

HILL AIR FORCE BASE



Hill Air Force Base, World War II

Hill Field was activated on 7 November 1940 when Lieutenant Colonel Morris Berman arrived for duty as the first commanding officer. The base was named after Major Ployer P. Hill, a test pilot who was killed in a crash of the prototype of the B-17 in 1935 at Wright Field, Ohio. Strategically located close to transportation lines, the base was operated by Ogden Air Depot as a maintenance and supply depot.

Four 7,500-foot runways were completed in September 1941; and by 1943 construction of the base was nearly complete. Aircraft maintenance and depot supply began in mid-1941 and overhaul of B-17s in April 1942; in February 1943 a B-24 assembly line was opened.

The Ogden Air Depot has changed names four times: the Ogden Air Service Command, Ogden Air Technical Service Command, Ogden Air Materiel Area (OOAMA) and on 1 April 1974 the Ogden Air Logistics Center (OO-ALC). Hill Field was renamed Hill Air Force Base on 5 February 1948.

During the Korean War, Ogden overhauled B-29 and B-26 bombers. Jet fighter maintenance began in 1953 with the F-89 and F-84; and in 1957 with the F-102 and F-101. Maintenance of the F-4 began in 1965 and of the F-16 in 1979, while the C-130 and OV-10 were assigned to the base in 1988.

The Ogden Arsenal was transferred to Hill AFB on 1 April 1955, and Ogden was immediately assigned responsibility for Explosives Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and for most Air Force armunitions. A facility to test armunitions was completed in 1964 at the Hill AFB Bombing and Gunnery Range in the desert west of the Great Salt Lake. The facility was renamed the Utah Test and Training Range, and operation was transferred to the Air Force Systems Command in 1979; however, Hill still manages range property.

Ogden began missile management with its assignment in 1954 of the Snark, a subsonic intercontinental missile. The Bomarc interceptor missile was assigned in 1957 and the Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) in January 1959. Boeing assembled the Minuteman at Hill, completing the first missile in July 1962. The Titan II ICBM was assigned in 1965 and the Advanced Intercontinental Ballistic Missile in 1975. President Reagan named the latter "Peacekeeper," and it became operational in December 1986. Commodities managed by Ogden include aircraft wheels and brakes (beginning in 1952), flight simulators (1955), and tires and tubes (1958). Photographic supply was assigned in 1954, and photographic and reconnaissance equipment in 1965.

Flying organizations assigned to the base in the 1950s and 1960s included the 28th Military Airlift Squadron (C-124), 4677th Defense Systems Evaluation Squadron (TB-29 and B-57), 461st Bombardment Wing (B-26 and B-57), and, in 1971, the 1550th Aircrew Training and Test Wing (helicopter combat training). The 388th Tactical Fighter Wing (F-4D) arrived from Thailand in 1976 and transitioned to F-16s in 1978. The 419th Tactical Fighter Wing (AFRES) converted from F-105s to F-16s in 1984.

Since World War II, a new 13,500-foot runway was completed in 1957 and new maintenance supply and administration buildings have improved base capabilities. A new chapel, housing projects, base exchange, commissary, and recreation facilities have improved the quality of life of personnel assigned to Hill.

See: Kenneth I. Patchin, ed., *History of Ogden Air Logistics Center, Hill AFB Utah 1939-1988* (1988); P.

Susan Weathers, *History of Hill Air Force Base (1981); Chronology Ogden Air Logistics Center Hill Air Force Base, Utah 1976-1985 (1986).*

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