



Air Force Bases: Active Air Force Bases Within the United States of America on 17 September 1982 (Reference Series) (Volume 1)

Office of Air Force History, U.S. Air Force

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In April 1917, as the United States entered World War I, the Aviation Section of the U.S. Army Signal Corps had only a handful of usable flying fields. This number quickly grew, ultimately exceeding 40 by the end of the war. Several uncompleted fields at the time of the Armistice were abandoned, and in the period between the world wars, the number of fields decreased more until only a relatively few were in use in 1939, when the country again began to rebuild its land and air forces. By the end of 1943, these few fields had grown to an astounding peak of 783-345 main bases, 116 subbases, and 322 auxiliary fields - a number not including the many depots and ranges. Of the 89 bases described in this volume, only Langley and Kelly, which were both under construction in April 1917, remain from the pre-World War I era. Eight others were completed during that war, 11 were established between the wars, and 11 more have been opened since the end of World War II. The remaining 57 bases were built as part of the tremendous growth during the latter war. This volume deals, in a statistical format, with the histories of these bases, a topic of particular interest both inside and outside the Air Force. The book provides a ready reference for basic information on active USAF bases within the United States as of 1982, the 75th anniversary of military aviation in the United States and the date established as the cutoff for research in assembling this volume. The history contained in these bases is as old and as new as the history of aviation: the area where the Wright brothers conducted their early experiments is now included within Wright Patterson AFB, while tests of the latest experimental aircraft and space vehicles take place at Edwards AFB. Each base has its own special history and its own place in history. Air Force Bases should serve as a convenient resource for those interested in dates of activation, occupancy, closure, and transferral; in lists of units stationed at each installation; in the chief support organizations; and in the names of commanders. While numerous unit or organizational histories are available, much less has been written about the bases from which these units actually operated and trained. This volume fills that void.

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