

A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF THE  
502D AIR BASE WING  
AND  
JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO



*Office of History  
502d Air Base Wing  
Joint Base San Antonio, Texas*

May 2014

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This pamphlet has been reviewed by the 502d Air Base Wing  
Public Affairs Office and has been cleared for public release.

## The 502d Air Base Wing

The 502d Air Base Wing traces its lineage back to 1947. On November 17, 1947, the Air Force organized and activated the 502d Air University Wing (502d AUW) at Maxwell Field, in Montgomery, Alabama. The Air Force, which became a separate service two months before, initiated a re-organization program that decentralized operations and provided for easier and quicker mobility of tactical units. As part of the re-organization, the Air Force inactivated the 42d Army Air Force Base Unit, and activated the 502d AUW in its place. Personnel and equipment from the 42d transferred to the 502d AUW. Under the command of Col. William E. Covington Jr., the 502d AUW provided logistical support and base services for Air University and other base agencies on or near Maxwell Field and nearby Gunter Field.



**Maxwell Field, circa 1944**

The 502d AUW performed the installation support mission for less than a year when the Air Force disestablished the wing on July 27, 1948 and established, organized, and activated the 3800th Air University Wing in its place July 28, 1948. The 3800th, under various designations, accomplished the installation support mission at Maxwell and Gunter for the next 44 years.

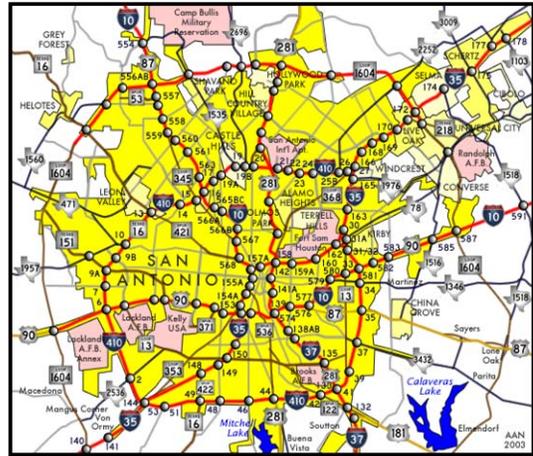
In 1992, then-Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Merrill A. McPeak ordered a major re-organization of the Air Force. As part of the re-organization, General McPeak focused on the preservation of the lineage and heritage of the Air Force's most prestigious units. The general also decided that all four-digit units should be redesignated as three-digit units. Because of this, Air Training Command (ATC) consolidated the history of the 502d AUW with the now designated 3800th Air Base Wing on Oct. 1, 1992. That same day, ATC redesignated the 3800th Air Base Wing as the 502d Air Base Wing. The 502d ABW continued to perform the installation support mission at Maxwell and Gunter until Oct. 1, 1994. That day, the 502d ABW inactivated once again and the 42d Air Base Wing took over installation support for Maxwell and Gunter.

On Nov. 9, 2005, President George W. Bush endorsed the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) and signed them into law. One of the recommendations called for the implementation of joint basing. Joint basing involved a single entity that managed the support functions of two or more adjacent Department of Defense installations. The commission felt that combined support functions eliminated duplicated efforts and created a single efficient organization. For San Antonio, the commission recommended joint basing for the three major installations around the city; Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB. The Air Force, as the lead service for Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA), looked to one of the few wings with a history of accomplishing an installation support mission, the 502d Air Base Wing.

On Aug. 1, 2009, the 502d ABW activated once again, this time to perform the vital joint base mission. Because of its central location in San Antonio and Bexar

County, Texas, the Air Force activated the wing at Fort Sam Houston. This also marked the return of a major Air Force presence to Fort Sam Houston for the first time since 1917. Unlike its prior activations, the 502d ABW did not replace a unit. The wing gradually built its staff over the next few months, while it coordinated with the support functions at Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB, and Randolph AFB, in anticipation of JBSA achieving Initial Operational Capability (IOC). When IOC occurred, the 502d ABW assumed the installation support mission for the three installations.

On Jan. 31, 2010, the 502d ABW took over responsibility as the host unit at Lackland and Randolph. On that day, the 12th Mission Support Group at Randolph inactivated and the 902d Mission Support Group activated in its place. Meanwhile, the 37th Mission Support Group at Lackland inactivated and the 802d Mission Support Group activated in its place. At Fort Sam Houston, the wing assumed IOC April 30, 2010 when the 502d Mission Support Group (502d MSG) activated. The 502d MSG also provided installation support for Camp Bullis in northwestern Bexar County. The three groups and their subordinate squadrons accomplished the various installation support missions for each JBSA installation. The U.S. Army Garrison at Fort Sam Houston remained active alongside the 502d MSG until JBSA achieved Full Operational Capability (FOC) Oct. 1, 2010. At FOC, the garrison inactivated and the Army civilian employees transferred to the Air Force.



The 502d ABW became the host unit for Fort Sam Houston, Lackland AFB and Randolph AFB. While all three installations and Camp Bullis (supported by Fort Sam Houston) made up JBSA, none shared a fence line and each maintained its long and distinguished historical identity.

## Fort Sam Houston



Quadrangle construction 1876

Fort Sam Houston encompassed an area of land just north of downtown San Antonio. The oldest JBSA installation and one of the oldest posts in the U.S. Army, the origins of Fort Sam Houston went back to 1876, when the Army began construction of a Quartermaster supply depot on 92 acres of land donated by the city of San Antonio. The Army constructed the supply depot, eventually known as the Quadrangle, from limestone cut from a local quarry. Though designed as a supply depot, the Army expanded the Quadrangle in 1877-78, to house the Headquarters, Department of Texas, as well as the 1880 construction of fifteen houses — the Staff Post — for the officers who staffed the department. Line officers and Soldiers lived in tents and

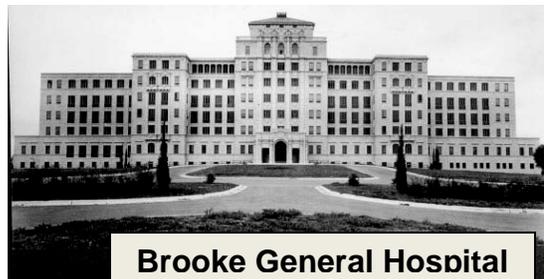
temporary wooden barracks. The post became known simply as The Post at San Antonio.

The Army continued expanding the Post at San Antonio throughout the 1880s to meet its needs in the western territories, to include the addition of the Infantry Post. Despite the growth and significance of the installation, it still bore the name “Post at San Antonio.” This changed with the issuance of General Orders No. 99 Sept. 11, 1890. Acting Secretary of War L.A. Grant signed the orders which designated the Post at San Antonio as Fort Sam Houston. Named for the larger-than-life Texas general, the post — a mere supply depot 14 years earlier — now was the second largest Army post in the US.

Following the Spanish-American War, another major expansion brought a Cavalry Post and Light Artillery Post. The construction of support buildings, barracks and housing pushed Fort Sam Houston’s boundaries further. With additional land purchased for training areas, the post soon became the largest post in the Army. With the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution, Fort Sam Houston was used as a staging point for troops mobilized as a show of force along the border in 1911 and again for the 1916 Punitive Expedition.

The Army established Camp Wilson on the east side of Fort Sam Houston in 1916 to handle the troops needed in Mexico. In 1917, Camp Wilson was renamed Camp Travis and another expansion occurred in order to support training a division. Camp Travis became an induction and training center for Soldiers who soon went to France during World War I. After the war, Camp Travis became a demobilization center for returning troops and remained open into the 1920s to house the 2d Division. Camp Travis was absorbed into Fort Sam Houston in 1922. Fort Sam Houston’s boundaries now stretched to the north and northeast and settled to its current boundary.

In the late 1920s, the Army began improving the post’s infrastructure. The hastily erected buildings on Camp Travis quickly deteriorated after World War I and the Army planned improvements using city planning techniques. From 1929 to 1939, new housing and support buildings replaced the failing structures. The use of the popular Spanish Colonial Revival architecture gave the post a distinctive appearance. The construction included a new eight-story, 418-bed hospital which opened in 1938. The War Department soon funded another 200-bed addition to the building to stem potential overcrowding. In 1942, the hospital was named Brooke General Hospital.



**Brooke General Hospital**

During World War II, Fort Sam Houston once again became packed with soldiers. Another 500 temporary buildings went up — 400 in the first year alone — during the war to house the Soldiers who transitioned through the post. A recruit reception center at Dodd Field, the airfield on the northern tip of the post, processed up

to 1,000 recruits a day. From 1943 to 1946, Dodd also contained a prisoner of war camp for 1,600 Axis prisoners.

Brooke General Hospital also continued to expand. During the war, many of the temporary buildings that went up saw use as wards, administration buildings or staff housing. Four barracks built in the 1930s were converted to hospital Annexes I, II, III and V, while a new building, completed in 1942, became Annex IV, a psychiatric ward. This pushed the capacity to 7,800 beds and the entire complex became Brooke Hospital Center in 1945.

At the end of the war, Fort Sam Houston again became a demobilization point and 500,000 Soldiers were processed back to the civilian world. The growth of San Antonio, as well as improvements in weapons range and infantry division needs, meant Fort Sam Houston could no longer support a combat mission. The 1946 transfer of the Army's Medical Field Service School to the post marked the beginning of Fort Sam Houston's role as the home of Army medicine. At the same time, Brooke Hospital Center and several other medical activities on the post were all organized as Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC).

During the Korean War, Fort Sam Houston again became a reception center for draftees and new recruits. The Medical Training Center also activated to train enlisted medical personnel. In the meantime, BAMC provided treatment for Soldiers wounded in Korea. In the years after the war, the Medical Training Center continued to train medics for the Army. In 1967 the Medical Training Center reached its peak of 29,000 graduates. In 1972, a reorganization of the Medical Field Service School resulted in its redesignation as the Academy of Health Sciences. The reorganization consolidated the Army's medical training, making the Academy one of the largest medical training institutions in the world. In 1991, it was redesignated as the Army Medical Department Center and School (AMEDDC&S), with the Academy of Health Sciences becoming the school arm of the AMEDDC&S.

BAMC also continued its growth, adding new clinics in 60s, 70s and 80s. Despite its growth and reputation for healthcare, it remained scattered across Fort Sam Houston. In 1987, officials broke ground on a new hospital facility. The state-of-the-art medical center was dedicated in 1996. The 2005 BRAC not only made Fort Sam Houston a part of Joint Base San Antonio, it also consolidated medical training for all branches of the military on the old post.

## **Randolph**

The Army built Randolph Field, the "Showplace of the Air Force," on a tract of land just outside what is now Universal City. The need for Randolph began soon after the enactment of the Air Corps Act of 1926. The act, which changed the name of the Army Air Service to the Army Air Corps, provided a five-year expansion program for the under-strength Air Corps, and established two new brigadier general positions for the Army. One of these new positions placed a general officer in charge of all flying training for the Air Corps. Brig. Gen. Frank P. Lahm, later known as the "Father of Randolph

Field,” filled this position first. General Lahm soon realized he needed another air field dedicated to flying training when the training requirements of the Air Corps grew too great for Brooks and Kelly Fields alone. The initial site chosen for the new field was a place known as Calf Hill, located less than 10 miles east of the city on Hedwig Road, just south of the present site of Woodlake Country Club. However, because an essential tract of land could not be obtained, and speculation caused prices to rise, General Lahm dismissed the site. In November 1927 another 19 sites were submitted to General Lahm for his consideration. Finally, Lahm selected a 2,300-acre tract near Schertz for the new field.

In December 1927, the city of San Antonio sought appropriations in Washington for the field, but found a Congress not in a buying mood. The government already owned suitable land in Florida and California. Additionally, other cities vying for the new field lined up to give land free to the government, so San Antonio needed to act fast. Within a couple of weeks, the city council devised a plan to purchase the land. San Antonio notified Congress Dec. 31, 1927 that it had land available to give the Air Corps as a gift. The War Department accepted the land in August 1928.

During the search for a new training field, a young first lieutenant named Harold Clark busied himself designing his ideal “Air City” on the back of dispatch sheets while assigned as a dispatch officer at the Kelly Field motor pool. Prior to entering the Army, Clark trained as an architect and he designed an airfield unlike any already built.



**Randolph Field 1930**

Clark’s design centered the building area on the field, laid out the streets concentrically, and put the aircraft ramps and runways on three sides forming a square perimeter around a circular building layout. Clark took his drawings to General Lahm to consider for the new field. Impressed with the lieutenant’s designs, Lahm assigned Clark to his office in December 1927, so the lieutenant could devote full time to developing his design.

After the site for the new field was selected, a committee of officers was organized to select a name for the new installation. Membership of the committee included Capt William M. Randolph, a native of Austin and Adjutant of the Advanced Flying School at Kelly. While serving on the committee, Captain Randolph died in aircraft accident. While on a return flight to Kelly, his AT-4 crashed on takeoff from Gorman Field, Texas, likely due to strong winds. A member of the committee suggested the new field be named for Randolph. Randolph Field was formally dedicated in front of a crowd in excess of 15,000 people on June 20, 1930. Captain Randolph’s widow, Mrs. Cornelia Read Randolph, raised the first flag over the base.

On Oct. 1, 1931, the Air Corps Training Center moved its headquarters to Randolph. A month later, on Nov. 2, the first pilot training class of 210 flying cadets and 99 student officers began their primary pilot training. Student officers identified personnel already in the Army. West Point graduates and line officers who transferred to the Air Corps represented most student officers, but students also included enlisted

pilot trainees, and reserve and National Guard officers. Flying cadets (renamed aviation cadets in 1941) encompassed those with no prior military service. The military training for cadets modeled the programs at West Point and Annapolis. In fact, Randolph quickly became known as the “West Point of the Air” and getting accepted into the program was difficult. Most applicants failed to make it through the initial screening process. Those who did make it to Randolph went into an intense eight-month-long program consisting of primary and basic pilot courses, of which half would make it through.



**Cadets in flight training**

Primary training continued at Randolph until 1939 when the Air Corps contracted this primary training out to civilian schools, and the mission shifted to basic pilot training. Cadet training at Randolph continued until March 1943, when the Army replaced it with the Central Instructor School. For the next few years, the mission at Randolph turned to training instructors for all three phases (basic, primary and advanced) of the flying training program. During this time, the Central Instructor School trained 15,396 pilots as instructors. Since that time, pilot instructor training remained a central part of Randolph’s mission.

In September 1947, the Air Force became a separate service. Effective Jan. 13, 1948, it renamed its major installations as air force bases. The outbreak of the Korean War rushed B-29 combat crew training to Randolph, due to the need for bomber crews overseas. Basic pilot training at first moved to the west runway to make room for the B-29, but eventually transferred to Craig AFB, Alabama. From 1950 until 1956 -- when B-29 training ended at Randolph -- 21,519 crewmembers graduated. Other training during the 1950s included C-119 instrument training, KC-97 and B-57 crew training and the USAF Helicopter School. A number of facilities were also constructed during this period, including Wherry housing, an annex to the base elementary school (August 1954), and Chapel No.2 (April 1955). Between July and October 1957, Air Training Command (redesignated Air Education and Training Command in 1992) moved its headquarters from Scott AFB, Illinois, to Randolph.

In the early 1960s, new training aircraft began arriving at Randolph. The T-38A and T-37A arrived in 1961 and 1965 respectively, and replaced the older T-33 and T-34. The T-39 also arrived in 1961, for use in instrument training, and remained until 1989. During the same time, Randolph gained two new residents, the Air Force Military Personnel Center (now Air Force Personnel Center) and the USAF Recruiting Service (now Air Force Recruiting Service).

Shortly after the end of the Vietnam War, Air Training Command established a pilot requalification training course for more than 150 USAF pilots held prisoners of war. Operation Homecoming began May 2, 1973 and ended Nov. 12, 1976. After that, Randolph entered a long period of stability until the 1988 BRAC brought navigator training to Randolph in 1992, along with a fleet of T-43s to support it as a flying classroom. Navigator training became joint training with the Navy in the 1990s. Despite

a two-year period when it transferred to Pensacola, Florida, joint navigator training remained at Randolph. In 1999, electronic warfare officer training arrived at Randolph. In 2004, Air Force navigators and electronic warfare officer combined to become a single combat systems officer. The 2005 BRAC transferred combat systems officer training to Pensacola.

In 1993, the T-1A arrived to train instructors to prepare student pilots for assignments to airlift and tanker aircraft, as did Introduction to fighter fundamentals training and a fleet of AT-38s (a T-38A modified to drop a practice bomb). Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals departed Randolph in 2001, only to return in 2007. During the 2000s, the Air Force upgraded all AT-38s and T-38As to T-38C models and Randolph received theirs in 2004. Randolph also gained a fleet of the brand new T-6A in 2000, which replaced the outdated T-37, the last of which flew out in 2007.

## **Lackland**

Lackland Air Force Base dates from July 4, 1942, when the War Department separated the part of Kelly Field lying west of Leon Creek and made it an independent installation, naming it the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center. Prior to 1941, the portion of Kelly Field beyond Leon Creek known as "the Hill" served at various times as a bivouac area and bombing range for advanced aviation cadets going back to 1922. Construction of an Air Corps replacement-training center on the Hill began on 15 June 1941. The first class of 1,906 cadets began training in mid-November 1941, even though barracks were not ready until mid-December. The demand for aircrew became urgent after Pearl Harbor and inductees picked as aviation cadets began to pour into Kelly Field. On April 30, 1942, the War Department redesignated the replacement-training center as a preflight school and established a classification center. This expansion in classification operations caused a need for additional facilities, the construction of which began in June 1942.

Managing this explosion of activity on the Hill became increasingly burdensome for the commander of Kelly's advanced flying school, who focused on the urgent demand for bomber pilots. The Adjutant General took action June 26, 1942, and directed that the Hill be separated from Kelly Field and operated as an independent military installation designated as the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center. The Gulf Coast Army Air Forces Training Center, an intermediate higher headquarters, formally transferred the preflight school, the classification center, a station hospital, an Air Force band and several other units to the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center, activated on July 4, 1942.

With general mobilization following Pearl Harbor, the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center grew rapidly. Approximately 90,000 candidates for flying training passed through the preflight school. On Nov. 5, 1942, the SAACC Recruit Detachment received the first raw recruits for enlisted basic military training to fill the ranks of the Gulf Coast Training Command. Basic military training occurred in a tent city on the site of present-day Wilford Hall Medical Center.

The San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center performed a variety of other training missions late in the war; among them were officer candidate training for enlisted men, indoctrination for officers directly commissioned, and preparation for officers to pursue advanced college courses. The Center closed June 30, 1945, and the next day the Army redesignated the installation as the San Antonio District, Army Air Forces Personnel Distribution Command. The new mission involved receiving soldiers from the overseas theaters and reassigning or separating them. With that task largely accomplished by early 1946, the base became subject to the general demobilization.

Instead of closing operations on the Hill, as happened to most wartime training camps, the Army redesignated it as the Army Air Forces Military Training Center Feb. 1, 1946, and gave it the basic military training mission for the Army Air Force. Reinforcing the military training center's indoctrination mission, the Officer Candidate School also transferred there from Maxwell Field, Alabama. On Nov. 1, 1946, Air Training Command redesignated the military training center as the Indoctrination Division. While all the name changes reflected mission changes, the base still lacked an identity. The War Department finally resolved the identity crisis July 11, 1947, by naming the base for Brig. Gen. Frank D. Lackland. General Lackland originated the idea of an aviation cadet reception and training center at Kelly.



"The Gateway to the Air Force" accurately described Lackland after 1946. Much of the time, it had sole responsibility for the military indoctrination of basic trainees. Only during the Berlin Airlift crisis and the Korean and Vietnam Wars did the Air Force find it necessary to conduct basic military training elsewhere. During the Korean War, Sheppard AFB, Texas, Parks AFB, California, and Sampson AFB, New York, also provided

recruit training until shortly after the war ended. Crowded conditions and a meningitis outbreak caused Lackland to shift some basic trainees to Amarillo AFB, Texas, between Feb. 17, 1966, and Dec. 11, 1968. With those exceptions, after February 1946 all enlisted airmen began their Air Force careers at Lackland. Over the same period, Lackland had a large role in training future officers. Officer Candidate School produced reserve officers from the enlisted corps until July 1962; the Officer Training School activated July 1, 1959, and commissioned college graduates with no prior service, as well as airmen who had earned undergraduate degrees. In 1993, the Officer Training School moved to Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

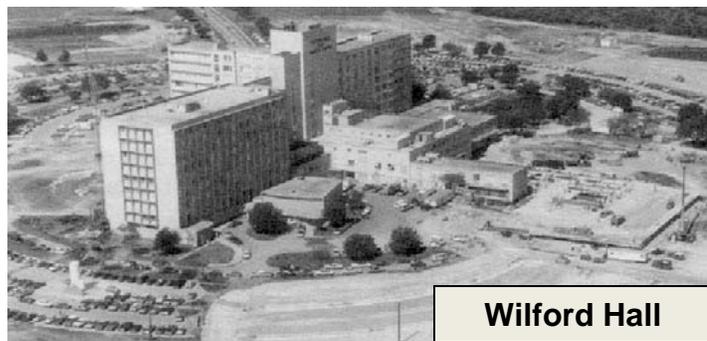
Although Lackland's technical training mission grew out of the Korean War, Lackland gained its first permanent technical training responsibility in May 1954, when the Officer Candidate School implemented the USAF Recruiting Course. The base received its first technical training unit Nov. 20, 1956, when the 3275th Technical Training Group transferred from Parks AFB, California, bringing with it all air police training. In July 1957, cryptographic equipment maintenance training transferred from

Scott AFB, Illinois. In 1958, the base gained two new missions connected with air police training: the USAF Marksmanship Center and a sentry dog handler course.

Teaching English to military personnel from foreign countries became another critical mission on Lackland. Begun informally in 1953, the Air Force established a formal English training program in May 1954, which gave way to the USAF Language School, which activated Jan. 1, 1960. The Department of Defense took over the mission in July 1966, and gave it to the Defense Language Institute, under the executive agency of the U.S. Army. In October 1976, the Air Force became the executive agent for the Defense Language Institute English Language Center.

Despite the basic and technical training missions, Lackland's infrastructure still relied on temporary buildings dating to World War II. Facilities erected initially in 1941, and in two mobilizations (1942-1943 and 1951) dominated the Lackland landscape. Most of the approximately 1,400 buildings erected for World War II were in place when the Korean War began in June 1950. Korean War manpower needs greatly exceeded Lackland's capacity, even with other bases joining in the basic military training effort and resulted in another mobilization building project to increase the base's trainee/student capacity.

In 1957, Lackland got its first visible sign of permanence. A new nine-story, 500-bed hospital dominated the north rim of the base, displacing most of the 94 temporary buildings that had made up the hospital complex. The hospital added a 500-bed wing in 1961. On the east side of the base in 1971, the main Base Exchange complex



**Wilford Hall**

took the place of 109 World War II barracks torn down between 1966 and 1971. At the same time, on the west side of Lackland, contractors built more facilities for recruit housing and training. Removing the old temporary structures as rapidly as possible became a priority in 1976 and construction in the 1980s mostly focused on new unaccompanied permanent personnel quarters and technical trainee dormitories. Other projects tackled crumbling infrastructure: sewers, sewage treatment, water mains and roads.

With the closure of Kelly AFB April 1, 2001, the Air Force transferred the airfield operations mission and real property west of Kelly's hanger line to Lackland. For the first time in its history, Lackland gained a runway, but training remained its most visible mission.

## **Notable events in the history of the Joint Base San Antonio installations**

- 1886** In September 1886, famed Apache leader Geronimo, and his band of Chiricahua Apache, negotiated their surrender with the 4th Cavalry. Geronimo and the Apache arrived in San Antonio by train and are held in the Quadrangle for six weeks, until being transferred to Fort Pickens, Florida.
- 1910** In February 1910, Lt. Benjamin Foulois arrived at Fort Sam Houston with a handful of enlisted men, a model 1909-A Wright Flyer, and orders to teach himself to fly. On March 2, 1910, Foulois launched the aircraft — Signal Corps No. 1 — from the parade field, and subsequently launched the history of the Air Force.
- 1911** In early 1911, President Woodrow Wilson ordered a show of force in response to the start of a revolution in Mexico. Some 12,000 troops assembled in a maneuvering camp established east of, and adjacent to Fort Sam Houston. Aircraft fly reconnaissance missions along the border for the first time.
- 1911** On May 10, 1911, Lt. George E.M. Kelly dies when his plane crashed on Fort Sam Houston. Maj Gen W. H. Carter bans any further flights on the post.
- 1915** In November 1915, aircraft return to Fort Sam Houston when the now activated 1st Aero Squadron is transferred from Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The squadron is posted to an airfield built on Fort Sam Houston's Cavalry Remount Station.
- 1916** In March 1916, Pancho Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico. During the raid, 18 civilians and soldiers are killed. Gen. John J. Pershing leads a force into Mexico to hunt down Villa. The 1st Aero Squadron is deployed to support Pershing in Mexico.
- 1917** In April 1917, the US entered World War I, and the now-activated 3d Aero Squadron departed Fort Sam Houston and landed a few miles to the southwest of San Antonio, at a new installation east of Leon Creek. By the summer, the Army designated the installation as Kelly Field.
- 1917** In May and June 1917, Camp Bullis and Camp Stanley are established. Both make up the Leon Springs Military Reservation.
- 1918** The U.S. Army Balloon School arrived at Fort Sam Houston in January 1918. They stay in the post's barracks for three months until Camp John Wise is ready in April. Camp John Wise remained open until 1919, when it closed and balloon training moved to Brooks Field.
- 1918** Organized and trained on Camp Travis, the 90th Division deployed to France in June 1918. The 90th participated in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives.

- 1918** Beginning in late September 1918, the Spanish Influenza pandemic reached San Antonio. More than 4,000 military personnel became infected. Although fatalities occurred, planning and personnel dispersment kept the numbers low.
- 1925** In June 1925, the 12th Observation Squadron is transferred to Fort Sam Houston's Remount Station to support the 2d Division. The station is designated Dodd Field in May 1928. Active flying operations ceased in October 1931 when the 12th is transferred to Brooks Field, south of San Antonio.
- 1926** In 1926, cameras rolled in San Antonio for the filming of the movie "Wings." Fort Sam Houston provided equipment used to reenact the Battle of St. Mihiel filmed at Camp Bullis. Aircraft used in the filming flew from Kelly Field. "Wings" earned the first-ever Academy Award for Best Picture.
- 1933** In 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps utilized Camp Bullis as a processing center for 4,000 civilians who went to work on public works projects during the Great Depression.
- 1937** A 1937 exercise at Camp Bullis, along with subsequent exercises through 1939, led to the development of the triangular division. This became the basic structure of modern army units through World War II.
- 1942** The 63d Troop Carrier Group flew C-47s at Dodd Field from September to November 1942. This is the last known use of Dodd for flying operations. In 1943, a POW camp is established and used until 1946. The area is redeveloped for Wherry Housing in 1949.
- 1944** On New Year's Day 1944, the Randolph Field Ramblers played the University of Texas Longhorns to a 7-7 tie in the Cotton Bowl. Randolph remains the only military installation to ever play in the Cotton Bowl.
- 1947** On Sept. 18, 1947, the Army Air Force is separated from the Army and designated the United States Air Force. In 1948, Randolph, Lackland, Kelly and Brooks are designated Air Force Bases.
- 1958** On Feb. 9, 1958, Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Donald G. Farrell becomes America's first space traveler when he enters a space capsule simulator at Randolph for a week long endurance test. Farrell's simulated trip to the moon proved that a human could endure the confines of space flight.
- 1967** Nemo, an 85-pound German Shepherd, is retired to Lackland from active service as a sentry dog — the first to be so honored — June 23, 1967. On Dec. 4, 1966, Nemo, severely wounded, attacked a Viet Cong guerilla who shot Nemo's handler, then crawled over the handler to shield him, saving his life.
- 1968** In May 1968, future U.S. President George W. Bush graduated basic training at Lackland. He is the only person to go from Airman Basic to Commander in Chief.

# **Lineage and Honors of the 502d Air Base Wing**

## **Lineage**

Established as 502d Air University Wing and organized Nov. 17, 1947. Disestablished July 27, 1948.

Consolidated Oct. 1, 1992 with the 3800th Air University Wing, which was established and organized July 28, 1948.

Redesignated as: 3800th Air Base Wing Sept. 1, 1954

3800th Air Base Group Jan. 2, 1979

3800th Air Base Wing July 21, 1983

502d Air Base Wing Oct. 1, 1992

Inactivated Oct. 1, 1994.

Activated Aug. 1, 2009.

## **Assignments:**

Air University, Nov. 17, 1947-Oct. 1, 1994.

Air Education and Training Command, Aug. 1, 2009-present.

## **Stations:**

Maxwell Field (later, Maxwell AFB), Alabama, Nov. 17, 1947-Oct. 1, 1994.

Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Aug. 1, 2009-present.

## **Commanders:**

### **502d Air University Wing:**

Col. William E. Covington Jr., Nov. 17, 1947

### **3800th Air University Wing:**

Col. Sydney D. Grubbs Jr., June 17, 1948 (Transitioned from 502d A UW to 3800<sup>th</sup> A UW)

Col. Leslie G. Mulzer, Jan. 8, 1949

Col. Stoyte O. Ross, Nov. 1, 1951

Col. James P. Newberry, June 1, 1952

### **3800th Air Base Wing:**

Col. James G. Pratt, March 28, 1953 (Transitioned from 3800<sup>th</sup> A UW to 3800<sup>th</sup> ABW)

Col. Mills S. Savage, Nov. 1, 1955

Col. Clyde C. Harris Jr., May 5, 1958

Col. William J. Wrigglesworth, June 1, 1961

Col. Wilson R. Wood, Aug. 1, 1963

Col. Rudolph B. Walters, Jan. 12, 1967  
Col. Paul A. Jones, April 2, 1968  
Col. Lattie A. Ritter Jr., Jan. 21, 1970  
Col. Charles G. Weber, Aug. 16, 1970  
Col. Andrew J. Chapman, Nov. 12, 1972  
Col. James H. Hiley, June 15, 1974  
Col. David T. Stockman, Aug. 18, 1975

**3800th Air Base Group:**

Col. Robert D. Hartwig, Sept. 1, 1978 (Transitioned from 3800<sup>th</sup> ABW to 3800<sup>th</sup> ABG)  
Col. Robert W. McClain, June 1, 1979  
Col. William D. Palmer, July 7, 1980  
Col. Donald F. Brackett, April 15, 1982

**3800th Air Base Wing:**

Col. Vardaman F. Johnson, June 30, 1983 (Transitioned from 3800<sup>th</sup> ABG to 3800<sup>th</sup> ABW)  
Col. Mark J. Dierlam, March 25, 1985  
Col. David J. Vogl, June 20, 1988

**502d Air Base Wing:**

Col. Gerald R. Adams, June 18, 1991 (Transitioned from 3800<sup>th</sup> ABW to 502d ABW)  
Brig. Gen. Albert D. Jensen, Aug. 4, 1993  
Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Waskow, Aug. 9-Oct. 1, 1994  
Brig. Gen. Leonard A. Patrick, Aug. 1, 2009  
Brig. Gen. Theresa C. Carter, July 18, 2011  
Brig. Gen. Robert D. LaBrutta, May 2013-present

**Operations.** Provided logistics support and base services for Air University and other base agencies on or near Maxwell Air Force Base and Gunter Annex, 1947-1994. Since Aug. 1, 2009, provided logistical support and base operating support for Joint Base San Antonio, including Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base and Randolph Air Force Base.

**Service Streamers.** None.

**Campaign Streamers.** None.

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers.** None.

**Decorations:** Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: Jan. 1, 1965-Dec. 31, 1966; July 1, 1972-June 30, 1973; Jan. 1, 1986-Dec. 31, 1987; June 1, 1992-May 30, 1994.

