

**87th AIR BASE
WING
HERITAGE
PAMPHLET
2009-Present**

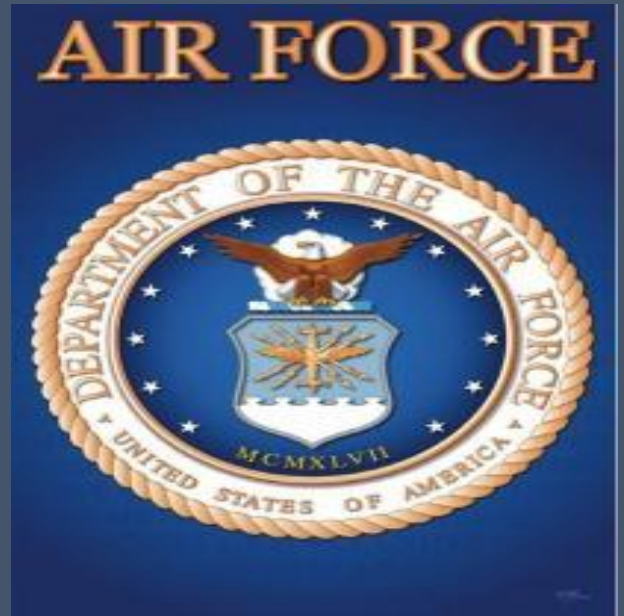


“Win as One”



**Joint Base
McGuire - Dix - Lakehurst**

Prepared by the 87th ABW History Office
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87th AIR BASE WING HISTORY



The namesake of McGuire Air Force Base

Major Thomas B. McGuire Jr. "Pudgy"

On Sunday January 7, 1945 at approximately 0710 local time a flight of four U.S. Army Air Corps P-38 Lightning's were conducting a fighter sweep of the northern part of Negros Island in the central Philippines. Leading "Daddy Flight" was Major Thomas B. McGuire, Jr. piloting P-38L *Lightning* 44-24845 with wingman Major Jack B. Rittmayer with element leader Captain Edwin R. Weaver and wingman 2nd Lt. Douglas S. Thropp, Jr.

Their mission was to search for and engage any airborne Japanese aircraft they might encounter. After circling Fabrica Airfield they headed for Carolina Airfield. Approximately three miles from the Carolina Airfield they suddenly observed a lone Japanese single engine fighter aircraft flying below them and heading directly towards them. As the Japanese aircraft passed directly underneath the flight leader an intense aerial engagement broke out. In less than two minutes two of the P-38 fighters lay burning on the ground, their pilots killed. The two remaining P-38's continued to fight the lone enemy fighter but eventually sought the safety of the overcast clouds and headed back to their base on Leyte. The lone Japanese fighter apparently got away undamaged.



The news of this dogfight devastated the morale of the American fighter pilots prosecuting the war against the Japanese. The top Army brass immediately slapped a “Top Secret” classification on any talk of this incident. For two decades after the war any details of this incident was kept from the public. Finally in the late 1960’s the Freedom of Information Act finally opened up the military’s records on this incident and allowed military historians to finally learn the truth about what happened that day over Negros Island.

On that day America lost one of the greatest fighter pilots in its history. Major Thomas B. McGuire, Jr. aged 24 from Ridgewood, New Jersey. Major McGuire was the top ace of the 475th Fighter Group of the Fifth Fighter Command with 38 confirmed aerial victories. He ranked second only to Major Richard I. Bong who had been credited with 40 victories. At the time of his death Major McGuire was the highest scoring American ace still involved in air combat against the enemy. At war’s end Major McGuire’s total of 38 victories would place him as the second leading American ace of World War II. Major McGuire was also one of the highest decorated pilots during WW II and was posthumously awarded the nation’s highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Today McGuire Air Force Base located near his home town in New Jersey stands as a daily reminder of his sacrifice.

History of the 87th Air Base Wing Stationed at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

The 87th ABW currently calls JBMDL or Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst home and has since 2009. In May 1952, U.S. Air Force leadership established the 87th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, at Atterbury Air Force Base (AFB), Indiana, under the command of Col George C. Riley. The unit performed a training mission in support of the Korean War. Two groups comprised the 87th Troop Carrier Wing, the 87th Troop Carrier Group and the 87th Air Base Group.

The 87th Troop Carrier Group replaced the 923d Reserve Training Wing as part of the new wing/base organization system. They performed training under the supervision of the 2d Air Reserve District and the 2466th Air Force Reserve Training Center. The group operated a mix of aircraft in the training of reserve aircrews.

The aircraft included the B-25 *Mitchell* (1)



The T-6 *Texan* (2)



The C-46 *Commando* (3)



Flight-Engineer/Radio-Operator
Tech-Sergeant Edward Herzog,
USAAF McGuire Air Field circa 1945.
His items are on display at the JBMDL, Ft. Dix
Museum.

The C-47 *Skytrain* (4)



The 87th Air Base Group consisted of four squadrons. These included the 87th Food Service Squadron, 87th Installations Squadron, 87th Communications Squadron, and the 87th Air Police Squadron.█

The 87th Troop Carrier Wing inactivated in February 1953 and the 434th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium replaced them at Atterbury AFB. The 87th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, was re-designated as the 87th Tactical Airlift Wing in July 1985 but never reactivated.

As a result of the 2005 Congressional Base Relocation and Closure Commission, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL) was established in central New Jersey. The new installation was a combination of McGuire Air Force Base, Fort Dix, Naval Air Engineering Station– Lakehurst, forming the nation's only tri-Service Joint Base. In February 2009, the 87th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, was re-designated and reactivated as the 87th Air Base Wing, assuming responsibility for installation support for the missions on JB MDL. The 87th Air Base Wing reported to the 18th Air Force until December 2010, when the United States Air Force Expeditionary Center assumed oversight of the 87th Air Base Wing and JB MDL.

All units assigned to the 87th Air Base Wing possess the same numerical designation as the wing. The wing consists of four groups, the 87th Mission Support group the 87th Medical Group and the 87th Civil Engineering Group, and 14 wing staff agencies.



87th Communication Squadron

The 87th Mission Support Group consists of 4 squadrons: the 87th Communications Squadron; the 87th Force Support Squadron; the 87th Logistics Readiness Squadron; and the 87th Security Forces Squadron.

The 87th Medical Group consists of 4 squadrons: the 87th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; the 87th Dental Squadron; the 87th Medical



Operations Squadron; and the 87th Medical Support Squadron. The 87th Civil Engineering Group consists of; the 87th Civil Engineering Squadron and the 787th Civil Engineering Squadron.

Wing staff agencies include Air Forces Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO 21), Business Office, Chaplains, Community Support Coordinator, Command Post, Comptroller Squadron, Equal Opportunity, History Office, Inspector General, Legal Office, Plans and Programs, Public Affairs, Safety,

and Sexual Assault Response and Prevention, and the Protocol office.



Entering the modern age, Dix, Lakehurst and McGuire settled into their enduring roles. McGuire remains the “Gateway to Europe” and serves a critical mobility role of Air Mobility Command through the strength of her Active, Reserve and National Guard units. Marine aviators share McGuire Field and bring an airborne fighting capability to the installation.

Lakehurst continues as an elite test and development facility, hosting several developmental missions for the Army and Navy. In addition they serve as a training location for many of the Joint Base mission partners. The primary mission on Dix revolves around training as Army, Air Force, Coast Guard and Navy forces engage in the numerous developmental programs and facilities situated on that side of the installation.



A truly Joint integrated installation, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL) mission partners represent all five services and ALL elements of active, reserve and guard service. Multiple civilian agencies pepper the installation fashioning an inimitable blend of capabilities and services unmatched anywhere. JB MDL provides a unique combination of global vigilance, reach and power that makes the

installation undeniably the nation’s premier Joint Base.

Some of the Aircraft that have been and are currently used on McGuire.



C-5A *Galaxy*, in a comparison photo surrounded by smaller aircraft in the Air Force inventory.
(5)

The 87th Air Base Wing includes a command structure consisting of an Air Force Joint Base Commander, an Army Joint Base Deputy Commander; and a Navy Joint Base Deputy Commander.

C-17A, *Globe Master III* (6)



The 87th Air Base Wing personnel include Airmen, a Soldier, and Sailors. During its tenure at JB MDL, the wing has supported several significant operations and activities, to include: Hurricane Irene and Super Storm Sandy recovery operations; 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 distinguished visitors. The wing has since earned five 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 and to fulfill the wing's motto, **“Win as One!”**



(Postcard circa 1960)

Aircraft pictured in text:

1. B-25 Bomber, "*Mitchell*" 1952-1953
2. T-6 Trainer, "*Texas*" 1953
3. C-46 Cargo/Transport, "*Commando*" 1952-1953
4. C-47 Cargo/Transport, "*Skytrain*" 1953
5. C-5A Cargo/Transport, "*Galaxy*" current
6. C-17A Cargo/Transport, "*Globe Master*" III current

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 Engineering, 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
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 – Present
87th Medical Support, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Aerospace Medicine, 3 March 2009 – Present
87th Dental, 3 March 2009 – Present
787th Civil Engineering, 1 July 2015 - Present

Honors:

Service Streamers:

Campaign Streamers:

Global War on Terrorism Service (GWOT) 3 March 2009-Present

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers:

NONE

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

Stations: Atterbury AFB, Indiana, 15 June 1952 – 1 February 1953.
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, 3 March 2009 – Present.

Commanders:

Colonel George C. Riley	15 June 1952
Unknown	2 – 14 February 1953
Inactivated	15 February 1953
Brigadier General Gina M. Grosso	3 March 2009
Colonel John M. Wood	24 June 2011
Colonel James C. Hodges	24 July 2013
Colonel Frederick D. Thaden	24 July 2014

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: Approved on 3 August 2010.
(Assigned Groups use same emblem as parent wing)

Significance: 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" in English

Notes: