

USAF BASIC MILITARY SCHOOL

MISSION

LINEAGE

AAF Basic Military School established, 1 Feb 1946
Redesignated AF Basic Military School, 15 Dec 1947
Redesignated USAF Basic Military School, 15 May 1948
Inactivated, 15 Aug 1972

STATIONS

Sheppard AFB, TX, 16 Aug 1948-21 Jun 1949

ASSIGNMENTS

Air Training Command
Technical Training Air Force, 1951
Air Training Command, 1 Jun 1958

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The land that would become Lackland AFB used to be a part of Kelly Field. The pilots at Kelly used the area as a bombing range in the mid 1930's and called it "the hill," because the flat escarpment rose steeply above their airfield. In 1938, Brigadier General Frank D. Lackland was in charge of Kelly Field and called for an expansion of training from Kelly to incorporate the area known as "the Hill." On 30 Sep 1941, the new development on the hill was designated the Air Corps Replacement Center. The primary mission concerned the production of potential Army Air Force pilots. However, the Recruit Detachment, San Antonio Cadet Center was activated on 5 Nov 1942.

Nov 1942 BMT training began at the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center (SAACC) Length was probably six weeks.

10 Nov 1942 One hundred and thirty-six recruits arrived from Tarrant Field, Fort Worth Texas, and became the first soldiers to begin basic training at the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center (SAACC).

30 Nov 1942 More than 800 recruits were receiving basic training at SAACC.

29 Feb 1944 Major General Barton K. Yount, first commander of the Army Air Force Training Command issued a directive calling for the standardization of all training for new enlisted recruits.

1 Feb 1946 The War Department established the Army Air Forces Basic Military School and transferred Harlingen Field's basic training operation to the 3543 AAF Base Unit at the Army Air Force Military Training Center.

1946 BMT at six weeks (30 training days). SAACC absorbed the BMT school at Harlingen Field, Texas.

Jan 1947 BMT at 8 weeks

Mar 1947 BMT at 12 weeks

Apr 1947 BMT at 13 weeks

May 1949 BMT at 10½ weeks

1 Jun 1949 Incoming recruits were assigned to squadrons and flights by sex and time of arrival only, ending racial segregation in Air Force basic military training.

13 Feb 1950 Air Training Command approved the addition of 55 hours of mathematics instruction; this was done to reduce the high rate of technical training course failures.

Jun 1950 BMT at 6 weeks

24 Jul 1950 Due to the Korean War, the 13-week training program was replaced with a 40-day program.

The Air Force was in need of more people and Lackland, in 1950, was the only place for Air Force enlisted training. This soon changed as Sheppard AFB got back in the business of basic training. But even this was not enough as the US Navy gave the younger service two bases from which to expand basic training: Sampson AFB, New York and Parks AFB, California. Headquarters Air Force also authorized enlisted training in overseas locations as well including Clark AB, Philippines; Seal and, Wales in the United Kingdom; Albrook AFB, Panama Canal; and Andersen AFB, Guam.

Basic training during the late 1950's emphasized the combat lessons of the Korean War. Trainees went through a small bivouac called "Little Korea," and were exposed to real bullets at the Fire Lane Confidence Course.

Aug 1950 BMT at 8 Weeks

Oct 1950 BMT at 5 weeks

Dec 1950 BMT at two weeks. Because of the Korean buildup, BMT went from 30 to 14 days. There was very little training going on save for the processing and uniform issue for recruits. Training items such as the mathematics portion of the training was entirely cut out.

1-5 Jan 1951 A total of 11,569 recruits arrived on Lackland

Jan-Feb 1951 Blitz - Lackland witnessed BMT programs ranging from two weeks to merely in and out processing. Most of the Airmen who fell into this category ended up making up their training at follow-on locations.

Mar 1951 BMT at eight weeks

Aug 1952 BMT at 12 weeks

3 Nov 1952 The Green Monster processing facility opened

Feb 1954 BMT at 11 weeks

1955 Two phase (male) training; Six weeks (phase I) at BMT and five week phase II.

Oct 1955 BMT Drum and Bugle Corps formed to raise esprit de corps and improve the accuracy of close order drill.

A major innovation in basic training came during 1955 with the inception of two-phase training program for male trainees. The first phase of six weeks took place at Lackland while the second phase occurred at the technical training school. The phase program ended in 1964 with the start

of the single phase six week BMT program. Unlike the Korean War, the buildup at Lackland for the Vietnam War went smoothly as the base easily handled the influx of trainees.

Feb 1960 BMT at eight weeks; program made up of five week phase I and three week phase II.

Nov-Dec 1963 BMT at 7 weeks

Oct 1964 Six week single phase BMT phase program.

14 Feb 1966 Amarillo AFB became the second basic military training center as Lackland personnel were sent there following a meningitis outbreak at Lackland.

Aug 1965 Split phase BMT training (Vietnam buildup). Twenty two days at Lackland and eight days at the technical training school (four weeks).

Apr 1966 While the four week 'minimal essential' BMT training was directed by ATC, but upon closer examination, the evaluation exposed deficiencies in training and the six-week course was deemed the superior training method.

During 1967, five new 1,000 person Recruit Housing and Training Dormitories were built. These giant "RH&T's" provided space for living areas, dining halls, classrooms and training areas for entire squadrons. It was not until 1976 that the last BMT squadron moved out of the WWII era barracks and occupied a newly constructed RH&T.

The Basic Military Training School found another way to endure what many Air Force, as well as BMTS, officials assumed would be a temporary decline in enlisted accessions. It placed two of its nine squadrons in "mothballs." Rather than having them inactivated, Col. Roy D. Sheetz, the BMTS commander, gained higher headquarters approval to close down two recruit housing and training (RH&T) buildings and to redistribute the personnel assigned to the affected units among the remaining seven basic military training squadrons. Officially, the 3702d Basic Military Training Squadron and 3704th Basic Military Training Squadron remained active units in standby status. The arrangement allowed BMTS official the management option to place either or both units back into operation at any time that accession rates warranted.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.