

*A Heritage Guide to the 87th Air Base Wing
and
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey*



2021

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 87th Air Base Wing (87 ABW) and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL). As the only tri-Service installation in the United States military, the men and women of JB MDL provide to the Nation's defense across 42,000 acres, supporting over 88 different mission partners. The history of JB MDL brings together the unique and accomplished histories of McGuire Air Force Base (AFB), Fort Dix and Naval Air Engineering Station Lakehurst, providing a foundation for the combined history that has been made since the first of October, 2009, when the 87 ABW officially activated bringing together over 50,000 military and civilian personnel. As New Jersey's second-largest employer, the base contributes more than \$6 billion annually to the State's economy and supports more than 65,000 off-base businesses.

The heritage captured in this publication does not cover the entire history of the military installations prior to the merge of the three military installations, but it does provide an insight into the proud heritage of each base before the concept of joint basing was conceived. It's important for military and civilian personnel who call JB MDL home, to appreciate the work and sacrifices that were made before them. In doing so, it allows for a better appreciation of where their respective units came from and how they are adding to that rich heritage every day.

The 87 ABW History Office is responsible for collecting information concerning wing events, including operational documents and photographs, as well as memorabilia. Additionally, the office supports installation units through education, research and U.S. Air Force (USAF) heraldry management, providing support in the coordination and approval processes for unit emblems. The office is located in building 2901 and can be reached via telephone at (609) 754-3350.



James J. Warrick, GS-12, DAFC
87 ABW Historian

LINEAGE AND HONORS

87th Air Base Wing

Lineage: Established as 87th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, on 26 May 1952. Activated in the Reserve on 15 June 1952. Inactivated on 15 February 1953. Redesignated 87th Tactical Airlift Wing on 31 July 1985. Redesignated 87th Air Base Wing on 19 February 2009. Activated on 3 March 2009.

Assignments: 2d Air Reserve District, 15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953
Eighteenth Air Force (Air Forces Transportation), 3 Mar 2009 – 5 Dec 2010
USAF Expeditionary Center, 6 December 2010 - Present

Components: *Groups:*

87th Troop Carrier, 15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953
87th Air Base Group, 15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953
87th Mission Support, 3 March 2009
87th Medical, 3 March 2009
87th Civil Engineer, 1 July 2015

Squadrons:

87th Food Service, 26 May 1952 - 1 February 1953
87th Mission Support, 3 March 2009 – 3 April 2009
87th Services, 3 March 2009 – 3 April 2009
87th Installations, 26 May 1952 – 1 February 1953
87th Communications, Fighter, Two Engine, 2 June 1949 – 1 February 1953
87th Force Support, 3 April 2009 - Present
87th Air Police, 26 May 1952 – 1 February 1953
87th Security Police, 12 October 1984 – 18 February 2009
87th Comptroller, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Security Forces, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Civil Engineer, 3 March 2009 – Present
787th Civil Engineer, 1 July 2015 – Present
87th Communications, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Logistics Readiness, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Contracting, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Medical Operations, 3 March 2009 – 11 July 2019
87th Operational Medical Readiness, 11 July – Present
87th Medical Support, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Aerospace Medicine, 3 March 2009 – 11 July 2019
87th Healthcare Operations, 11 July – Present
87th Dental, 3 March 2009 – 11 July 2019

Honors:

Campaign Streamers:

Global War on Terror

Decorations:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards:

- 1 April 2009 – 30 September 2010
- 1 October 2010 – 30 September 2011
- 1 October 2011 – 30 September 2012
- 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013
- 1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014
- 1 October 2014 – 30 September 2015
- 1 October 2015 – 30 September 2016
- 1 October 2018 – 30 September 2020

Stations: Atterbury AFB, Indiana, 15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953.

Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, 3 March 2009 – Present.

Aircraft: C-47 *Skytrain*, 1953

T-7, *Hawker Hunter*, 1952-53

C-46, *Commando*, 1952-53

B-25, *Mitchell*, 1952-1953

T-6, *Texan*, 1953

Commanders:

Colonel George C. Riley

Brigadier General Gina M. Grosso

Colonel John M. Wood

Colonel James C. Hodges

Colonel Frederick D. Thaden

Colonel Neil R. Richardson

Colonel Bridget V. Gigliotti

15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953

3 March 2009 – 24 June 2011

24 June 2011 – 24 July 2013

24 July 2013 – 25 June 2015

25 June 2015 – 25 June 2017

25 June 2017 – 26 July 2019

26 July 2019 – Present

Operations: Replaced non-flying 923d Reserve Training Wing. Trained under supervision of 2d Air Reserve District and 2466th Air Force Reserve Training Center, using aircraft assigned to the center. Experienced difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified Airmen. Replaced in February 1953 by 434th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium. Assumed host and support wing responsibilities for the newly formed Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

EMBLEM, SIGNIFICANCE AND MOTTO



Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The eagle represents the air power that projects from the unit's support. The anchor represents the Wing's support for seaborne joint forces. The cannon balls represent the unit's support for powerful ground forces. The Latin motto, "UT UNUM VINCERE," translates to "Win as One".

THE PATH FROM BASE REALIGNMENT AND CLOSURE TO JOINT BASING



Congressman Jim Saxton, NJ 3rd District and fourth highest-ranking member of the House Armed Service Committee (Stock Photo, ca. 1990's)

The road to becoming a Joint Base was somewhat long and arduous. Over the course of nearly thirty years, a series of key events occurred requiring the need for leaders from the state and local governments to take action. The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, established by the Department of Defense in 1988, was created to restructure military installations in an effort to more efficiently and effectively support military forces, increase operational readiness and facilitate new ways of doing business.

As part of the very first BRAC report in December of 1988, the commission recommended Fort Dix realign to semi-active status and all Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) be moved to other Army training installations. This was a surprise to Congressman Jim Saxton (R-NJ), who represented New Jersey's 3rd District, which includes much of the base. Earlier in the year, Congressman Saxton was assured by a colleague that Fort Dix would not be considered by BRAC.

After the initial shock of the announcement, Saxton and local community leaders embarked on a lobbying campaign that became crucial not only to the survival of Fort Dix, but to the

remaining installations in future rounds of BRAC commission recommendations. Had Fort Dix closed, there would have been a loss of military and civilian jobs from the area numbering in the thousands. Over the next two years, money was raised for consultant reports and audits with the goal of quantifying the value Fort Dix brought to the local economy as well as to the readiness of troops north of Virginia and east of Ohio. In the end, the efforts of Congressman Saxton and the civic leaders rallied around him paid off. With Fort Dix spared, other missions moved to the installation; the U.S. Coast Guard stood up the Atlantic Strike Team, the Federal Corrections Institute utilized a number of dormitory buildings to establish a new prison, and the Air Force reutilized the Army Reception Center building, standing up the Air Mobility Warfare Center (*pictured right*). Eventually, Fort Dix would become one of the nation's premier Army Reserve and National Guard training installations, preparing and deploying personnel for military operations around the world.



In March 1993, the BRAC commission recommended realignment of McGuire AFB, with the active duty missions of the base being moved to Plattsburg AFB, New York, converting the installation to a Guard and Reserve base. This would have meant the loss of 3,663 military and civilian jobs, spurring Congressman Saxton back into action. With the experience gained in 1989, Saxton and his team of local civic leaders once again showcased the impact the commission's

decision would have on the area. It would take over two years for their efforts to see results, but in the end, McGuire AFB retained its status. Solidifying that fact was the announcement that C-17 *Globemaster* aircraft, a new airlift asset, would be calling McGuire AFB home (*pictured left*). It would be nearly ten years later before BRAC would affect the three installations. This



time, the news would be more welcome than previous announcements.

In May 2005, the BRAC commission recommended merging Fort Dix, McGuire AFB and Naval Air Engineering Station (NAES) Lakehurst into a single joint base, consolidating management of personnel and resources under one authority. Merging was recommended at other geographic locations with similar installation layouts. For JB MDL, the Air Force would be responsible for the operational and support functions of the installation. During the next four years, strategic-level planning and coordination established the operational structure of the joint base. This culminated with the redesignation and reactivation of the 87th ABW from the inactivated 87th Troop Carrier Wing on 19 February 2009. A Joint Base Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Air Force, Army and Navy was signed by their respective Vice Chiefs of Staff, effective on 10 April 2009. Initial Operational Capability (IOC) took place from 31 March 2009 to 30 September 2009 and Full Operational Capability (FOC) occurred on 01 October 2009. Leadership positions established to account for the diverse tri-service population of the base, still in place today, had Colonel Gina Grosso becoming the first 87 ABW Commander. Filling the first Deputy Commanders' roles were Colonel Joseph Poth for the Army and Captain Andrew Butterfield for the Navy, all with offices in the Joint Base Headquarters building to allow for ease in communication and leadership of the installation.



Colonel Gina Grosso (center) at the 1 October 2009 87th Air Base Wing activation with retired-Congressman Jim Saxton (right).

The joint base offers a unique capability to develop, train and deliver air, land and sea forces at a moment's notice anywhere in the world. History will continue to be made here. The history of the joint base, however, lies on the foundation made by those men and women whose names and faces may be forgotten, but whose impacts chartered a legacy that none can forget.

AIR POWER OVER THE PINELANDS

Initially known as Rudd Field, the land McGuire AFB is situated on was once owned by a farmer who used the property as a cow pasture. In 1937, Rudd Field and its lone runway soon grew, and the name was changed to Camp Dix Army Airfield. After Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939 and the *blitzkrieg* that followed, the base began to grow rapidly. When war was declared against the Axis powers, the runways were expanded and the base grew in importance. Strategically situated on the East Coast, the renamed Fort Dix Army Airfield provided counter-submarine operations, protecting America's northeastern shoreline from attack. The base also provided a debarkation point for supplies bound for Europe. The enlarged airfield allowed for the



transition from smaller engine observation aircraft to twin-engine B-25 *Mitchell* and B-24 *Liberator* bombers.

By July 1942, the base was once again renamed to Fort Dix Army Air Base (*pictured left*). While 1943-44 was a period of continued construction, particularly for facilities used to house and serve the needs of assigned transient personnel, the airfield also became a primary center for supply shipments to Europe. Aircraft bound for the war zone were overhauled, serviced and crated for overseas delivery. During the war years, the base was also a research and testing site for highly classified work on guided bombs, pilotless aircraft and ground control approach radar.

At the end of World War II, the base served as a processing location for those servicemen separating and heading home. The last significant base activity of the war ended in October 1945 and the last unit left the installation on 20 May 1946.

The airfield remained inactive for two-and-a-half years until, in the fall of 1947, the newly-independent Air Force, searching for former Army airfields to serve its mission requirements, requested it be reopened for Strategic Air Command (SAC) operations. On 13 January 1948,

Congress agreed to reopen the base and established McGuire AFB in honor of Major Thomas B. McGuire, Jr., a New Jersey native and second-leading World War II fighter ace (*pictured right*). McGuire, who was the highest ranked ace ever lost in combat, received the Medal of Honor posthumously after being killed in action over the Philippines in January 1945.



The base proved ill-suited to SAC's B-29 *Superfortress* operations because of the weight the heavy bomber placed on the thinly-poured original airfield pavements. Therefore, in October 1949, the base transferred to Continental Air Command and became home to aircraft that defended the eastern seaboard; originally P-47's, but later F-82, F-86 and F-84 aircraft.

In 1954, McGuire AFB transferred to the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) where the formal start of the base's modern mission of airlift was born. The base would become the "Gateway to the East" providing a huge majority of airlift missions of personnel and material to Europe and beyond. In January 1966, MATS was redesignated as the Military Airlift Command (MAC) and the C-141 *Starlifter* (*pictured below*) soon took over the airlift missions once completed by C-118, C-123, C-130 and C-135 aircraft that had filled the southern New Jersey skies for years.



During the Vietnam War, McGuire aircrews transported troops and supplies to South Vietnam, often under sniper fire. Later, C-141's were equipped with specially designed "snap-in" gear to quickly accommodate patients and medical crews during aeromedical evacuation trips back to McGuire AFB. Once the war had ended, aircrews from the base supported Operation HOMECOMING, bringing home 33 prisoners of war (POWs) released by North Vietnamese communist forces. The last POW arrived at McGuire on 4 April 1973.

In the 1980's, McGuire personnel participated in airlift operations in support of numerous contingencies. On 23 October 1983, following an attack on the Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, the crews airlifted dead and wounded Marines back to the United States. At the same time, aircrews were flying troops and cargo into and out of Grenada in support of the evacuation of American students on the Caribbean island nation (*pictured right*).



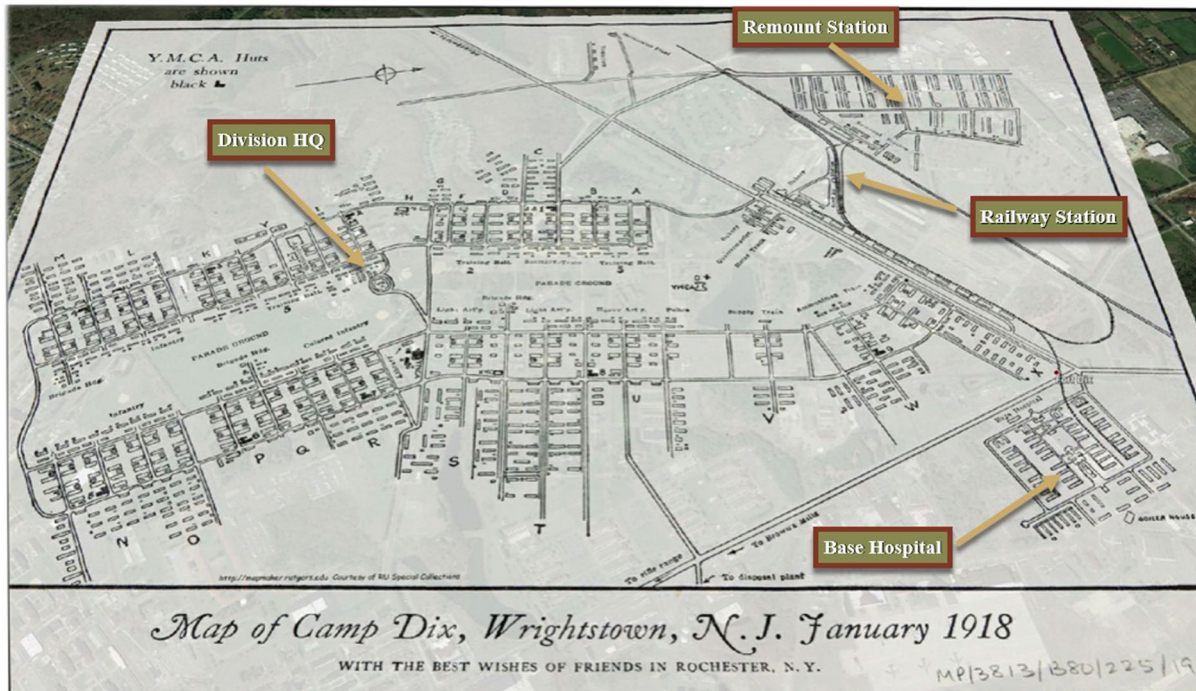
On 18 December 1989, McGuire aircrews spearheaded the airlift of Army paratroopers and equipment from Pope AFB, North Carolina, to Panama as part of Operation JUST CAUSE, the invasion of that country to secure order and restore the government.

The 1990's started with McGuire AFB units taking part in the largest airlift operation since the Berlin Airlift. Operation DESERT SHIELD deployed more than 700 local active duty, Reserve and New Jersey Air National Guard (ANG) members to the Persian Gulf to set up operations at a dozen bases supporting the defense of Saudi Arabia. These same personnel supported the region when the operation transitioned to DESERT STORM.

Following the Gulf War, McGuire aircrews began flying humanitarian aid to Turkey under Operation PROVIDE COMFORT. Later, McGuire crews played a major part in the history of the United States hostage crisis by airlifting Terry Anderson, the longest held Western hostage and last of three remaining American hostages held by pro-Iranian Shiite Muslim groups, in December 1991. The remainder of the 1990's had McGuire aircrews supporting humanitarian airlift operations around the world as part of Operations PROVIDE HOPE and PROVIDE HOPE II (former Soviet republics); PROVIDE COMFORT (northern Iraq and southern Turkey), PROVIDE RELIEF (Kenya and Somalia), and PROVIDE PROMISE (Croatia).

The men and women assigned to McGuire AFB can reflect on an evolution from dirt strip adjacent to an Army base, to its present status as a thriving and successful joint base partner. Supporting such operations as ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, McGuire proved time and again to be an important part of airlift history. As the base transitioned from an independent installation to a joint base mission partner, the time-honored legacy of McGuire AFB still stands as an example for many to appreciate.

FROM FARMLAND TO ARMY FORT



A January 1918 map of Camp Dix superimposed over a map image of the Fort Dix area of JB MDL. (Photo Credit: US Army Center of Military History)

In the early morning hours of June 1st, 1917, a small band of 19 officers and privates from Charlie Company of the 26th New Jersey Engineers arrived at the quaint, sleepy village of Wrightstown. This advance detachment and the construction workers that soon followed referred to the site as “Camp Wrightstown”. It was not until 18 July 1917 that a War Department general order designated the area to be known as Camp Dix in honor of Major General John Adams Dix (pictured right), who was born on 24 July 1798. A veteran of the War of 1812 and the Civil War, Maj Gen Dix had a distinguished public career serving as a United States Senator for New York, Secretary of the Treasury, Minister to France and Governor of New York. During World War I, Camp Dix was a training and staging ground for the 78th, 87th and 34th Divisions. Camp Dix grew quickly and became the largest military reservation in the Northeast. Following the armistice that ended World War I, the camp became a demobilization center for over 300,000 soldiers.



During the period between World War I and World War II, Camp Dix served as a training facility for active Army, Army Reserve and National Guard units. The Citizens' Military Training Camp conducted summer training under the 1st, 77th, 78th and 99th Infantry Divisions. During this period, construction began on a new runway for Camp Dix Army Airfield. On 8 March 1939, Camp Dix became Fort Dix as the installation became a permanent Army post. Fort Dix served as a reception and training center for men inducted under the draft of 1939. Ten divisions and many smaller units trained and staged here before entering the battlefields of World War II. At the end of the war, the reception center became the separation center, returning more than 1.2 million soldiers to civilian life (*pictured right*).



On 15 July 1947, Fort Dix became a Basic Training center and the home of the 9th Infantry Division. In April 1954, the 9th Division transferred to Europe and the 69th Infantry Division moved onto Fort Dix. The 69th Division's stay was short-lived as it inactivated on 16 March 1956. On that date, Fort Dix became the United States Army Training Center, Infantry.

The base expanded rapidly during the Vietnam War. A mock Vietnam village was constructed and soldiers received Vietnam specific training before going overseas. As in many



places around the country, the protest of the war came to the main post gate at Wrightstown (*pictured left*). On 12 October 1969, a crowd of nearly 5,000 attempted to enter the base in protest of the war as well as the conditions of the post stockade, which housed military members who refused to go to Vietnam.

In 1988, Fort Dix began to train Air Force Security Police in ground combat skills. Air Base Ground Defense Command, which consisted of both Army and Air Force instructors, trained enlisted and officer security police to better defend Air Force installations around the world.

During the 1990's, Fort Dix remained busy despite ending the Basic Training mission. In August 1990, Fort Dix began around-the-clock operations deploying troops for Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. In January 1991, Fort Dix was chosen to train selected Kuwaiti civilians in basic military skills. After a brief course, they boarded planes to take part in the liberation of their country. Later, in 1995, soldiers mobilized at Fort Dix to train and deploy as part of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As refugees fled the war-torn country of Kosovo in the summer of 1999, Fort Dix was chosen to help resettle 4,025 displaced personnel processing them before they moved to new homes in the United States (*pictured right*).

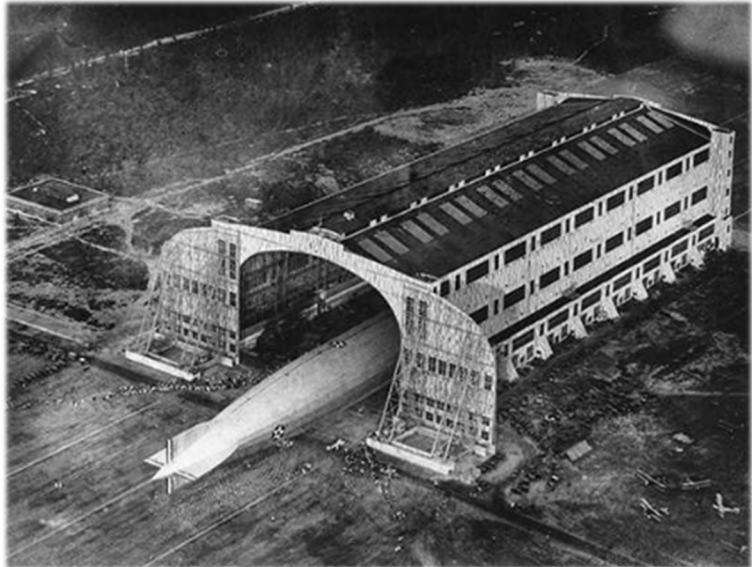


After the terror attacks of September 2001, the gates to Fort Dix were closed to public traffic for the first time. Prior to this, the base provided convenient routes of travel through the county. As part of the Global War on Terror, Fort Dix would become a major training and mobilization base, preparing hundreds of thousands of men and women for deployment in support of operations against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

On 30 September 2009, Fort Dix's last day as an independent installation, Colonel Patrick Slowey fired the salute gun and members of the garrison staff lowered the U.S. flag for the last time during the final Fort Dix retreat ceremony. Today, Army Support Activity (ASA) Fort Dix continues the mission of training, deploying and redeploying Army personnel around the world.

THE U.S. NAVY AT LAKEHURST

The history of Lakehurst dates further back as Fort Dix. As the oldest portion of the installation, the area near the resort town of Lakehurst, New Jersey began as an ammunition proving ground in 1915, testing munitions for the Russian Imperial Army. In 1917, following the Russian Revolution, the proving ground was procured by the Ordnance Department of the Army. The area was then named Camp Kendrick and used as a munitions and mustard gas testing location. Similar to Fort Dix, the end of World War I brought about rapid reductions in manpower. However, the Navy, wishing to continue its lighter-than-air efforts, saw Camp Kendrick as a likely location for airship operations and in 1919 began building the foundation for its air station. This foundation – Lakehurst’s Hangar One – was built to house and support the lighter-than-air program. The structure, a national historic landmark, is 961 feet long, 350 feet wide and 200 feet high. It was intentionally built oversize in order to comfortably construct and house the first of the United States’ rigid airships, the *Shenandoah* (pictured right).



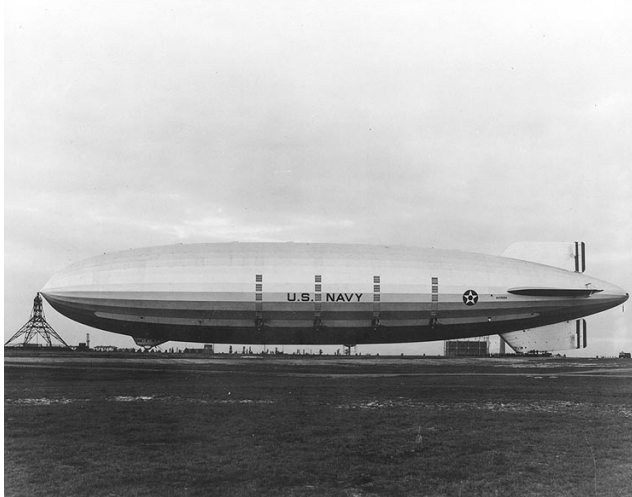
On 28 June 1921, the Navy renamed the base Naval Air Station (NAS) Lakehurst. NAS Lakehurst

became home to three of the four rigid airships owned by the Navy (ZR-1 *Shenandoah*, ZR-3 *Los Angeles* and ZRS-4 *Akron*). It was the nation’s first trans-Atlantic international airport and the U.S. berthing location of the LZ 129 *Hindenburg*. On the evening of May 6, 1937, the *Hindenburg* airship exploded and crashed at Lakehurst killing thirty-six people. Today, the mooring location of the *Hindenburg* still exists.

Soon after, NAS Lakehurst purchased an additional 5,892 acres and became the largest naval installation east of the Mississippi at 7,430 acres. As the Navy’s primary location for lighter-than-air vehicles, NAS Lakehurst was a thriving hub of home defense activity.

As the situation in Europe deteriorated in the late 1930's, training activity at Lakehurst intensified. The base became the main operational, overhaul and training base for airship activities on the East Coast. Hangar's number 2 and 3 were completed in 1942 and numbers 5 and 6 were completed in 1943. By 1945, the Navy had 141 airships, the largest airship fleet ever constructed. All squadrons identified for service in the North Atlantic, South America and Europe were

Photo # NH 42158 USS Akron moored at NAS Lakehurst, N.J., November 1931



USS Akron moored at NAS Lakehurst, November 1931

commissioned, outfitted and delivered from NAS Lakehurst. Lakehurst's own patrol squadron, Airship Squadron Twelve, was equipped with eight airships and flew a total of 5,261 flights by the end of World War II, providing escort and early warning of German submarines to ships at sea.

In 1961 the Navy halted all lighter-than-air activity and ordered the blimps deflated and stowed. As the age of the lighter-than-air airships became history, Lakehurst's mission was restructured, becoming host to the Navy's first helicopter squadrons, as well as one of the Navy's only overhaul-and-repair services for heavier-than-air and rotary winged aircraft, the forerunner of a Fleet Readiness Center.

NAS Lakehurst's name changed in 1977 to Naval Air Engineering Station (NAES) Lakehurst when the Naval Air Engineering Center relocated from Philadelphia. Critical design, prototyping, manufacturing and testing facilities were constructed to support Naval Air Systems Command.

Initially, the 1995 BRAC targeted NAES Lakehurst for closure; however, this decision was soon reversed. Lakehurst's support role to naval aviation, specialized testing equipment and dedicated air corridors were too valuable to be relocated. Therefore, additional specialized missions such as the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion Mid-Atlantic, the Army Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center (CERDEC) testing mission and a number of other support missions and training functions transferred to Lakehurst.

Today, Naval Support Activity (NSA) Lakehurst is home to Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), part of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division. As the Navy's engineering

support activity for Aircraft Launch and Recovery Equipment (ALRE) and Naval Aviation Support Equipment (SE), Lakehurst is the critical link between Naval Aviation and Navy Aircraft Carrier (CV) Battle Groups worldwide. NSA Lakehurst is responsible for maintaining fleet support and infusing modern technology across the entire spectrum of equipment needed to launch, land and maintain aircraft from ships at sea.

Lakehurst's Aircraft Platform Interface (API) provides the facilities and services necessary to permit fixed and rotary wing aircraft to operate safely and effectively from ships at sea and from austere expeditionary airfields. This includes designing, prototyping, testing and contracting to provide items such as catapults, arresting gear, visual landing aids, flight deck marking/lighting systems, aircraft and weapons handling equipment, aircraft servicing and maintenance equipment, unique avionics testing equipment, aircraft engine test equipment and shipboard



Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) testing at Lakehurst.

aircraft fire trucks. Lakehurst is the only activity responsible for this unique and vital aspect of Naval Aviation. In short, Lakehurst supports all the aircraft operating from ships at sea, as well as the ships they operate from and the U.S. Marine Corps expeditionary airfields worldwide.

THE 87TH AIR BASE WING IMPACT

Becoming the Nation's first and only tri-service joint base stands as a singularly historic moment. There are, however, many more events to look back on with just over ten short years since three installations became one.

The 87th Air Base Wing supported several significant operations and activities, to include: Hurricane Irene and Super Storm Sandy recovery operations, where 5,000 relief workers from more than 87 different units from across the country staged and operated from the joint base. There have been visits by the President of the United States; the United Nations General Assembly; the Commission on the Structure of the United States Air Force; and thousands of distinguished visitors.

The wing has earned seven Outstanding Unit awards and a myriad of Air Mobility Command, Air Force, and national-level awards. The 87th Air Base Wing continues to operate with a focus on delivering championship caliber installation support to enable the JB MDL partners' missions of rapid global mobility, training, and innovation.

The wing rapidly generated and controlled White House-directed airlift missions to battle the Ebola outbreak in Western Africa and deployed medical personnel within 48 hours to Liberia



(pictured left), opening Operation UNITED ASSISTANCE while providing family support and quarantine operations on the Joint Base.

Supporting well over 150 missions annually, the Joint Base Military Working Dog section of the 87th Security Forces Squadron, is the U.S. Secret Service's "go-to" unit, providing explosive detection capabilities in support of the President of the United States and foreign dignitaries, including the Pope.

In January 2010, a powerful earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale devastated the country of Haiti. Within 24-hours, JB MDL was at the forefront of providing immediate relief assistance to those affected by this tragedy. Airlift operations brought evacuees to the base where they were housed in the McGuire Fitness Center in order to rest, eat, and shower while they made

arrangements for transportation back to their homes or to stay with family and friends in the U.S. Joint Base personnel had the fitness center ready to receive evacuees (*pictured right*) in about three hours after receiving the tasking, and took in the first flight of evacuees shortly after.



The latest challenge to face the 87 ABW involved the response to the COVID-19 global pandemic with support provided to local, state and federal agencies. In the early months of the pandemic, wing personnel supported the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, and U.S. Northern Command establishing quarantine/isolation facilities and processing personnel and cargo deploying to New York City in support of Joint Task Force Civil Support. The wing was instrumental in the deployment and redeployment of over 3,000 personnel and 1,600 short-tons of equipment into and out of New York City. The 87 ABW was also selected as an Aggregate Installation, providing a location for deploying personnel to conduct a two-week Restriction of Movement prior to departing the United States.

With the selection of JB MDL to be home of the new KC-46A *Pegasus* (*pictured below*) tanker aircraft, there are many historic years ahead for the base. A truly Joint integrated installation, JB MDL mission partners represent all five services and all elements of active, reserve and guard service. Multiple civilian agencies operate on the installation fashioning a blend of capabilities and services unmatched anywhere. JB MDL contributes to a long legacy, providing a unique combination of global vigilance, reach and power that makes the installation undeniably the nation's premier Joint Base.

