



# TINKER AIR FORCE BASE

*Celebrating 75 years  
Delivering Air Power for America*



Supplement to the Tinker Take Off

## ANNIVERSARIES:

**Tinker AFB 75 years ★ AWACS E-3 40 years ★ 507th ARW 45 years ★ TACAMO 25 years**

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# TINKER AIR FORCE BASE

## Celebrating 75 years

## Delivering Air Power to America

**About the cover:** As public affairs practitioners and the design team, there were many different aspects we had to think about for the cover of this magazine.

- ✓ Is it interesting?                      ✓ Does it convey a message?
- ✓ Does it grab your attention?       ✓ Does it meet intent?

These are just some of the factors taken into account when we brainstormed how this cover should look.

After much discussion and answering these five questions (plus many more), everything seemed to narrow down to a single theme. That theme was echoed from leadership to our public affairs team to the Airmen and their families across Tinker – PEOPLE.

We fix planes, sustain readiness, build structures and do all kinds of other jobs, but the most important thing to celebrate as we look back through our 75-year history and ahead 75 years into our future is our people. When our 75th anniversary time capsule is opened in 75 years and this magazine is read, we want the future generation to know that we were, first and foremost, about the people.

So, we took as many pictures of people from our past and present and we crammed them into the face of Tinker – Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker. There are pictures of Rosies, past and present, leaders, and about every cross section of people representing Tinker Air Force Base that we could squeeze in. We even managed to include a Military Working Dog.

We wish we could have put every face of every person who ever worked or served here, as they all deserve recognition for being a part of our Tinker heritage.

Delivering Combat Power for America – that’s what we have always done and will continue to do for generations to come.

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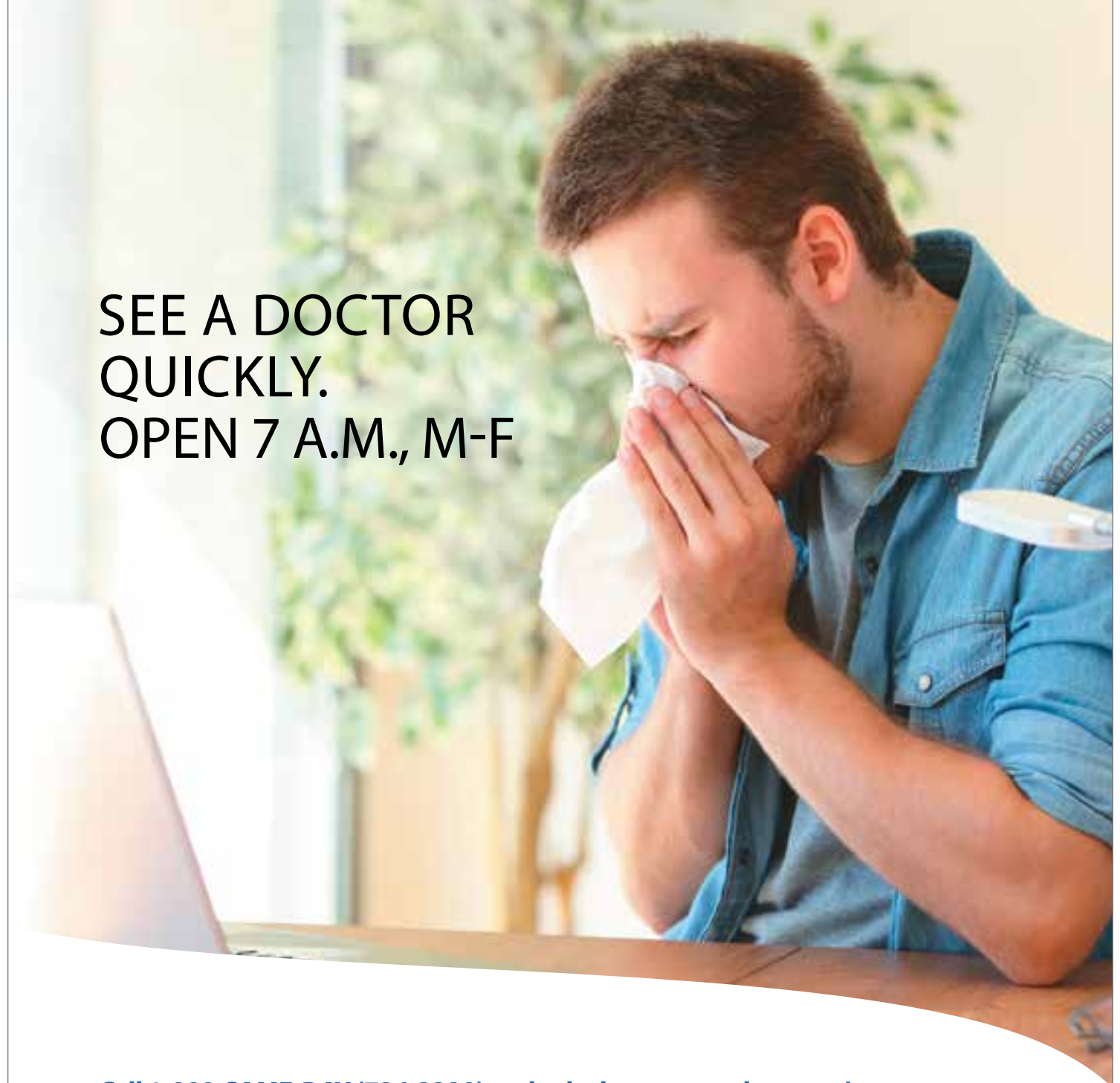
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Story by  
**April McDonald**  
*72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs*  
and Tinker History Office



# 75 years of warfighter support

For 75 years, Tinker Air Force Base has provided combat air power for America.

It all started with a group of Oklahoma City visionaries who wanted to move their city out of the Dust Bowl days and give people a hope for the future.

In October 1940, a dozen key businessmen formed the Oklahoma Industries Foundation in an effort to attract a bomber base, an aircraft plant or an air repair depot to the Oklahoma City area. The group acquired 960 acres and offered the land to the government at no cost. While holding the option on another 480 acres, they promised to provide necessary utilities, roads and a rail spur to the airfield. Their hard work and long hours paid off. On April 8, 1941, the order was officially signed awarding the depot to Oklahoma City.

On January 15, 1942, Lt. Col. William R. Turnbull issued General Order No. 1 marking the establishment of the Midwest Air Depot. Because the installation was far from complete, operations began in downtown Oklahoma City, first in the Commerce Exchange Building and later in

the Bass Building.

As February began, Colonel Turnbull announced that the new air repair center would be known as the Oklahoma City Air Depot. On March 1, 1942, the War Department officially activated the airfield. Hiring new workers accelerated as the depot competed with the Douglas Aircraft Plant going up east of the runway.

During the war years, thousands of Oklahomans and military personnel from across the United States laid the foundation of Tinker's reputation for excellence in depot repair and maintenance. At the employment high point in late 1943, 13,500 people worked at the air depot, while another 23,000 worked for Douglas Aircraft. Nearly half of all the Tinker and Douglas workers were women who exemplified the famed "Rosie-the-Riveter."

Douglas employees built more than 5,000 C-47s for World War II and at one time produced 13 Skytrains per day. Meanwhile, Tinker Toolers repaired, modified and maintained B-17, B-24 and B-29 bombers. Their important "Eagle Project" enabled B-29 Superfortresses to conduct high-altitude precision bombing in the Pacific theater of operation.





When victory came, the Douglas Plant ceased operations, and everyone wondered what would become of the installation. Soon word arrived that Tinker Field would not only survive, but would expand and take over the three-quarter-mile-long facility now known as Bldg. 3001. In recognition of its permanent status, 150,000 people attended the formal dedication of Tinker Field on Nov. 18, 1945, and heard Durant native Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker deliver the keynote address.

In February 1946, depot employees began modifying B-29s for atomic testing near the Bikini Atoll, and the historic Enola Gay made its first visit to Tinker for an overhaul. On July 2, 1946, the depot received another name change as the Oklahoma City Air Technical Service Command became the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area. In 1947 Tinker employees began working on jet engines and also

completed a modification of Pres. Harry S. Truman's C-54 airplane, the "Sacred Cow."

Subsequent to creation of the Department of the Air Force in 1947, the airfield received its modern name, Tinker Air Force Base, effective Jan. 13, 1948. The year proved to be one of the most notable in the installation's long history. Five days following a massive tornado that caused more than \$10 million in damages to aircraft and facilities, another tornado threatened central Oklahoma. On March 25, 1948, base meteorologists – Maj. Ernest Fawbush and Capt. Robert Miller – issued the first official tornado warning in American history. Another form of Tinker expertise took center stage in late 1948 when the Soviet Union blockaded Berlin, and Oklahoma City depot leaders went to Burtonwood, England, to establish procedures for the successful airlift mission that saved the German city from Russian

domination.

The 1950s pulled the United States and Tinker AFB into the Korean Conflict. B-29s, B-50s and B-36s came to the base for modifications necessary to combat communist aggression. The work force increased in numbers as the depot work load continued to expand. Soon, new aircraft types such as the B-47, B-52 and KC-135 were seen in Tinker hangars as Cold War deterrence ushered in another generation of weapon systems.

Base workers provided logistics support during the Suez Crisis in 1956 and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The first C-141 Starlifter in the U.S. Air Force inventory, named the Spirit of Oklahoma City, was delivered to Tinker AFB in October 1964. For the next 10 years all thoughts were on the war in Southeast Asia as Vietnam-weary aircraft and Airmen passed through Tinker's portals. During the period, more than 2,000 A-7 Corsair IIs, F-4 Phantoms

and B-52 Stratofortresses received depot repair and modification.

On April 1, 1974, the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area became the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center. Three years later, the first E-3 Sentry aircraft arrived at Tinker AFB as the 552nd Airborne Warning and Control Wing recognized the merits of co-locating its main operating base with its maintenance and repair center. The unusual-looking radar and communications aircraft with a rotating dome on top of the fuselage became a frequent sight in the Sooner skies and a sign of American interests around the world.

In the 1980s Tinker returned to work force and work load levels not seen since the end of the Vietnam War. Pride in aviation achievement was demonstrated when an estimated 200,000 people saw the space shuttle Columbia, riding atop a B-747, land at Tinker on April 27, 1981. In 1988 the first B-1B bomber





arrived for programmed maintenance and overhaul. That same year the center assumed management responsibility for the B-2 stealth bomber.

When Operation Desert Shield began in August 1990, Tinker associate units deployed to the Near East, and the base's aerial port of embarkation began moving cargo and troops to areas of operations. In January 1991 conventionally armed, air-launched cruise missiles, modified at Tinker, were among the first weapons fired in the Gulf War.

The Navy's Strategic Communications Wing One relocated to Tinker in May 1992, allowing the unit's E-6 Mercury aircraft to be maintained while providing communications to its worldwide fleet. Having the first naval operational unit assigned to an Air Force base, Tinker became a model for defense inter-service cooperation. The pace-setting practice was one of the factors enabling Tinker AFB to survive base closures in 1993 and 1995. The future looked even brighter after the 1999 announcement that the public-private team of the Oklahoma City ALC and Lockheed-Martin Corporation had won a \$10 billion engine work-load bid competition. Tinker began work on the F135 engine, which powers the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, in October 2012.

Always a community partner, Tinker supported relief efforts after the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in April 1995 and after a devastating tornadoes struck Oklahoma County in May 1999, 2003 and again in May 2013.



Mark Smith, 565th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron B-52H crew chief runs to position himself in front of B-52H 61-0007, 'Ghost Rider,' in order to launch the aircraft on an attempted functional test flight at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex, Aug. 29, 2016, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. 'Ghost Rider' is the first B-52 to ever be regenerated from long-term storage with the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., and returned to fully-operational flying status. (U.S. Air Force photo/Greg L. Davis)

After terrorists attacked the United States in September 2001, heightened security and urgency could be seen all around the base. For the first time since the Revolutionary War, foreign troops were defending the homeland as North Atlantic Treaty Organization Airborne Warning and Control System aircrews began flying operational missions out of Tinker AFB. After seven months here, NATO crews left Tinker on May 15, 2002.

In late 2011, the Air Force announced an initiative to restructure Air Force Materiel Command from a 12 center configuration to a new five-center structure. Under this organization Tinker AFB

became the host site for the Air Force Sustainment Center, one of six centers under AFMC and the supporting command for readiness. The AFSC was activated on July 10, 2012, the same day the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center was redesignated as the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex.

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail yard was acquired in February 2015 for conversion into the KC-46A maintenance campus. The railyard will be transformed into the maintenance repair and overhaul home for the KC-46A Pegasus, America's next-generation aerial refueler. The Pegasus is being built from the Boeing 767 airframe and will eventually replace the KC-

135 Stratotanker. On July 26, 2016, leaders officially broke ground on the new campus.

The first B-52H Stratofortress to be resurrected from long term storage at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group spent nine months at Tinker in 2016 before rejoining the active strategic bomber fleet. The historic Sept. 27, 2016, flight of tail number 61-007, known as "Ghost Rider," marked the end of the warbird's 19-month transformation from a mothballed 55-year-old, eight-engine jet parked in the Arizona desert to a fully updated conventional- and nuclear-capable global strike bomber platform.

Tinker AFB's 76th Aircraft Maintenance Group handed over the plane 90 days ahead of schedule to Air Force Global Strike Command. The team working to bring Ghost Rider back to life was made up of members of the OC-ALC, 76th Aircraft Maintenance Group, 76th Propulsion Maintenance Group, 76th Commodities Maintenance Group, 848th Supply Chain Management Group, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, 10th Flight Test Squadron and Defense Logistics Agency.

2017 has been yet another big year for Team Tinker as the base celebrates its diamond anniversary, along with the Air Force's 70th birthday. The Star Spangled Salute Air Show was one of many 75th anniversary events held throughout the year. For the first time ever, Tinker had to close its gates and

turn spectators away due to reaching its capacity. More than 200,000 people attended the two-day event that featured the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds demonstration team.

In addition to the base's anniversary, the 552nd Air Control Wing celebrated 40 years of the E-3 Sentry at Tinker, Strategic Communications Wing ONE celebrated 25 years at Tinker and the 507th Air Refueling Wing celebrated its 45th anniversary at Tinker.

The 567th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron was named the 2017 Robert T. Mason award for depot maintenance.

It's that kind of excellence that will enable Team Tinker to continue its tradition of enabling the warfighter for decades to come.

*(John Parker, Tinker Take Off staff writer, contributed to this article.)*



(U.S. Air Force photo/April McDonald)



# A future so bright...

Kimberly Woodruff  
72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Picture it: Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, in the year 2092 — 75 years from now.

It might look something like this ... The base no longer has fences, but now a laser boundary guard system protects the perimeter. Surrounding areas have been acquired by the government, so the base's footprint has expanded. As that space runs out, new work areas were carved out underground and braced with new engineering technology discovered by Tinker engineers. Everyone drives hovercraft, so potholes in the roads are no longer an issue. Personnel all wear hover boots to move around easily and save time in the workplace.

As for weapons systems, legacy aircraft has finally been retired and moved to the boneyard or memorial parks. In their place, new aircraft will be unmanned, lethal machines feared by the rest of the world.

That's just one idea of what the future might hold. But, no matter what the physical world looks like, Air Force Sustainment Center Commander Lt. Gen. Lee K. Levy II said he believes the people will still be making it happen here at Tinker AFB.

"People are more important than hardware," said Levy. "In 75 years, what will we be doing at Tinker? I have some ideas, but whatever the mission

is, the people will make sure the mission absolutely happens. Whatever it is they are working on — unmanned systems or the B-21 bomber, KC-46A or something not yet dreamed up — the Oklahomans who work on it will make it amazing. I'm 100 percent sure on the quality of the fifth and sixth generation workforce of Oklahomans to provide extraordinary, lethal weapons systems capable of defending our nation."

the nation's wars. It is a huge responsibility making sure the workforce is ready to do what this nation's leadership asks of it at a moment's notice.

Leaving Tinker AFB and Oklahoma better than we found it is also very important for General Levy.

"As a citizen, an American and an Oklahoman, it is the responsibility of the AFSC to make sure Oklahoma continues to thrive and grow economically and to

math) education is key.

"Weapons systems, people, economy, and education are all interconnected, and we can't remove one without affecting the other," said Levy. "All of those things must grow and mature so Tinker can stay the critical strategic node that it is today. When the workforce is dedicated, capable and motivated, the community is thriving and flourishing. We are citizens of Oklahoma and we have an obligation to leave Oklahoma better than we found it."

Recruiting the next generation of Airmen is also important to Levy.

"We've really pushed STEM in the colleges and it has made a huge difference and has been an accelerator to our workforce," he said. "It's about total force Airmen — active duty, contractors, and civilians. I can't deliver what the Air Force demands, the readiness and lethality for the world's preeminent airspace and cyberspace without all the total force Airmen working in tandem."

The vision that Oklahomans had in 1942 — the forethought to get the land and to imagine a premier depot maintenance base is the kind of spirit that has made Tinker AFB a success for the state of Oklahoma and the Air Force.

"We can see the Oklahoma spirit reflected even today, and I know it will shine brightly 75 years from now," Levy said.

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**"Weapons systems, people, economy, and education are all interconnected, and we can't remove one without affecting the other. All of those things must grow and mature so Tinker can stay the critical strategic node that it is today."**

— Lt. Gen. Lee K. Levy II, Air Force Sustainment Center Commander

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The general had plenty of great things to say about the workforce at Tinker AFB, but used just one emphatic word to describe what the base would look like 75 years from now: "Crowded!"

Tinker is a 5,500 acre base surrounded by a densely packed urban area and space is definitely a premium. The general said the lack of adequate real estate today is limiting the ability to do some things on the base and the challenge will still be there in the decades to come.

The general knows his first job is to fight and win

sustain the workforce," he said. "If Tinker is better, the community is better. Economic diversity creates strength which creates more opportunities, which creates a better workforce ... as Air Force grows more and more complex and sophisticated, all of Oklahoma and the rest of the nation will benefit."

Building a better workforce in Oklahoma requires one thing very dear to the general's heart — education. With everything requiring advanced software, STEM (science, technology, engineering and



# 552<sup>nd</sup> Air Control Wing: Contributing more than 40 years to Tinker's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Story by Ron Mullan  
72nd ABW Public Affairs

Curtis Swift  
552nd ACW Historian

The 552nd Air Control Wing has been located at Tinker AFB, Okla., for more than 40 years. Prior to that, the wing was based out of March AFB, Calif., and was known as the 552nd Airborne Early Warning & Control Wing. But that all changed during America's bi-centennial celebration year when on July 1, 1976, the wing was redesignated as the 552nd Airborne Warning and Control Wing and activated at Tinker AFB, Okla.

It was eight months later, in March 1977 that the first E-3 AWACS Sentry aircraft, tail number 75-0557, arrived here. The wing provided airborne early warning, surveillance, command, control and communications, and battlefield services for US Armed Forces and its allies.

Besides operating at its primary station, the wing fulfilled its mission from other geographical locations, worldwide, by participating in numerous tactical exercises, such as joint training in electronic warfare environments, airborne battlefield command and control for Tactical Con-

trol Centers, search and rescue, and maritime operations beginning in October 1977.

In January 1979, the wing expanded its air operations with the addition of drug interdiction missions in support of US Customs. Other highlights of the 552nd during this period included: •Advising NATO on the activation of its Airborne Early Warning system and trained NATO crews in E-3 Sentry aircraft to improve the Allied air defense system in Europe, from January 1980–December 1982.

•Aiding in the search and salvage operations Sept. 1–Oct. 9, 1983, of the Korean Airlines flight 007 shot down by a Soviet fighter over the Sea of Japan on Sept. 1, 1983.

•Flying intelligence missions with E-3s in Saudi Arabia during the Iran-Iraq War, Oct. 13, 1980–April 17, 1989.

•The wing was elevated to the division level on Oct. 1, 1983, with the activation of the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. The division took on the Command, Control and Communications Counter-

measures mission, which lasted until April 1, 1985. The division then returned to a wing designation and was relieved of the countermeasures duty.

The 552nd flew Airborne Battlefield Command, Control and Communications missions on airborne alert during the invasions of Grenada, in November 1983, and Panama, December 1989. The wing trained Royal Saudi Air Force aircrews in the operations of ABCCC missions, April 1985.

The 552nd performed air-

borne warning and control operations in Southwest Asia, August 1990–March 1991. In 1990, the wing provided airborne command, control support for Counter-Drug Operations while deployed to Roosevelt Roads Naval Air Station, Puerto Rico, and provided navigational support for USAF units to and from overseas deployments.

The 552nd received its current designation – 552nd Air Control Wing -- on Oct. 1, 1991. In January 1993, the





wing supported deployed aircraft and crews to Southwest Asia to ensure that Iraq complied with ceasefire terms. It also provided airborne command and control operations over the United States immediately following terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

From October 2001 through 2009, the 552nd provided airborne command and control of Operation NOBLE EAGLE and continues to routinely provide support for presidential support missions around the world. The wing played a major role by providing airborne command and control support for US and Allied forces during Operations IRAQI FREEDOM, from March – May 2003, and NEW DAWN from 2003-2011.

Part of the 552nd ACW current mission is to provide airborne warning and control support for counter-drug operations from Curacao. The wing also provided airborne command and control operations for US and Allied Forces in Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM from 2002-2003, and 2007- 2014.

In May 2008, the 552nd gained four geographically separated air control squadrons, better known at CRCs (Control and Reporting Centers). Since that time, the Air Control Group and Wing have worked to improve CRC capabilities, fostering a mass effort to adopt best practices from one another while creating modern, relevant, lean and lethal air control squadrons available to combatant commander's around the world.

The men and women of the CRCs have deployed to the CENTCOM AOR regularly since 2004, providing unsurpassed air control and communications to US and allied forces. In 2013, the 552nd

ACG lost two of its four air control squadrons, when HQ Air Combat Command inactivated the 728th ACS as part of a force reduction measure, and transferred the 607th ACS to HQ Air Education and Training Command.

In early 2011, the men and women of the 552nd ACW deployed in support of Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR, which later changed to Operation ODESSEY DAWN, in support of operations in Libya.

In March 2012, the first of the E-3G Block 40/45 aircraft returned to the 552nd ACW following upgrade. From April 2012 until June 2014, members of the 965th Airborne Air Control Squadron flew the Block 40/45 aircraft as part of the Operational Test and Evaluation period, before Gen. "Mike" Hostage, commander, Air Combat Com-

mand, declared the aircraft had reached OIC in June 2014.

Also in June 2014, members of the 552nd ACW began flying missions in support of combat operations against ISIS, later ISIL, forces in Iraq and Syria. These operations continue today.

In November 2015, the 552nd ACW deployed the first Block 40/45 E-3 to the CENTCOM AOR. Within two days of arriving, E-3 crews flew the first 40/45 combat sortie.

In August 2017, 552nd E-3 crews began flying sorties in support of rescue and recovery operations following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey in East Texas and the Gulf Coast. Within a few days, Hurricane Irma devastated the Caribbean and the state of Florida and the 552nd ACW was once again tasked to fly sorties supporting the enor-

mous and widespread rescue and recovery efforts in the state of Florida.

The 552nd Air Control Wing stands poised to rapidly deploy forces world-wide and provide sustained world-class command and control operations to ensure US dominance over the battlefield well into the future.

#### Awards

Since arriving at Tinker in 1976, the USAF has awarded the 552nd ACW a total of 18 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, two with valor, and four Meritorious Unit Awards.

Prior to arriving at Tinker, the 552nd was awarded seven AFOUAs bringing the total to 25 (four with Valor), four Meritorious Unit Awards and the Southwest Asia: Defense of Saudi Arabia; Liberation and Defense of Kuwait campaign streamer.



# ‘Okies’ Celebrate 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Tinker



HICKAM AFB, HAWAII (July 15, 2010) U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Timothy Milliken, crew chief, assigned to the 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., marshalls in a KC-135 Stratotanker from the 465th Air Refueling Squadron, Tinker AFB, Okla., after a refueling mission in support of exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, on July 15, 2010. RIMPAC is a biennial, multinational exercise designed to strengthen regional partnerships and improve interoperability. RIMPAC includes more than 14 nations 32 ships, five submarines, more than 170 aircraft and more than 20,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Kamaile O. Long/Released)

Story by Master Sgt. Grady Epperly  
507th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

This year marks the 45th Anniversary of the 507th Air Refueling Wing operating out of Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. The 507th ARW is the largest Air Force Reserve Command flying unit in the state of Oklahoma. Reporting to Fourth Air Force, the 507th ARW performs daily missions both locally and around the world in support of Air Mobility Command and U.S. Strategic Command's national emergency war order requirements.

"We have been at Tinker for 45 of its 75 years, and the support of the base and surrounding community is unlike any other in the U.S. Air Force," said Col. Douglas E. Gullion, 507th ARW commander.

The wing operates and maintains eight KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft, providing world-wide aerial refueling to U.S. and NATO aircraft in times of peace,

war and national emergency. The 507th ARW trains aircrew on the Reserve KC-135 and the Reserve C-17 Globemaster III at a geographically separated unit, the 730th Air Mobility Training Squadron at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, where KC-46 Pegasus flight training will begin in the near future.

"With the diversity of missions that the 507th and its subordinate units perform, you can bet that our Airmen are an active part of the nation's defense and support," said Gullion. "We support all types of missions; from domestic disaster relief to the war against ISIS."

Today, the 507th ARW consists of three subordinate groups and 11 squadrons while employing more than 1,100 men and women. The 507th ARW is made up of Reserve Citizen Airmen, many of whom live and work in our Oklahoma communities in addition to their Reserve commitment. Approx-

mately 200 members of the 507th are traditional civilian employees or dual status Air Reserve Technicians who

serve as a support cadre.

The 507th ARW Reservists fly two to three missions daily and off-load millions





of pounds of fuel in support of operations worldwide. The 507th ARW flies over 3,000 hours annually in support of national defense requirements. Additionally, the wing serves as the support backbone for the 513th Air Control Group, the Air Force Reserve's only associate E-3 Sentry Airborne and Warning Control System. The 507th ARW also provides peacetime personnel and support functions for the 35th Combat Communications Squadron. Expeditionary medical support rounds out the wing to make it one of the Reserve Command's most valuable assets.

"We are fortunate to have strong partnerships with associate units on Tinker Air Force Base," said Maj. Jon Quinlan, 507th ARW chief of public affairs. "The Okla-

homa City Air Logistics Complex, the Air Force's primary KC-135 engine maintenance facility, is a critical neighbor. The partnership gives us the ability to support depot requests involving modification projects and future upgrades to the Air Force's tanker fleet."

The 507th ARW operates a daily KC-135R Strato-tanker aerial refueling alert capability in support of U.S. Strategic Command. According to Quinlan, the nuclear deterrent alert requirement could not be met without support from the U.S. Navy's Strategic Communications Wing ONE which is also an associate unit here on Tinker AFB.

The 507th Operations Group oversees three subordinate units: 465th Air Refueling Squadron, 507th Op-

erations Support Squadron and the 730th Air Mobility Training Squadron.

The 465th ARS is one of three flying organizations in the 507th OG, incorporating pilots and traditional operations functions. The squadron operates eight Boeing KC-135R aircraft. Reservists, both pilots and boom operators, fly and maintain worldwide mission-ready status and regularly deploy in support of contingency operations.

The 507th OSS incorporates traditional operations support functions such as Intelligence, Aircrew Flight Equipment, Combat Crew Communications, Operations Plans, war plans and flight records maintenance.

The 730th AMTS is a geographically separated unit operating at Altus Air Force Base, Okla. The 730th AMTS is charged with training aircrew on the C-17, KC-135 and in the future, KC-46 aerial refueling aircraft. The Reservists in the unit work next to active duty Airmen of the 97th Air Mobility Wing, training aircrew members for Air Education and Training Command.

The 507th Maintenance Group brings all maintenance support activities under a single commander. The group staff is small, consisting primarily of quality assurance personnel supporting intermediate level maintenance. Additionally, due to the deactivation of all Maintenance Operations Flights, group staffs now support aircraft records, maintenance reporting, personnel support and military training.

The 507th Maintenance Squadron is responsible for

periodic KC-135R inspections, fabrication repairs, propulsion, air refueling boom maintenance, aircraft fuel systems and aerospace ground equipment.

The 507th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron is responsible for directing all organizational level maintenance and generation of KC-135R aircraft.

The Mission Support Group commander oversees five squadrons: The 507th Security Forces Squadron, 507th Civil Engineer Squadron, 507th Logistics Readiness Squadron, 507th Force Support Squadron and the 72nd Aerial Port Squadron.

The 507th SFS is tasked to provide air base ground defense and to protect weapon systems and support personnel. The squadron's Combat Arms Training and Maintenance section trains wing personnel in the use of small arms.

The 507th CES trains and equips engineering teams for worldwide combat support. The squadron's personnel can perform rapid runway repair, structural bomb damage repair, firefighting and crash rescue.

The 507th LRS carries out all other logistics staff functions, including those pertaining to transportation, supply, contracting, fuels, maintenance training and plans.

The 72nd APS personnel load, unload, and process airfreight arriving from and departing to locations worldwide.

The 507th FSS provides personnel management and services support such as lodging, fitness, food, recreation and mortuary affairs to the entire 507th ARW and the 513th ACG. Additionally, a communications



The "Okies" of the "Fighting 507th" have seen many changes in its diverse history from the P-47 Thunderbolts to the F-105 Thunderchief pictured here, to the KC-135 Stratotankers, the unit continues to play a important role in our national defense. (507th Fighter Wing, 507th Wing, 507th Tactical Fighter Group, 507th Fighter Group).

element consisting of wing knowledge operations, unit telecommunications, radio systems, and small computer support falls under the command.

The 507th ARW has its own medical squadron. The 507th MDS monitors the medical, dental and mental health of all members in the 507th as well as the personnel in the 513th ACG. Major focus areas are: Maintaining processes and records for annual physical and dental assessments, currency in immunizations, and monitoring occupational environments. The medical squadron operates out of Tinker Air Force Base's 72nd Medical Group and integrates with the staff. If mobilized, staff members are trained to support a fixed or mobile field hospital site.

### 35th Combat Communications Squadron (10th Air Force)

The 35th CBCS, a standalone Air Force Space Command unit that reports to the 960th Cyber Operations Group, Joint Base San Anto-

nio-Lackland, Texas. Squadron members can be rapidly deployed anywhere in the world to set up, from scratch, a Theater Air Base to include: satellite communications, telephone switching bands and base computer networks. They can perform setup, operation and maintenance of voice and data communications systems essential to wing operations, including radio, telephones, teletype and computer systems.

### 1st Aviation Standards Flight

The 1st ASF, located at Will Rogers Airport in Oklahoma City. The 1st Aviation Standards Flight falls under the 413th Flight Test Group, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. This unit, working in tandem with the Federal Aviation Administration, performs flight inspections of navigational aid radar and instrument procedures at

military and civilian installations in the United States and overseas. The flight operates from Will Rogers International World Airport, Oklahoma City and augments the Air Force Flight Standards Agency Detachment 1, the on-site active duty unit. The 1st ASF consists of approximately 23 people. They fly and help maintain the FAA's Bombardier "Challenger" 601, 604 and 605.



The men and women of the 507th Air Refueling Wing pose for a wing photo at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., Oct 23, 2014. (U.S. Air Force Photo/TSgt. Lauren Gleason)



# **TINKER AND GREATER OKLAHOMA CITY SOARING TOGETHER FOR 75 YEARS.**



In 1941, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber spearheaded the donation of the land to build Tinker Air Force Base. Over the past 75 years, the business community and the base have worked hand-in-hand to ensure jobs and economic growth for our region. Tinker has grown to become Oklahoma's largest single-site employer with more than 26,000 military and civilian employees. As we look to Tinker's future growth and success, the Chamber and Oklahoma City remain committed to being a trusted partner for the next 75 years and beyond.

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# REACT team builds state-of-the-art time capsule



During the Air Force Ball on Sept. 16, Todd Bayles, mechanical engineer from the 76 CMXG REACT office and Jerry Bryza, media chief with the 72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs office, stood by as Honor Guard member A1C Joshua Stuff placed the last flag to fly over bldg. 460, the building that housed the headquarters of Tinker Air Force Base for nearly 75 years.

Kimberly Woodruff  
72 ABW Public Affairs

Future generations celebrating Tinker Air Force Base's 150th Anniversary in the year 2092 will unearth a time capsule that the 76th Commodities Maintenance Group's REACT team built using 3D printing technology.

The team constructed an inner compartmentalized box or group of boxes that fit inside an outer box that



(U.S. Air Force photos/Kimberly Woodruff)

Phil Tinker, grandson of Gen. Clarence Tinker, and Jim Diehl, President of the Tinker Heritage Foundation placed the lid on top of the time capsule manufactured by the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex REACT cell, a 3-D Additive Manufacturing team.



Col. Kenyon Bell, 72nd Air Base Wing Commander observes as Todd Bayles and Jerry Bryza place the middle section of the time capsule.

is the first time capsule approved container that is flame, smoke and toxicity resistant. It has been rated to withstand the test of time.

Conceptualized by Gerald Bryza, 72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs media chief, the inner containers feature

nine 6 inch by 9 inch boxes on the bottom layer with a middle layer for the American flag and a top layer for larger flat items such as magazines and newspapers.

Nine of the largest units on base were each given a box to fill with items special to that unit. The Air

Force Sustainment Center, Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex, 552nd Air Control Wing, Strategic Communication Wing ONE, 507th Air Refueling Wing, 448th Supply Chain Management Wing, Defense Information Systems Agency, Defense Logistics Agency, and 38th Cyberspace Engineering Installation Group all included items such as letters, coins, pins, letters and even small parts.

The capsule was printed using the most modern technique of manufacturing to showcase the latest tech-

nology. When the capsule is unearthed in 2092, that technology will be more than 75 years old, but it is exciting and new today.

At this year's Air Force Ball, Sept. 16, the items were placed inside the time capsule. In the top layer, Honor Guard member, A1C Joshua Stuff placed the last flag to fly over building 460. Phil Tinker, grandson of Gen. Clarence Tinker, and Jim Diehl, President of the Tinker Heritage Foundation placed the cover with the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo on the time capsule.





# Strategic Communications Wing ONE celebrates 25 years

Story by Jillian Coleman  
Staff Writer

Tinker Air Force Base is home to 6,712 Airmen, but it's not confined to one branch of the Department of the Defense. The military installation is also home to the United States Navy and Strategic Communications Wing ONE.

As the installation celebrates 75 years in Midwest City, the Navy too, has had a milestone year – 2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the Red Dirt Sailors joining Team Tinker. Twenty-five years in Oklahoma dates the Wing's commission back to May 1992, but its history tracks it back a touch further.

When the need for an inland naval base became dire, Tinker wasn't initially a top contender. Not only was it not at the top of

the list, it wasn't even on the list. To the surprise of many, Tinker was announced as the chosen location in July 1986 following the E-6 project office's preliminary site survey. According to an official in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Shipbuilding and Logistics, Tinker offered several operational advantages over other contenders.\* Perks of the Oklahoma installation revolved around the AWACS frame that was also used for the Navy's E-6, as well as the depot level maintenance performed through the Air Logistics Complex. The ALC's capabilities for the E-6, its airframe and engine repairs maintenance have largely contributed to the Red Dirt Sailors remaining in Oklahoma for the last 25 years.

As Oklahoma's largest single-site employer, the economic

impact of the base expanded from the addition of SCW-1, as roughly 1,200 military personnel would re-locate. Subsequently, major infrastructure and construction would ensue, large facilities and hangars would be built, and thus a hiring frenzy would begin. More jobs would filter through the Oklahoma pipeline naturally with the development of the Navy's new inland location, and the state would flourish as a result.

After a couple of years coordinating design and construction details, Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadrons Three and Four (VQ-3 and VQ-4) stood alert at Tinker in May 1991. Their homeport changes would occur in July 1992 and 1993, respectively, each year bringing approximately 480 Sailors, accompanied by eight E-6 aircraft. Another squadron, VQ-7, would join the forces down the road in 1999.

Each squadron operates E-6A jets, providing airborne and alert coverage of the communications link to strategic nuclear deterrence forces. Like the Air Force and other branches of service, the aircraft evolved and progressed alongside the technological advancements. The E-6A aircraft,

for example, underwent heavy modifications six years after the Wing's commission and became the new E-6, referred to as the E-6B. The E-6B has remained predominately unchanged since its transition from A to B, and have been employed in critical missions for Strategic Command in Iraq, providing communications for ground forces.

The E-6 Mercury is the Wing's aircraft responsible for conveying instructions to fleet ballistic missile submarines, which is commonly referred to as the Navy's TACAMO, which signifies Take Charge and Move Out. A key weapon in the Navy's arsenal, the E-6 provides command and control of nuclear forces in the event that ground forces become inoperable.

TACAMO has several components which comprise the military system assigned to link and maintain communication between National Command Authority and strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems. With its ability to communicate with radio frequency bands of any frequency level, Tinker's TACAMO facility conducts the airborne portion of the mission, as it is an inland base.



# Men & Women on the Street

Jillian Coleman  
Staff Writer

"I've been stationed at Tinker since Oct. 1998, so I've seen the base through a lot of changes. When I first got here, there was the old BX, and that was pretty small, and old hospital clinic. When they built the new BX that we're standing in now, this is like Wal-Mart. It's huge and has everything you need. The new clinic, I remember, was built after the 1999 tornado hit the old one. And now it's really nice and I know the people, especially those who worked in the old clinic, really enjoy it. Something I will really miss is the old headquarters building (Bldg. 460). It was a cool building and I loved driving through the gates and seeing that first thing in the morning. I've seen three presidents land

here, George W. Bush, [Bill] Clinton and [Barack] Obama. It's pretty special.

There's been a lot of positive change in my time here, and I know it will continue to change after I leave. Progression never stops, and people are always thinking about what is next; they are creative and smart. Being a part of the 552nd, I have deployed 14 times in 20 years and I will retire in January. We will move back to the east coast, where we're from, but Oklahoma will always have a warm place in my heart. The 'Oklahoma Standard' is a real thing, and I experienced that first hand after the 1999 tornado and going out in the community to help and support.

To retire in the military, it's not like quitting a job and going to the next. The Air Force is in me and in my heart. It is a family



Maj. Alex Frisch, 964. (Photos by Kelly White)

and nowhere else will I work that the people, whether above me or below me, will care about me and I, them. It isn't about the guy in the uniform, it's about the uniform." —**Tech. Sgt. Daniel Neff, 552**

"In the last 12 years I've been [at Tinker], I've seen a dynamic shift, with leadership, in integration. Logistics is an established integrating unit, and to have someone like [Lt. Gen. Lee K. Levy II] actually pushing to streamline how we operate as a business, as opposed to how it used to be, that is a significant positive change." —**DeCarlos Sanders, AFSC LG**

"I started at Tinker in 2004 as Active Duty, and have been on base with the Air National Guard, Reserve and now in the Complex Quality Office. The biggest difference I've seen is the directives that come down from the Secretary of the Air Force and trying to get rid of excess AFIs and additional duties. They take up time and

resources, and I'd like to see us being more proactive rather than having to always be reactive. Let's focus on efficiency." —**Chris Clark**

"We're continuing to press forward, and the future of PMXG is going to be the next generation of fighters out there, what we're calling 'Fifth Generation.' The goal is, in the next five years, to consolidate the workload of all outside partnerships and move that workload to our back shop. Right now we contract out all of the sustainable workload and we are — as we speak — working on moving all of that work to be done house. We have the capabilities now to work and build engines here." —**Steve Stoner, 548 PMXS**

"[Tinker] is the best base I've been on in comparison to Navy training bases. The Exchange and the commissary are great and it's just nicer overall. I love the community and the running trails here...love that I can take my dog out, which I haven't felt



Staff Sgt. Rashonique Jackson, 72 ABW



like I could do other places.” —**Lt. JG Eric Warrington, VQ-4**

“It is a great base, the only thing I’m disappointed in is not having an indoor pool. That would be at the top of the list of things I would like to see change in the next 75 years. For [the Sailors] especially, we swim in our physical fitness tests, so having indoor facilities for that would be awesome.”

—**Lt. JG Andy Husted, VQ-4**

“I first got here in 2002. I was gone for four years, and now I’m back and I’ve seen a lot of changes both on the aircraft side as well as the community and personnel side. The biggest difference I’ve seen is the younger generation of our Airmen. They have a different mentality and view their career paths differently. They are more innovative and they are more determined to figure out how to make things better and do their jobs more efficiently. My job as a navigator, for example, is changing as more and more technological advancements are made and electronics are used more, instead of things being done in a manual way.” —**Maj. Alex Frisch, 964**

“This base is very unique in that the civil-

ian population is the majority. Specifically for the chapel, we have so many restrictions and limitations with who we can and cannot offer support to, unless it’s a crisis situation. I’d like to see changes in regulations and allow for more bodies or resources to help us help more people. Drawing a line between business and compassion can take a toll on you, especially when individuals are in need.” —**Staff Sgt, Rashonique Jackson, 72 ABW**

“I have been in the Air Base Wing for 13 years and have experienced and been a part of many changes. Physically, the wing headquarters recently relocated from Bldg. 460 to Bld. 1002. I’ve been on Active Duty, was in the squadron level in a leadership position and now I work in the wing headquarters with commanders and senior leaders. I will say that every wing commander brings something different to the table as far as their vision for the wing, but people have always remained the top priority. Every commander has built upon what the previous commander has done, which ultimately takes the wing to another level. There may be new missions constantly, and missions may belong to other units, but we

as wing support that mission, and the people are who get the mission done.” —**Phyllis Atkins-Johnson, 72 ABW**



Phyllis Atkins-Johnson, 72 ABW



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# Osage Nation plays pivotal role

## Grandson of Tinker's namesake vows to keep legacy alive

Darren D. Heusel

The legacy of Tinker Air Force Base is alive and well, as base and community leaders continue to celebrate the base's 75th anniversary by hosting events throughout the year to commemorate the occasion.

Phil Tinker, grandson of Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker, for whom the base is named, has attended a number of those events and has vowed to do what he can to keep his grandfather's legacy alive for the next 75 years – and beyond.

Gen. Tinker was shot down on June 5, 1942 near Wake Island while leading a squadron of LB-30 Liberators against the Japanese, making him the first U.S. general officer and highest-ranking Native American killed-in-action during World War II.

On Oct. 14, 1942, the Oklahoma City Air Depot was renamed Tinker Field at the direction of Gen. Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the Army Air Forces.

Phil Tinker, 58 of Campo, California, located about 45 minutes east of San Diego, said he's pretty much known his entire life he was related to Gen. Tinker. But, it

wasn't until he became an adult that the desire to learn more about his grandfather's service began to burn deep within him.

"As a kid, it doesn't mean what it means now – the historical significance," said Phil Tinker, of knowing his grandfather. "When I became an adult, that's when it started kicking in."

Phil said his dad didn't discuss the family history much because it was painful

to talk about. His dad's father, Gen. Tinker; Gen. Tinker's son and Phil's uncle, Clarence Tinker Jr., a.k.a. Uncle Bud; and Gen. Tinker's brother-in-law, Bryon E. "Bill" Brugge, had all been killed-in-action.

"Bill was shot down in World War II, captured by the Japanese, put in a concentration camp and tortured to death," Phil said. "So, it was painful for my dad to talk about."

Phil said he always knew his grandpa was a general officer and had an Air Force based named after him. But it wasn't until he was in his 20s that he really began wanting to learn more about his granddad - his heritage and his connection to the Osage Nation, of which Gen. Tinker was a member.

Phil said when he retired from being a welder on KC-135 "Stratotankers" in 2012, wanting to know more about



Phil Tinker, grandson of Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker for whom Tinker Air Force Base is named, pours over artifacts preserving his grandfather's legacy during a recent visit to the base's history office. In this photo, Phil is holding a book entitled "Osage General: Major General Clarence L. Tinker" written by Dr. James L. Crowder, former Tinker historian. (Photo by Darren D. Heusel)



his grandfather became his No. 1 mission in life.

Phil said the first time he visited Tinker was in 1997, when Midwest City and Tinker were celebrating 55 years of coexistence and the Air Force was celebrating its 50th birthday.

"It wasn't long after the Oklahoma City bombing (April 19, 1995)," he recalled. "I still have the plaque where we were grand marshals of the Midwest City parade."

Phil said he remembers being "blown away" at the enormity of the base and its impact on the community.

"Everywhere we went, it was Tinker this and Tinker that," he said. "I knew at that point I was going to do everything I could to keep granddad's legacy alive."

Phil said he's been "very humbled, very honored and very blessed" by all the attention he's received over the years, particularly this year, having been invited to participate in a number of the 75th anniversary events.

However, he insists, "This isn't about me. My grandfather was a great man, who died for his country. I just want to keep his legacy alive."

Since 2012, Phil and his wife, Dawn, and the couple's two children, Luke Tinker and Amanda Neves, have visited the base a couple times - once for a brief tour and another to take part in a videoteleconference when 7th Air Force renamed its headquarters conference room in honor of Gen. Tinker, who served as the organization's commander at the time of his death.

In 2017, things really started coming together for Phil. He has visited Oklahoma on multiple occasions this year, beginning with the 75th An-



Phil Tinker, grandson of Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker for whom Tinker Air Force Base is named, right, visits with Air Force Sustainment Center and Tinker Air Force Base Historian Howard "Hooch" Halvorsen, during a recent visit to the base's history office. Phil was in town in September to attend the Air Force Ball and stopped by the office to learn more about his grandfather. (Photo by Darren D. Heusel)

niversary Kickoff Luncheon back in January, the Tinker and Community Dining Out in April, the Midwest City 75th Anniversary Gala later that month, the Star Spangled Salute Air Show and Open House in May, and the Air Force Ball in September.

Phil also returned in June at the invitation of Osage Nation Principal Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear to attend their annual pow wow in Pawhuska, something he said he'd been looking forward to for quite some time.

At the pow wow, Phil and his daughter, Amanda, were given their Indian names, which he says is "a big deal." Phil's Indian name is Mo Shita Moi, which means Flies Up Above. Amanda's name is Mi Tse Xi, which means First Daughter.

"I first met Chief Standing Bear at the Dining Out and we really hit it off," Phil said. "They were unveiling a mural and (Air Force Sustainment Center Commander) Lt. Gen. (Lee K.) Levy

called us both up on stage and asked us to be part of the unveiling.

"From that point on, Chief Standing Bear was instrumental in helping me get my Indian name."

Phil said when he was given the name Mo Shita Moi, an Osage elder from the Bald Eagle Clan, of which he is apart, told him he'd been waiting more than 20 years to give someone that name.

"It was such an honor," he said.

Phil said when his grandfather passed, he was given the name Tse Tse Moi, which means Walking Elk.

"It's something that's engrained in me now," he said, of his Native American heritage. "I won't miss another pow wow."

Phil said the Osage people have a ceremonial dance in honor of Gen. Tinker, one he said he got to participate in at the pow wow.

"It was one of the last songs near the end," he said. "Everyone stands in honor of

Gen. Tinker. It's one of the few songs where everyone can participate. Otherwise, you have to be in traditional garb, or regala."

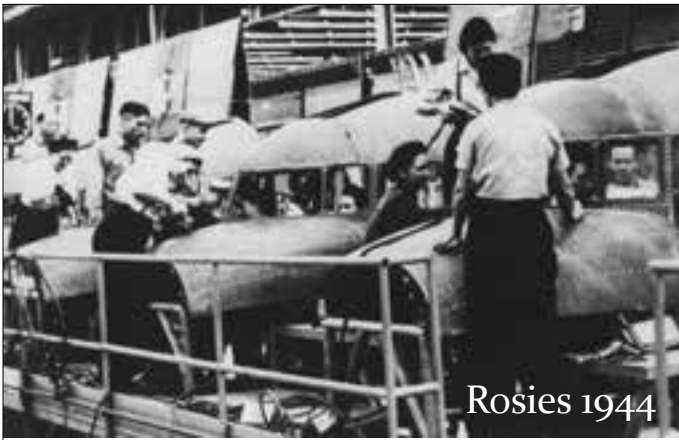
Phil said the visits to Oklahoma have allowed him to build some fond friendships and establish some great relationships.

"I feel so honored to be treated so well by the community," he said. "The hospitality shown by everyone has just been overwhelming. Again, this isn't about me. It's about granddad. I've been received with open arms beyond my wildest dreams."

Phil went on to say he only hopes he's represented the Air Force and the Tinker family name in an honorable and respectful way.

Moving forward, he said he would like to continue to visit the base and be apart of future events.

"I would be honored," he said. "I'd like to continue this relationship. I'd like to return as often as I can."



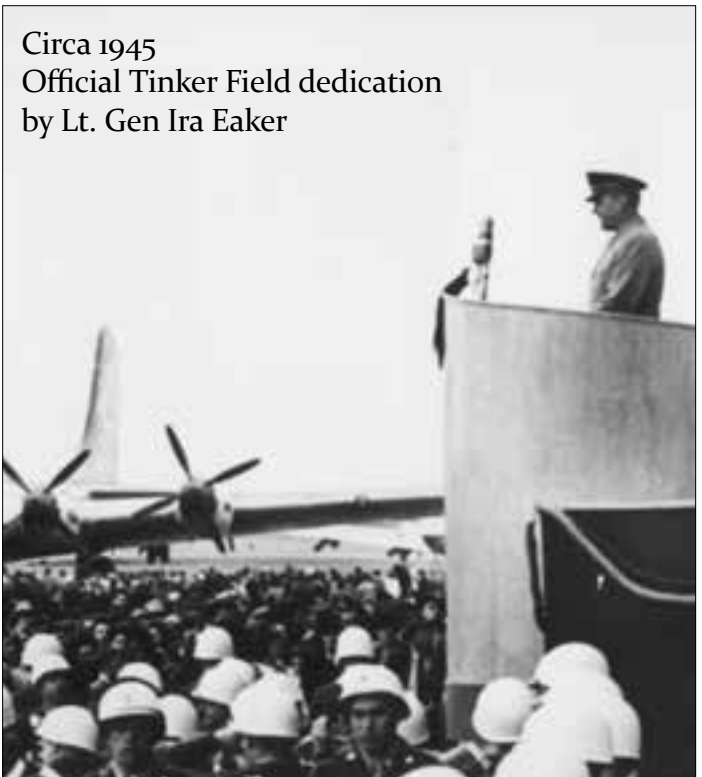
Rosies 1944



Circa 1957

WORK ORDER				
Station: <u>Wichita City Air Depot</u>		Work Order No. <u>00002-B</u>		
Initiating organization: <u>Operations</u>		Amount Symbol: <u>C-25-2</u>		
Signature: <u>Albert C. [illegible]</u>		Date: <u>8/1/52</u> Property class: <u>25-2</u>		
To: <u>Engineering</u>		Date wanted: <u>as soon as possible</u>		
Overhead: <u>Removal</u> Reason: <u>same and letter according to attached plan.</u>				
Repair: <u>Manufacture</u>				
QUANTITY	UNIT	PRICE NO.	EXT. NO.	NAME
1	EA			Air Traffic Board
To: <u>Personnel of</u> <u>AIRC SUPPLY</u>				
Date started: _____				
Date completed: _____				
M.D.:		Coordinated: <u>[Signature]</u> Approved: <u>[Signature]</u> Approved: <u>[Signature]</u>		

Circa 1945  
Official Tinker Field dedication  
by Lt. Gen Ira Eaker







Circa 1939



Circa 1962-63



# 72nd Security Forces defending Tinker AFB

Jillian Coleman  
Staff Writer

The United States Air Force defenders are members of Security Forces, the force protection and military police for the entire Air Force. As the defenders, Security Forces are keenly aware of base demographics – everything from acreage, gates, zones and procedures. At Tinker, the 72nd Security Forces Squadron allocates all of its resources to defending and protecting nearly 5,000 acres in the Oklahoma City metro, and the base which hosts 31,000 civilian and military Airmen who live, work, and play on Tinker Air Force Base. Defenders secure and protect the base with its squadron comprised of Military Working Dogs, fire departments and emergency responders.

Security Forces, which is the largest career field in the Air Force, has its own story to tell as the squadrons have changed throughout history, updating everything from training to manpower to uniforms. They are responsible for missile security, defending bases worldwide, providing law enforcement on said bases, combat arms and handling Military Working Dogs.

Dating back to the early 1940s, the Army officially established Army Air Forces Military Police, branching away from the Army Military Police units which previously existed. When the National Security Act of 1947 created the United States Department of Defense, the Air Force was formed as its own entity and was completely separate from the Army Air Corps. As its own branch, the Air Force was then responsible for the safekeeping of its own installa-

tions and was no longer to rely on security from the Army. So, the Air Force opened the doors to the first Air Police school three years later. Throughout the next few years, the training center bounced around trying to cement its place at a home base. Beginning at Tyndall Air Force Base in Florida, transferring to Parks Air Force Base in California, where it became the Air Base Defense School, training eventually put the wheels down at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. There, the school evolved into Security Police training before becoming what it is today, the U.S. Air Force Security Forces Academy.

Stylistically, what separates a Defender from other Airmen is the distinctive blue beret. A navy blue beret with the crest and motto, “Defensor Fortis,” was officially part of the Security Forces uniform in 1976. It was first worn by Strategic Air Command’s Elite Guard 20 years prior.

Defenders are stretched to the limit, with their demands making them arguably amongst the busiest in the Air Force. Deployments have varied in length throughout the duration of their existence, with an increase in combat deployments occurring in 2011, typically stabilizing a defender to six months.

Defenders are armed with an apt and knowledge in weapons systems, antiterrorism, law enforcement, air base defense and combat arms. Changes in training, tactics and procedures align with the mission, but keep the Defenders steps ahead of adversaries. Security Forces Squadrons effectively update training methods and procedures as the nature of warfare shifts.

Joining the force begins with



With one threat identified, a Tinker Airman continues to sweep the area for more subjects during active shooter training. (Air Force photo by Kelly White)

a 65-day intensive at Lackland, where Defenders-to-be are taught basic military police functions. Students study and engage in everything pertaining to the installation’s safekeeping. That includes missile security, convoy actions, securing or recovering nuclear weapons, as well as regular law enforcement and conducting and directing traffic. Trained to protect and defend the nation at home and abroad, Security Forces are equipped and train to use both lethal and nonlethal tactics through various combat training and use of force courses.

The 72nd Security Forces Squadron conducts combatives training to enhance Defenders’ capabilities as security and law enforcement officers for Tinker Air Force Base. This specific training regimen boosts basic skill sets as well as builds and maintains self-defense skills in close-quarter combat.

Security Forces personnel hone their techniques in hand-to-hand combat training through various exercises in submissions, restraints, strikes and weapons retention. This includes several techniques from

escaping blows, maintaining and escaping the mount, passing and maintaining the guard, and preventing and assuming the mount, all involving a variety of situations and dominant/non-dominant positions. Different maneuvers and takedowns allow for a greater working knowledge of hand-to-hand combat to aid an evasion.

Security Forces personnel are additionally certified to use Tasers effectively as another nonlethal training force option. The 72nd was able to acquire 75 Tasers in 2016 through excess Department of Defense fallout funds, which allowed Defenders more opportunities to train more efficiently. Again the squadron excelled in training, this time through lucrative spending.

Other methods of training may be more elaborate.

Active shooter exercises ensure first responders, medics and essential personnel are up to speed on the proper protocol and procedures in the event that real-world events occur. The 72nd Security Forces Squadron assigned to Tinker also emphasizes tactical training with joint operations, including Midwest




City SWAT officers and emergency responders. Sharing training strategies has allowed Security Forces to increase on and off base response, as well as bolster the relations with our community partners.

Testing the base's readiness is consistently challenged, as there are multiple training exercises conducted throughout the year. Man-made mayhem has overwhelmed first responders, causing a multitude of life-threatening situations, and taking the right precautions could be the difference between life and death.

Defenders, consistently striving for improvement and living the core value of excellence in all they do, found themselves presented with an opportunity to refresh and recharge when the Department of the Air Force officers began shifting schedules and hours around.

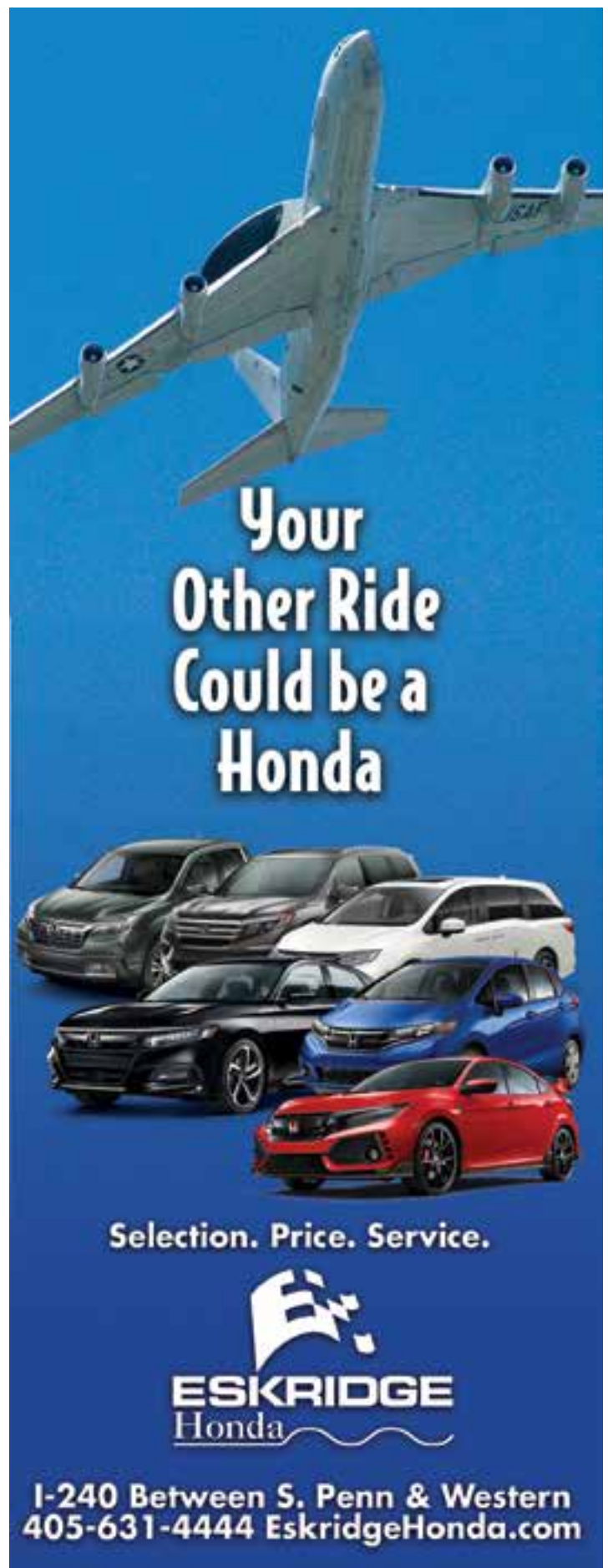
In 2015, Security Forces better allocated its manpower by operating on eight-hour shifts. Previously burning the candle at both ends

by enduring 12-hour shifts, the 72nd Security Forces Squadron's manpower is now better used to provide more base coverage. Since the adjustments were enforced, Defenders have had more energy during a shorter period, thus allowing for not only a better quality of life, but an all-around healthier, more focused member of the squadron. Four extra hours in a day resulted in Defenders having more time to go to the gym, excusing failure to train for physical fitness tests, subsequently improving test scores. Further, members could put more time into preparing healthier meal options instead of grabbing fast food or sugar-filled snack foods for quick fixes. This also meant more time to spend with family, friends or engaged in other hobbies. All things that positively contribute to a physically and mentally fit Defender, ultimately providing and sustaining a better beret-wearing member of the elite, 72nd Security Forces Squadron.



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# Tinker's Vision for the Environment

Kimberly Woodruff  
72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Tinker Air Force Base was green long before being green was cool.

The green vision started back in March 1965 when the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area established some a wildlife areas by planting 12,000 seedling trees and shrubs. However, that vision wasn't fully realized until decades later.

In 1989, the area in the southwest corner of the base was mostly just a field of tall weedy grass, marked to become ball fields. John Krupovage, Natural Resources manager with the 72nd Air Base Wing Civil Engineering Directorate, pointed out that it was their responsibility to ensure proper and sustainable management of ~~manage~~ the land and its resources as development occurred. That land and the land where the seedling trees and shrubs were planted became portions of today's 150-acre Urban Greenway.

At the Greenway dedication in 1993, then Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center Command-

er Maj. Gen. Joseph K. Spiers said, "It is now our philosophy that natural resources stewardship is our responsibility, and the Air Force and this stewardship is not mutually exclusive. They can be worked together and they can be integrated for everyone's benefit."

Talking about base expansion and industrialization, Spiers said he didn't think past base leadership "paid attention to the wildlife we have here and we often overlooked the conservation of natural resources. Today we are celebrating a different kind of commitment not to expand into certain parts of our base."

## Benefits

While planting trees does a great deal for the environment and the ecosystem, it also screens out the developed areas, making the base a greener and more livable community for residents, campers and other trail users.

"As a land holder, the federal government should be lead-



(Photo by Kelly White)



(Photo by Kelly White)

ing the way and setting a good by example," said Krupovage. "We need to be smart and balance our developed and undeveloped spaces. Just because it isn't a building doesn't mean that it doesn't have value." We should look at our woodlands, wetlands, floodplains and other natural spaces, not as constraints to development, but as opportunities to create a more vibrant, higher quality installation.

To illustrate his point, Krupovage points to the undeveloped prairie and woodland areas along the creeks. These areas serve to provide great outdoor recreational space as well as reduce negative flooding impacts on the mission. This makes us

more resilient. He also points to the oaks, a trees that hosts more lepidopteran, or moths and butterflies, larvae than any other trees. More oaks in the area equates to more food for the wildlife that make Tinker Air Force Base their home.

"It's our responsibility to maintain a healthy ecosystem," said Krupovage.

He added that by planting a mix of flora native to our region, it creates the foundation of a healthy ecosystem. "The greater the diversity of native plants, the greater the diversity of native wildlife," he said.

According to Krupovage, there are more than 350 documented fish and wildlife species



on the base. Among those species are deer, squirrels, coyotes, foxes, bobcats, beavers, owls, scissortail flycatchers, painted buntings, bobwhite quail, snakes, spiders, bats, small mammals and lizards, includ-

ing the protected Texas horned lizard.

Tinker AFB is also home to eight different species of bats. That alone is great for the environment because bats are the only major predator of night

flying insects. That means bats control the mosquito population because they eat half their body weight in bugs. According to the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife and Conservation, bats reduce the pesticide costs to the state by \$6 million to \$24 million, proving they are not only good for the ecosystem, but economical for the base.

“By building a healthy, native urban ecosystem, we strengthen our warfighter and the surrounding community by enhancing base employees’ and residents’ quality of life, while demonstrating responsible stewardship of our natural world,” said Krupovage.

### Tree City USA

Though it’s not always been easy being green, Tinker AFB has been recognized as a Tree City USA for the past 24 years.

Krupovage said that they have had to think of creative ways to preserve the tree areas. When the a gas company wanted to clear-cut 1/3 of a mile through the Greenway to replace a gas main, his team stepped in and worked with the company to develop alternatives. In the end, the gas line was installed and not a tree was lost.

Today’s plan is to restore some

of Tinker’s land back to its original prairie state. Forty-five acres in the old base housing area sits in the 500-year flood plain and are among the lands that will go back to prairie. That land will be converted to meet the federal requirement to restore floodplain functions and values; to reduce mowing, saving approximately \$25,000 annually; and to meet the mitigation requirement to replace wildlife habitat to be lost by construction of the new KC-46A site north of the Tinker Aerospace Complex.

“We are three years in and almost have the foundation of prairie with grasses established,” said Krupovage. Wildflowers are now being planted. “The ultimate long-term vision is of a self-sustaining, ecologically healthy prairie.”

Though it will take several years to get back to the prairie -- which will include an occasional prescribed burning to kill off the remaining unwanted weedy grasses and sustain prairie vigor -- Krupovage believes the efforts will result in a rich, balanced urban ecosystem providing wildlife habitat, recreational benefits, enhanced water quality, and a reconnection with our Oklahoma prairie heritage.



(Photo by Kelly White)



(Photo by Kelly White)



(Photo by Mark Hybers)





(Photo by Greg L. Davis)

# Tinker's Economic Impact

Jillian Coleman,  
Staff Writer

Seventy-five years is quite the milestone in any regard. When it benefits a state's people and prosperity, the recognition through discussion becomes even greater. Over the course of 75 years, the mere presence of Tinker Air Force Base has expanded Oklahoma's economy, experiencing an impact in everything from wages and taxes to goods and services. With the increased numbers in facility and production capabilities, employees have applied the Art of the Possible mantra to further the cost effective readiness that not only continues to support the warfighter, but keeps the economy thriving.

As the state's largest employer situated right in the heart of the Oklahoma City

metro, Tinker has evolved as its abilities in maintaining, repairing and overhauling a significant number of aircraft has skyrocketed. It's difficult to understand the magnitude of the impact the military installation has had on the state without recognizing its history, both trials and triumphs that brought Tinker to where it stands today.

When the gates first opened in 1942, what is now Tinker Air Force Base was known as Tinker Field. A movie ticket cost 27 cents in 1942, and the average wages per year ran around \$1,880. A loaf of bread ran about nine cents and the average cost of a new house was \$3,770. Initially, according to the Oklahoma Historical Society, 960 acres of land were acquired at no cost with an addition-

al 480 acres optioned at the government's promise to provide the necessary utilities and roads to develop the installation and airfield.

Construction on Tinker Field launched in the beginning of 1942 and the War Department officially activated the installation a couple months later, thus the slew of hiring workers began and the influx of economic impact ensued. A critical time for development, much of the United States was still looming in and recovering from the Depression, and the U.S. involvement in World War II changed drastically with the declaration of war to Congress Dec. 11, 1941. Bringing a major depot to the American Midwest would be no easy feat, but proved essential in its abilities to repair, modify and

produce major numbers in the Air Force fleet.

Meanwhile, this meant Oklahoma was bringing in more jobs, stimulating more wages, more taxes and producing a greater number of goods and services – all components helping to stabilize, and strengthen, an economy.

Employment would increase naturally as the demand for production and deliverables became greater. With 13,500 employees a year and a half after its activation, the depot worked competitively with Douglas Aircraft in the manufacturing of 5,000 C-47s that would deploy in support of the War in Europe and in the Pacific. B-17, B-24 and B-29 bombers were also in the arsenal maintained at Tinker Field.

After staking its claim





(Photos by April McDonald)

and proving its worth, Tinker Field continued on post-World War II, officially renaming itself as Tinker Air Force Base when the Department of the Air Force was established and the branch separated from the Army. Simultaneously, the 1940s saw further increase and expansion, as employees began working on jet engines.

Progressively, the next decade brought the U.S. involvement in Korea, which subsequently meant more – both numerically and variety – of aircraft. New aircraft included B-50s and B-36s, B-47s and B-52s and eventually the KC-135 Stratotanker. The 60s included the first C-141 Starlifter's addition as well as logistical support demanded during the trying times of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Additionally, more than 2,000 A-7 Corsair IIs, F-4 Phantoms and B-52s received depot maintenance. A hefty load requiring a substantive workforce, depth both in quality and quantity.

The 70s kept Tinker booming – quite literally – with the acquisition of the E-3 Sentry. The Airborne Warning and Control Wing



set up camp and the rotadome aircraft became a staple in Oklahoma skies. So, in the first thirty years of Midwest City hosting a major military installation handfuls of aircraft and engines were added to the Air Logistics Complex's collection, spurring thousands upon thousands of both workers and revenue.

A decade known for its grooves didn't hinder Team Tinker from surging onward and upward. The 80s saw the B-1 and B-2s onto Tinker's campus, as the stealth bomber and its counterpart were assigned to the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex. The 90s further expanded its range when

the Navy's Strategic Communications Wing ONE relocated to Tinker, and the base became a pace-setter in joining forces with what are lovingly referred to as the "Red Dirt Sailors."

Fast forward to present day and much has changed. Spanning across 5,000 acres, Tinker now hosts two 10,000 foot runways, seven thousand military personnel and 15,000 civilian employees. As one of the largest installations in the nation, Tinker is home to the OC-ALC, the 552nd Air Control Wing, 72nd Air Base Wing, 507th Air Refueling Wing, 513th Air Control Group, and the Navy's Strategic Communica-

tions Wing ONE.

As illustrious as the last 75 years of Tinker have been to the state, the next 75 years look even more promising. The Air Force will continue to flourish naturally with advancements of technology, but the Art of the Possible initiative and the ability to save time and money via modernization of information technology, will only return heaps of funds back into the Air Force. The value in saving money through modernization and development will end up boosting the support of the warfighter. Having the resources and abilities to do that are undoubtedly integral in the United States

remaining a global superpower.

In February 2015 Tinker marked another accomplishment in its acquisition of land for the new KC-46A Pegasus campus. Procuring the real estate was a joint effort involving the U.S. Air Force, the City of Oklahoma City and Oklahoma County, for a grand total of \$44 million. The future home to the next-generation aerial refueling tanker will cover nearly 160 acres of land on the south side of the installation and is expected to generate approximately 1,300 jobs; something that will further boost the community and state's economic growth.

Air Force Sustainment Center Commander Lt. Gen. Lee K. Levy II has said that the new addition to Tinker Air Force Base "will bring a number of hangars, ramp infrastructure, software in-

novation labs and engine test facilities so that the United States Air Force will have the full capabilities to take care of the platform for the decades ahead."

The KC-46A addition to Tinker will be part one of three in replacing the Air Force's aging tanker fleet. For comparison, the KC-135 turned 61 this year. Groundbreaking occurred July 2016 and new aircraft is slated to arrive in 2018.

Beyond the construction of facilities, the maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircraft, and the surplus of parts netted through supply chain, a large economic booster comes through the recent push for STEM education and STEM careers.

Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics have been core components in driving a future that can sustain and surpass the needs of the Air

Force. Continued strength and success in the Air Force depends on innovation and technical excellence, which comes from invaluable STEM education resources.

As an employer, Tinker benefits by helping feed the STEM pipeline and the state reaps the rewards in the job market as the Air Force is in dire need for individuals with an aptitude for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

As an Air Force, missions revolve around and depend upon elements of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Over its 75 years, the force has advanced and modernized simultaneously with technology. Having the proper educational resources to propel STEM initiatives forward will allow the Air Force to better develop, coordinate and assess its pro-

grams and operations.

Much progress has been made through Tinker's 75 years, both in terms of production and maintenance capabilities as well as workforce and resource availabilities. Producing more aircraft, turning flow days into astronomically low reduction days, maintaining and repairing engines, and keeping parts on the shelf all go towards supporting the warfighter and sustaining combat readiness at all times. Having the workforce that is capable of achieving those tasks in a manner that drives the cost down and provides better efficiency is what keeps the U.S. warfighter dominant. Both aspects have proven to be significant factors to the economic growth of Oklahoma, and will continue to drive the state – and the United States Air Force – onward and upward.

K-46 groundbreaking Air Force (Photo by Kelly White)





An American flag with 50 stars waves in the upper right corner. Below it, a large pile of uprooted tree trunks and debris dominates the foreground. In the background, a white water tower with the word 'MOORE' in blue letters is visible against a clear sky.

# The events that made Tinker Strong

Kimberly Woodruff  
*72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs  
and Tinker History Office*





Tinker firefighters respond to May 20, 2013, tornado in Moore, Oklahoma.

Through the years Tinker Air Force Base has encountered its share of life changing events. Tornadoes, fires, snow and ice, and an act of terrorism didn't break the Oklahoma spirit of the people who live and work at Tinker. In fact, it is that spirit that keeps Tinker Strong.

## Tornadoes

With Tinker Air Force Base situated in tornado alley, it is no wonder that tornadoes have affected the base and its personnel through the years.

Tinker's generous nature shined April 9, 1947, when then Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area sent 148 doctors, nurses, and Red Cross workers along with 5,000 pounds of medical supplies and blankets to aid victims of a destructive F5 tornado in Woodward, Oklahoma.

Additionally, seven C-54s transport aid and return 90 victims, 74 of who are critically injured, to Oklahoma City for treatment.

According to the National Weather Service, the Woodward tornado is the deadliest tornado in Oklahoma's history leaving 169 dead (101 in Oklahoma), and property damages estimated at \$9.7 million across three states.

Just months after being named Tinker Air Force Base, a devastating tornado struck the base in the late evening of March 20, 1948. Fifty airplanes were destroyed and 50 others damaged, eight people were injured and damages were estimated at \$10 million.

Just five days later, a second tornado strike hits the base and damages 84 planes, 35 beyond repair. One person was injured and damages were estimated at \$6 million.



Damage from a tornado that hit Tinker Air Force base on March 20, 1948.



Tinker remained unscathed until 1999.

On May 3, 1999, a massive F5 tornado roared through Moore, Oklahoma and surrounding areas leaving 44 dead and hundreds of others injured. Thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed across 19 counties.

At the time, the Tinker TakeOff reported that Tinker's own devastation included damaged dormitories, a missing section of the Tinker hospital roof, the outer-western security fence plucked from the ground, cars crashed into one another and horse stables yanked from the ground. Several horses were killed in the disaster.

Tinker came to the aid of many victims displaced by the storm.

The 72nd Medical Group opened a triage center in a nearby warehouse and serviced roughly 200 Del City victims, whose homes were damaged by the storm. The 507th Air Refueling Wing Airmen moved a KC-135 Stratotanker out of a hangar and opened the facility as a shelter. And, the 3rd Combat Communications Group set





Exhausted firefighter takes break from Bldg. 3001 fire in 1984.

up 300 cots for displaced victims. Additionally, military members and dependents volunteered food, drinks and necessities.

Many Tinker personnel

were affected by the loss of property, but in the days following the storm, 72nd Security Forces patrolled the outer boundaries, where the fence was ripped from the

earth. During one patrol, five days after the storm, Staff Sgt. James Day patrolled the perimeters, and lost his life when his all-terrain vehicle struck an obscured object.

The other Tinker personnel killed by the storm include Robert Siano, of the Materiel Systems Group Tinker Software Development Activity; Suzanne “Sue” Cox, of De-





Bldg. 230 fire, 1946

pot Support in Bldg. 3705; Loretta Richard, a greeter at the Tinker Base Exchange; and Tech. Sgt. Glynda Stanfield, of the 507th ARW.

While every season produces tornadoes, Tinker AFB wouldn't see that kind of destruction again until May 20, 2013, when a massive F5 tornado struck the area just south of Tinker AFB. There were 23 lives lost and thousands of homes either destroyed or severely damaged. Personnel from Tinker

AFB once again stepped up to assist with cleanup in the town of Moore, Oklahoma and surrounding areas.

According to the National Severe Storms Laboratory, 46 people died and 800 were injured. In all the 2013 tornado left more than 8,000 homes destroyed. Property damages were estimated at \$1.5 billion.

## Snow and Ice

Snow and ice certainly ar-

en't as destructive as a tornado, but it can affect the base nonetheless. In December 2007, a major ice storm hit central Oklahoma and Tinker AFB. The installation suffered severe tree damage, sagging power lines, and leaning utility poles. Personnel were allowed to stay home rather than risk their lives driving to work.

February 2, 2011, a 10-inch snow, significant icing and winds exceeding 50 mph, caused the installation

commander to close the base except for essential employees.

Closing the base has a heavy financial consequence, but one thing Tinker's leadership agreed on is that people come first and people are more important than hardware.

## Fire

January 28, 1946, a tragic fire raged through building 230 claiming the lives of ten Tinker Field workers. In a combined effort, firefighters from Tinker, Oklahoma City and Midwest City brought the fire under control.

November 17, 1976, a severe fire rages in the second floor administrative center of building 3001. The damages exceed \$4.2 million.

Almost to the day 8 years later, November 12, 1984, a major 40-hour fire began on the north end of building 3001 when a spark from a welders cutting torch ignites roofing material. In 1989, the Justice Department approved a \$4.2 million settlement of the building 3001 fire making it the largest pro-Air Force tort (negligence) settlement in history.



3001 fire, 1984



A couple consoles each other after the Moore 2013 tornado damages their home. (Photo by Jonathan Snyder)





## Alfred P. Murrah Building Bombing

April 19, 1995 was a beautiful, sunny day until 9:02 a.m. when a truck bomb exploded outside the Alfred P. Murrah building in downtown Oklahoma City, killing 168 people. Until September 11, 2001, it was the worst act of terrorism to occur on American soil.

Tinker AFB lost two of their own that day, Airman 1st Class Lakesha Levy of the 72nd Medical Group and Airman 1st Class Cartney McRaven of the 32nd Combat Communications Squadron.

Within hours of the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Tinker AFB workers rush to the scene aiding in the response. More than 1,000 military and civilian personnel took part in rescue, recovery

and relief operations.

Tinker personnel donated blood and gave money in support of the rescue efforts. The chaplains, Navy Strategic Communications Wing ONE, the 552nd Air Control Wing and the 38th Engineering Installation Wing sent troops and equipment to the bomb site.

Tinker's Fire Department personnel assisted with the task of search and rescue inside the bombed building.

Security Forces played a role in the aftermath of the bombing. The bomb squad scoured the area for additional bombs. Dog handlers, spotters and trained Belgian Malinois dogs searched the area and fortunately, no additional bombs were found.

In addition to personnel, the base provided 146 vehicles to include ambulances, buses, general purpose and







security police vehicles. Surgeons from the 72nd Medical Group helped in local hospitals in Oklahoma City.

Additionally, the base provided all weather equipment including boots, wet weather gear and hard hats so crews could continue to work in adverse weather conditions.

Tinker supported 29 aircraft, including two T-43 aircraft transporting doctors, nurses and medical personnel from Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland AFB, Texas; 15 C-141s and 11 C-5 aircraft transporting FEMA and law enforcement teams and equipment, and Air Force One when President Bill Clinton came to visit the victims and their families.

Tinker also hosted active duty and Reserve personnel from Washington, California, Virginia, Maryland, New York, Los Angeles and Texas who came to help. Quarters were provided for

approximately 200 Federal Emergency Management Agency and civilian law enforcement officials.

The Logistic Directorate supplied 10,987 gallons of fuel, \$96,546 worth of general supplies and individual equipment items, along with \$69,335 in vehicle-related costs. Additionally, more than 11,000 man hours were attributed to this operation.

In addition to the 168 people who were lost in the Oklahoma City bombing, 600 people were hospitalized, 30 children orphaned, 219 children lost one parent, 24 buildings were demolished, 333 structures were damaged, 462 people were left homeless and 2,000 vehicles were destroyed.

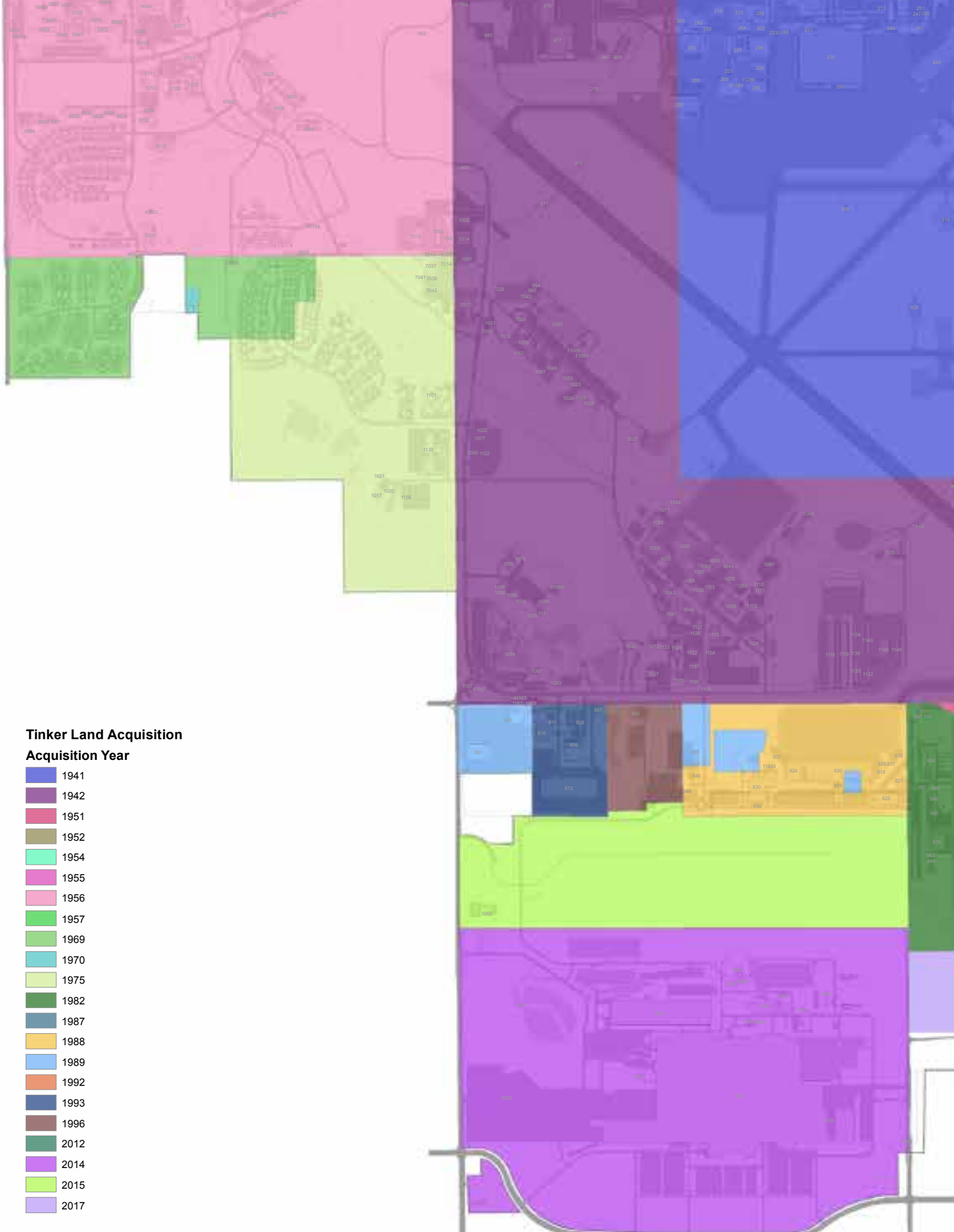
The estimated cost at the time was exceeding \$650 million, though a price can't be placed on the loved ones that were lost that day.



Airman 1st Class Cartney McRaven

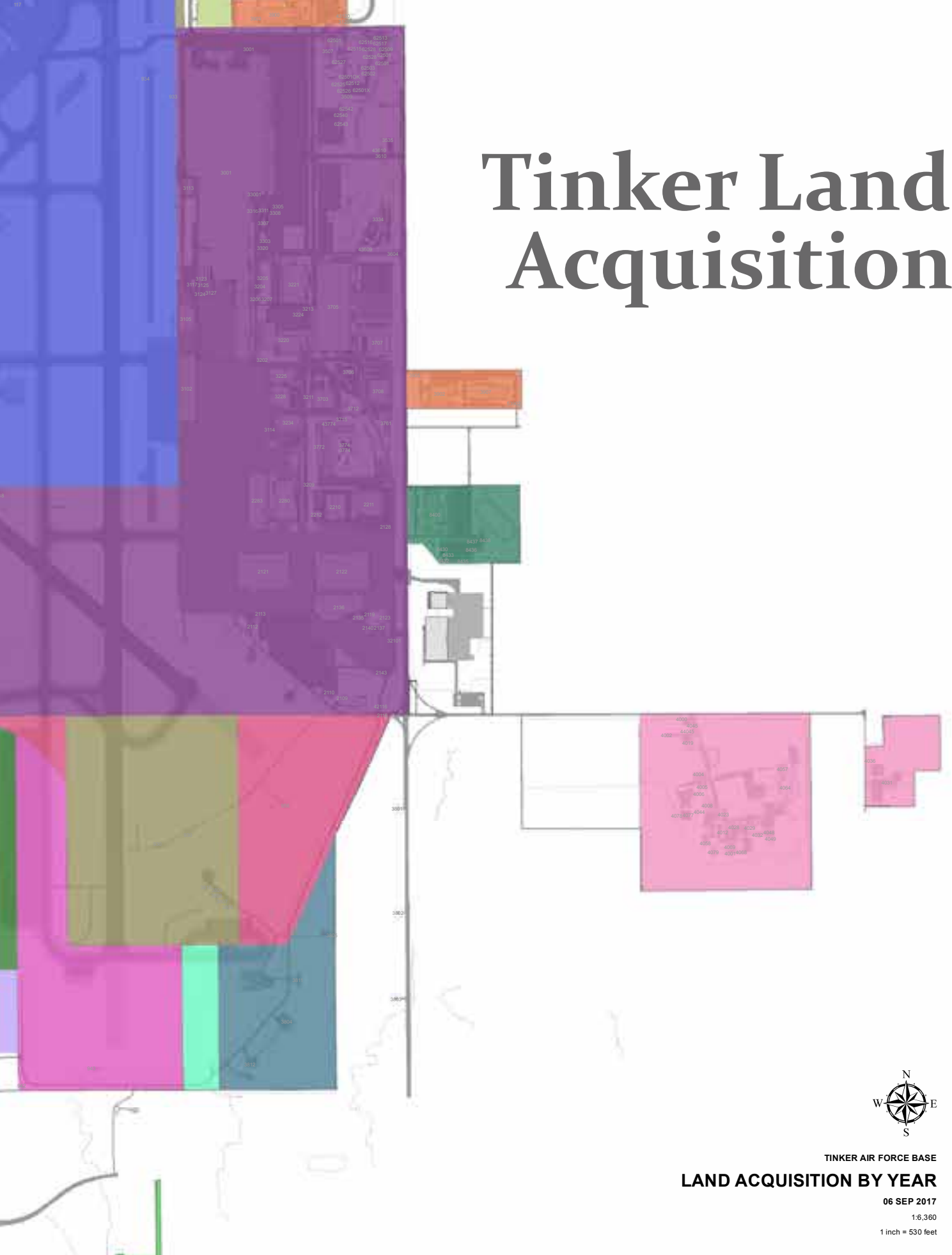


Airman 1st Class Lakesha Levy





# Tinker Land Acquisition



TINKER AIR FORCE BASE  
LAND ACQUISITION BY YEAR

06 SEP 2017

1:6,360

1 inch = 530 feet

# ‘Off We Go’

## Mrs. Tinker helps select Air Force song

April McDonald  
72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Most Tinkerites know the legacy of the base’s namesake and the contributions he made to the Army Air Corps. However, few know that his wife also made a contribution which continues to this day.

Madeline Tinker, wife of Maj. Gen. Clarence Tinker, played a pivotal role in choosing the Air Force Song.

In late 1937, Army Air Corps officials organized a publicity campaign to find a theme song. They approached the editor of Liberty Magazine, which had shown support of aviation, to sponsor a contest. The \$1,000 song contest was announced in the April 1938 issue and more than 300 entries were received within the first month. The contest garnered more interest after popular radio host Kate Smith used her national program to solicit more entries. Though they received numerous entries, not one song appealed to headquarters officials.

In August 1938, a “Ladies Song Committee,” made up of wives of prominent Air Corps officers in Washington, D.C., was formed to take on the search for the perfect song. The committee was chaired by Marilla MacDill, the wife of Col. Leslie MacDill, who was a respected music teacher.

Mrs. Tinker didn’t join the committee until Nov. 8, 1938, when Colonel MacDill asked if she would like to help his wife. “I’d love to,” Mrs. Tinker said after learning about the contest. Unfortunately, Colonel MacDill died in a plane crash the very next day and Mrs. MacDill never did anything else about the song.

In fact, no one thought about the song until the next year when Gen. Hap Arnold tapped Mildred Yount to lead the committee. Mrs. Yount, an accomplished violinist, was the wife of Maj. Gen. Barton Yount. By that time, more than 700 songs had been entered into the contest and the six committee members had a lot of work to do.

As the women searched through the pile of submissions, they had to return the rejects with a “thank you” note. It wasn’t an easy task. According to Mrs. Tinker some of the entries were “really pitiful.” Others were good, but none had the same spirit and dignity as the Army Song, which was written by Col. Edmund Guber when he was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, with the Tinkers.

As the burden of trying to find the perfect song grew, committee member Ruth Spaatz – who was married to Gen. Carl “Tooey” Spaatz – encouraged the women to simply write some words to the tune of “LaCucuracha.” Thankfully, Mrs. Yount and Mrs. Tinker didn’t agree, though they were starting to regret ever accepting the “fun” assignment.

Mrs. Tinker even tried her hand at composing a song. With her mother at the piano and General Tinker and a friend marching, singing and humming along with her, Mrs. Tinker put a few words down on paper. She wasn’t thrilled with their effort and couldn’t imagine what she titled “The Air Corps Song” ever being sung by aviators. The last three lines were:



Col. Clarence Tinker and his wife, Madeline, were on hand to see their son, 2nd Lt. Clarence L. Tinker Jr., graduate from Flight School at Kelly Field in February 1939.

“Air we conquer thee, tho the end be eternity  
And we will fly and fight with all our might  
Hail to our Air Corps.”

One day in June 1939, Mrs. Tinker and Mrs. Yount were looking over music they hadn’t returned when a young man and his wife showed up on the Tinker’s doorstep with a song. The women invited Robert Crawford to sit at the piano and play. They were pleasantly surprised with “Off We Go.”

“Now play yours, Madeline,” Mrs. Yount urged.

As Mrs. Tinker prepared to play, she inadvertently hit a note when she put her hand on the keys. The zealous young composer offered a bit of advice. “No, no,” he said. “You never start a march with a note; you start it with a chord.”

Though Mrs. Tinker politely said, “That’s very true,” her mind thought, “You young squirt!”

She removed her hands from the piano and announced, “We’ll take yours.”

General Arnold approved the song choice on Aug. 19, 1939, but the official announcement of the decision wasn’t made until Sept. 2.

*(Information for this article came from the book “Osage General: Major General Clarence L. Tinker; written by James L. Crowder)*



This Tinker family photo was taken in California around 1935. From left are Midge, Tim, Colonel Tinker, Clarence Jr. and Madeline. (Photo courtesy of Tinker History Office)





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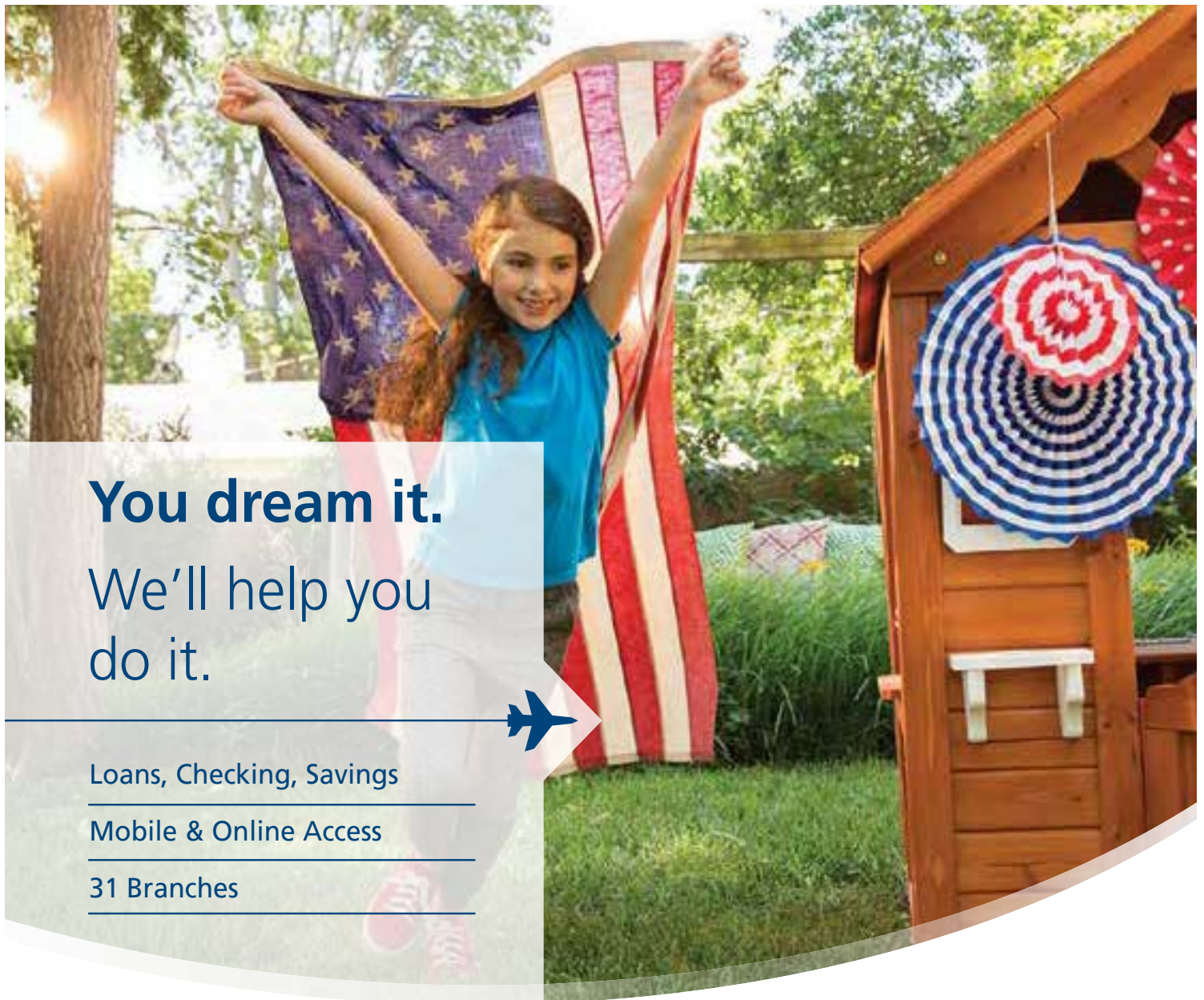
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