AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: No Bugles Will Blow, No Trumpets Will Sound: A Narrative History of


Abstract Approved:

No Bugles Will Blow is a narrative history of Smoky Hill/Schilling Air Force Base, Salina, Kansas starting prior to its construction in early 1942 to its last days as an Air Force installation in 1967. Smoky Hill AFB started its life in April, 1942 when Capt. Paul M. Long arrived to begin the process of acquiring and plotting land. It closed on April 3, 1967 when Lt. Col. Homer H. Houghton pulled down the flag of the officially deactivated Schilling AFB.

There are nine chapters in this paper, chapters one and nine are the introduction and conclusion, respectively, with chapters two through eight as the body of the paper. The latter chapters cover the two major eras of the base: 1942 to 1949 and 1951 to 1967, as well as the first deactivated period of late 1949 to mid-1951. In the first era, Smoky Hill was first a World War II training base for the B-17 and B-29 bomber aircraft and closed out the era as a B-29 bomber base in the Strategic Air Command (SAC) in 1949. Smoky Hill's second era started on August 1, 1951 when the base was reactivated as a SAC medium bomber base of two Wings and an Air Division equipped with the new B-47 stratojet bomber. The Air Force left Salina for good in April, 1967 after disposition of most of the Air Force property at Schilling.

Attention focuses primarily on the air base as a small city as well as its relationship with the city of Salina two miles northeast of the base. Perso-
nel sketches of the major Commanders are provided when available. However, the primary objective of this paper is to provide a view of the trials and tribulations of an air base during the 1940s, 1950s, and part of the 1960s.

Smoky Hill played a role in three major wars in which the United States was involved; World War II, Korea, and Viet Nam. Activated during the dark days immediately following Japan's attack on Hawaii, the base was reactivated during the Korean Conflict, and finally deactivated while the United States was escalating its involvement in Viet Nam. The base was indirectly involved in all three conflicts, although the housekeeping units were never involved in the actual combat. The runways of this base from its first activation to its final deactivation were among the longest military runways in the United States. Four of its original runways were 10,000 feet long and designed to handle the largest aircraft in the world which was then the B-29 bomber. By 1962, two of the runways had been extended to 13,330 feet with 1,000 feet overruns at each end to accommodate the B-52 bomber, which was supposed to be assigned to the base, but never arrived. The final closing took everyone by surprise, including, it seems, SAC which had assigned an overage of personnel to the base.

Appendices provide a listing of the units assigned to the base from 1942 to 1967, Commanders of the major units assigned to the base, capsule views of the base in 1945 and 1966, the origination of the current names of the base, street names when the city of Salina assumed control of the base, and capsule stories of the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings.
NO BUGLES WILL BLOW, NO TRUMPETS WILL SOUND

A Narrative History

of

Smoky Hill/Schilling Air Force Base, Salina, Kansas

1942 to 1967

A Thesis
Presented to
the Division of Social Sciences

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in History

By
Willis J. McClure
August, 1983
This writer wishes to dedicate this paper to two people who played a significant role in making this paper possible. Miss Mary Crowther, Kansas Librarian, Salina Public Library, provided considerable assistance throughout the researching and writing of this paper. Her knowledge of Salina's history made it possible to correlate and verify some events that appeared questionable to this writer. Col. John F. "Mike" Scanlan, USAF, ret., General Manager of the Salina Airport Authority and one of the last Commanders of the base, provided his military expertise and encouragement to this paper. He was able to add first-hand knowledge to the 1946-1949 and 1964-1967 periods of this paper and provide insight into General Curtis LeMay's Strategic Air Command. In no way was any question too big or trivial for Miss Crowther or Colonel Scanlan to answer. Without these two individuals, this paper might have been difficult to write.

I also wish to acknowledge the help that Professors William H. Seiler and John J. Zimmerman provided from the day that I first suggested this topic to the last when I was able to declare it finished. Their suggestions (and patience) has helped change this paper from a regional and topical paper into a history of a unique military installation.
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CHAPTER I

FLOWSHARES INTO SWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Salina, Kansas is located near the center of the continental United States just southeast of the junctions of Interstate highways 70 and 135. Travelers on the Interstate highways pay little attention to the four exits for Salina on both highways as they hurry on to their destinations. However, they can not help but notice the "prairie castle" grain elevators which denote Salina's role as a milling center and agricultural center for central Kansas. There is nothing to indicate that Salina is anything more than a small city in the middle of Kansas.

Traveling on I-135, one will see a sign that announces an exit for "Schilling Road--Salina Area Vo-Tech--Kansas Technical Institute." The sign does not reveal that the road leads into an old air base that is now an industrial park and residential area. Nor does it reveal that as a result of that old air base, Salina has a municipal airport with some of the longest commercial runways in the world. From the highway, all one sees is the white and orange checked water tower, the base housing area, and a hangar now used by Beechcraft.

Turning off on the exit and heading west, one is taken to the former base proper. Signs start appearing which announce the various enterprises that are in the area: KTI, Salina Vo-Tech, Kansas Rehabilitation Center, Tony's Pizza, Beechcraft, Salina Municipal Airport, and the Kansas Army National Guard's Nickell Barracks. One can still see a group of rundown buildings which obviously resemble a closed military installation. A couple of old barracks have been con-
d into apartment buildings, but the rest remain vacant with broken windows in obvious need of paint. The old base service station is now a tire center.

One block south of where Schilling Road ends is a parked six-engined jet bomber with peeling paint and an unkempt appearance that is keeping in place with most of the area around it. Unknown to most, the plane is a B-47 stratotjet bomber which was once considered to be the "long rifle" of the Strategic Air Command and the whine of its engines were a symbol of America's military might. Across the plane's nose is a peeling decal with the words: "City of Salina" over a yellow Sunflower. There are deserted foundations about the plane; some thick, some thin, and most covered with weeds. There is an empty feeling about the place; a feeling that something of consequence happened here at one time and then mysteriously ended, even though civilian aircraft can be seen landing on runways designed to handle the largest of military aircraft. Kansas Highway Patrol cadets train in a building which once housed men waiting for a war they hoped would never come. But most of the buildings go unused and seemingly have no use. Little thought seems to have been given to keeping the areas free of weeds and trash as they had been when the area was a part of the mighty Strategic Air Command. Now, it all looks very empty and harmless, belying its former importance.

But on December 7, 1941, when the Japanese attacked United States military installations on Oahu Island, Territory of Hawaii, and created a day which President Franklin Roosevelt was to declare would "live in infamy," this area was on a flood plain of the Smoky Hill River and covered with farms. Inadvertently, the Japanese attack created a need for the military installation whose planning and construction commenced within five months.

Beginning life as "the Army Air Base at Salina" while it was under construction, it then became Smoky Hill Army Air Field in December, 1942, when it
Formally opened, and ended life on April 3, 1967 as Schilling Air Force


Salina, Kansas. It was conceived to meet the demands of a global war.


Eventually, its life ended just as American involvement in Southeast Asia was


rising up. For twenty-five years, this tract of land, roughly four miles


south of the city of Salina, played a vital role not only in the air defense


of the United States but in the life of the city and the surrounding communi-


ties as well.


From its conception during the dark days of World War II to its end in


1967, this base was the center of military activity in central Kansas. It was


a self-contained city with a population that varied from one man to over 13,000


men, women, and children. At various times, it had the cantonment at Camp


Rollins, the OQ Gunnery Range, and twelve Atlas F missile bases dependent


on it for support. Some of the most popular military aircraft in the United


States were based here, such as the B-17, B-24, B-29, B-47, C-45, C-47, C-54,


and KC-135. In addition, helicopters and small utility aircraft were


used here from time to time. This city had its own shopping center, theaters,


clubs, police force, fire department, restaurants, water and sewage plants,


parking lots, parks, schools, church, work areas, and living areas for its


population.


This is the story of Smoky Hill/Schilling Air Force Base. Other air bases


have existed for a brief period of time and then closed with scarcely a concern


by anyone, for these bases were built during times of great crisis and when


their need ceased, closed. But Schilling Air Force Base was different. While


the need existed in the early days of World War II to train air crews as fast


as possible, Schilling was created as a base which eventually trained crews for


a super plane later identified as the B-29, and time was taken with the construc-


tion of its runways. Closed briefly in 1950 and 1951, it was reopened with the
In the first period of its life, the base seemed to be a foster child, in which the parents were afraid that if they got too attached to the child, the government would take it away, while the government kept demanding more proof love existed for the child. Yet, when the base reopened, its units won after award faster than the Air Force seemed able to come up with them. The adopted the base and lavished attention upon it while ignoring the possibility of attracting additional industry to the area for economic support while the Air Force leave.

Although the primary function of this paper is to write a history of the base, attention will focus on the often described as "unique" base/community relationship which existed from 1951 to 1967 that seems to never have existed before or since and certainly did not exist in the 1942 to 1949 period.* While it appears to have been a chronic housing shortage from 1942 to the early 1950s, and especially during the 1942 to 1949 period, the people of the area put out of their way to make the men and their families at the base feel at home. The base/community relationship seems to have contributed to a high morale that became the envy of other bases and enabled it to become one of the best bases not only in the Strategic Air Command but in the Air Force as well.

This writer believes that the time has come to write a history of this base. Something exceptional existed in central Kansas between 1942 and 1967 that de-

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*In conversations with various people, this writer discovered that Salinans believe even today, fifteen years after the base closed, that they had a good relationship with the base. In church affairs, they provided leadership for numerous projects. Salinans are proud to have had the Air Force in their community.
prior to 1951, there is much to suggest that the just tolerated. But all of this changed when the base was reactivated prior to 1951. What happened to cause an about-face between 1949 and 1951 is difficult determine as people seem to have forgotten the reasons. Perhaps the return of the civilian population of World War II veterans, who had seen the effects of poor community relations between the military installations where they had lived and the communities outside the main gates, had something to do with this. This paper can only present the facts that were discovered and let the reader decide the cause of the change.

Technically, there are two eras in the history of the base; the World War II era of about nine years and the Schilling era of about sixteen years. This writer has elected to write a complete history of this base because to write about only one era leaves a void which is filled by writing about both. To this day, few in Salina believe that they were doing anything different while the base was open the second time save being neighborly, and few remember how the base was from 1942 to 1949, except that some mention wild times "out there" as well as at the watering holes on east highway US 40 (now Pacific Street). As a six-year veteran of the United States Air Force, this writer remains impressed with the local press coverage of the base and the base/community relations from start to finish. There is also an appeal to this writer because of what this writer interprets as a "second chance" given the base and the city to try to achieve a better relationship. In this instance, what often develops as a hostility existing between a military base and the surrounding communities was eradicated and mutual respect established.*

*In this writer's interviews with Salinans who lived in the area in 1942 and after, he kept picking up mention of Salina's desire to avoid becoming another "Junction City" which has been the home of Fort Riley since the 1850s.
There seems to be a unique flavor to this entire period and that is the objective of this paper; to try to recapture what this writer saw and felt in his research. This, then, is the history of an air base from its creation out of farm land south of Salina to its final demise twenty-five years later. In 1942, when the War Department literally began beating plowshares into swords, eagles blew, trumpets sounded, and banners were unfurled. Then on April 3, 1967, the banners were folded, the trumpets sounded their last notes, and the process of converting swords back into plowshares began as the last airmen left for new assignments, never to return.

A feature of the air base, noticeable until just the mid-1970s, was the zoned absence of any shopping areas, gas stations, etc., for a two-mile area outside the perimeter of the base. In late 1981, a convenience store, which sells beer, did open near the old main gate.
CHAPTER II

ARMY AIR BASE AT SALINA, KANSAS

DECEMBER 7, 1941 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 1945

Salina wants a role in the War

Although the surprise attack by the Japanese on United States military installations in Hawaii plunged America into World War II, involvement had been seen by the national government and plans created for possible mobilization. Military draft had been in effect for over a year. More important to this, on December 7, 1941, the Army Air Forces (AAF) under the command of Marshal Henry H. "Hap" Arnold had 354,000 men in uniform of whom 9,000 were pilots. However, there were only 1,000 first-line combat planes, although had been drafted to produce 50,000 warplanes a year. In addition, forty flight schools were increasing the number of pilots in training from 3,000 a year to 12,000. There were 114 air bases in operation with fourteen more on drawing boards.¹

The B-17 Flying Fortress bomber was just being introduced into the inventory, but it was planned as the forerunner of newer and better bombers, such as the B-19 which later became the B-29. Fortunately for the United States, there were few B-17s in Hawaii and the Philippines on December 7 and 8 when the Japanese attacked. There were 231 army and 169 naval planes in Hawaii and 250 planes in the Philippines of which many were obsolete and quickly destroyed in

On this day, Salina, Kansas, roughly fifty miles west of the nearest military activity at Fort Riley, east of Junction City, was primarily a milling and railroad center, seemingly without much of a chance of doing any more for the effort than contributing men, money, and grain. These things were important but Salina wanted to do more. Politically, Salina, a very Republican town, was represented in Congress by Representative Frank Carlson of Concordia, Senator Capper of Topeka, and Senator Clyde Reed of Parsons. Republican Payne was Governor. Republican Roy Bailey was editor/publisher of the very publican daily Salina Journal. (An irony here was that the better-written but daily Salina Advertiser-Sun was the official county paper and its editor was a Democrat.)

Under normal circumstances, although President Roosevelt was trying to add giving a partisan tint to the war effort (which President Wilson had been used of doing in World War I), Salina, with its close proximity to Fort Riley, probably should not have expected much from the government, save perhaps a prisoner of War (POW) camp (which it got) or an auxiliary air field. It appears that Salina's leaders saw the situation in the same light because on January 29, 1942, Saline County offered the closed County Poor Farm to the government for use as a school to train air cadets.3

During this time, a Democrat banker who had served one term as Governor then served as Secretary of War, Harry Woodring, had managed or was about to arrange for Topeka to acquire an air base in its vicinity. Less certain is the role that Guy Helvering, a banker and former Congressman from Salina, was

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2Ibid., pp. 161-163.
laying at this time, in cooperation with Senators Capper and Reed, and Con­gressman Carlson, to get an air base for Salina but he was involved. 4

It seems probable that the matter of an air base for Topeka was cut and dryed and could have been one of the fourteen bases that was on the drawing board when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. After all, the expansion plans had been drawn up while Harry Woodring was Secretary of War. However, in this case, Salina had to compete with Hutchinson and Emporia. 5 Of these three towns, only Emporia lost out completely as Hutchinson later acquired a naval air station.

Saline County remained very desirous of selling the County Poor Farm and probably nursed hopes until the land for Camp Phillips had been acquired by the middle of 1942 that the Federal Government would take the Farm off of its hands. Why it had trouble getting rid of this land and why the War Department did not take up the offer of starting with land owned by a local government are unexplained mysteries. Camp Phillips' northern boundary stopped two miles south of the Farm. Eventually, the land was acquired by the Protestant Episcopal Church and became Saint Francis Boys' Home. Familiar with the area, this writer believes that it would have been more practical to locate the base there, as the area has never flooded and was only one-half mile south of highway US 40 and the railroad. In another chapter, a period is covered when the Department

4Salina (KS) Journal, December 29, 1941. This did not seem to do very much for the political career of Harry Woodring. He ran for office at least three more times and lost. Guy Helvering never sought another political office after losing his bid for re-election to Congress in 1918. Before the war ended, the AAF located sixteen air bases in Kansas at Coffeyville, Dodge City, Garden City, Great Bend, Herington, Independence, Kansas City, Liberal, Pratt, Walker, Wichita, and Winfield, in addition to the four already mentioned. "Wings Over Kansas," Kansas Historical Quarterly, Summer and Autumn, 1959, ad passim. The Navy located air fields at Hutchinson and Olathe.

5Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, January 1, 1942.
Defense was directed to locate missile bases on government-owned property if possible.

Construction

After a series of rumors regarding Salina's role in the war had circulated while, Captain Paul M. Long, US Army Corps of Engineers, arrived in early to make soil tests. On April 23, Congressman Frank Carlson confirmed the that the War Department would spend three million dollars for the construction of a base. This was followed by an announcement on April 28, that government had filed a condemnation suit in Federal District Court in for 1,441 acres of land involving twelve owners two miles southwest of Salina. Finally, Salina was to have an increased role in the war effort. Little known at the time about what sort of military air activity Salina would get. Salina Journal reported on April 28 that the runways would be at least 300 feet long. It was then reported on April 29 that three million dollars and be spent in construction. This must have made it seem well worth the it. Three million dollars plus the payroll of the soldiers was a considerable amount of money in those days!

While preparations were underway to start work on the air base, the Army what seemed to be a surprise on Salina by starting to acquire a triangular of land of approximately 42,000 acres four miles southwest of Salina. Construction of what came to be known as Camp Phillips, Phillips Village, Camp Phillips Gunnery Range, and finally Smoky Hill Weapons Range started on May 1, 1942 with a simple ground breaking ceremony. At the time of construction, Camp

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7 Salina (KS) Journal, April 28 and 29, 1942.
was to be subordinate to Smoky Hill Army Air Field. However, owing to number of men, there was usually a Major General in residence at the Camp of the air base subordinate to the Camp. In those days, the Army Air Force de facto, a branch of the Army. Five days after construction began, Major Caulkins arrived to assume command of what he described would become a troop cantonment. 

Construction of the air base was considered to have officially begun on 3, 1942. The first contract was released on May 2 for construction of a road spur and on May 4, the County began building up a county road one mile from highway US 81. This was Dry Creek Road, so named owing to a dry creek which crossed it. The road work was to cost the County $18,443, use ninety-six men, and take six weeks to complete. The exigencies of the war effort put construction in high gear. Work was around the clock, seven days a week and was basically a non-union project.

There remained one barrier to be removed before full-scale construction could commence. The Salina Journal announced on May 21 that the Army planned to dispose of four sets of buildings consisting of twenty-five farm buildings, which included four houses, four windmills, and a concrete stave silo. Terms of purchase required the new owners to remove the buildings from the area by June 7, 1942.

A unique feature associated with the base—the absence of taverns, pawn shops, etc.—was created on June 3, 1942 when the Saline County Commissioners

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8Salina (KS) Journal, May 1 and 6, 1942 and April 21, 1943.

9Salina (KS) Journal, May 2, 4, and 9, 1942. Apparently this was an improvement project as period maps show a road in existence at the time.


the area for two miles around the base to keep it "pure" and free of 

As has been noted in Chapter One, there was a strong desire 

for two miles around the base to keep it "pure" and free of 

woody tonsks."12 As has been noted in Chapter One, there was a strong desire 

area leaders to keep the County from becoming another "Junction City." The 

nts of this action are still in evidence. During the late 1950s, protests 

Saline County kept the base from getting its own liquor store. 

On August 11, 1942, the base acquired 480 more acres of land for $56,434. 

brought the size of the base to between 2,400 and 2,600 acres in size.13 

this time, construction had progressed to the stage that it was beginning to 

like a military base. There were to be two runways 10,000 feet in length 

two runways 7,500 feet long with twelve connecting taxi strips. The con­ 

crete apron was 4,000 by 600 feet and the buildings sat on 365 acres.14 

What kind of buildings were constructed has been hard to determine. The 

buildings pointed out to this writer as being left over from World War II are 

wooden stilts at least one foot off the ground. This would seem to indicate 

the base was located on swampy ground. (The area was considered to be a 

ood plain of the Smoky Hill River.) The quality of the buildings is also of 

нтерest because during the night of June 16, 1943, a "typical summer storm" 

Salina and the base. "Several" buildings, which included at least one bar­ 

acks, fell down with no injuries reported.15 No pictures of the base during 

is period have been found; however, the World War II structures still standing 

long, narrow one-story affairs.

12Salina (KS) Journal, June 3, 1942. As of September 1, 1982, there was 
only one liquor store in the area and a convenience story where 3.2% beer 
could be obtained.

13Salina (KS) Journal, August 11, 1942.


15Salina (KS) Journal, June 17, 1943. The kind of buildings will be 
drought up in greater detail in Chapter III.
Just what the War Department was planning for the base was open to speculation. The Salina Journal announced on September 12, 1942 that the base was designated a "super port," one of three in the Second Air Force area which would receive planes dubbed "Sky Dreadnaughts" and capable of carrying 400 men. The field was to be capable of handling blind landings and would have runways 300 feet wide. The idea of a large base seems to have caught the public's imagination, because on October 5 the Salina Journal heralded it as one of the three largest in the United States, with 583 acres of paved land. On October 8, 1942, the Salina Advertiser-Sun announced that "when completed, the base will be one of the world's largest. The largest ever-made will be the runways with combined length of 35,300 feet which with the apron and taxiways will contain 200,000 square yards of concrete pavement."\(^{16}\)

Originally, it appears that the War Department had intended to complete construction by September 15, 1942, but the Salina Journal announced on January 8, 1944 that construction was nearing completion,\(^{17}\) nearly two years after construction had started. Interestingly enough, a little over a year later, the AAF would start phasing out activities at the Dodge City (KS) Army Air Field, its purpose in the war effort accomplished.\(^{18}\)

**OO Gunnery Range**

Salvo, the base newspaper, featured an article on October 9, 1943 about the Gunnery range and only mentioned that it was located somewhere near the base. At this time, twenty-one men were stationed there to maintain it, working two

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\(^{16}\)Salina (KS) Journal, September 12 and October 5, 1942 and the Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 8, 1942. To the best of this writer's knowledge, not even the C-5A in use today can carry 400 men and it is the largest aircraft flying.

\(^{17}\)Salina (KS) Journal, June 17, 1943.

It was not until February 16, 1945 that the Salina Journal took note of the
Range and then only that the War Department had announced that 32,000 acres
been transferred from Camp Phillips to the air base for use as a bombing
and air-to-ground gunnery range for the B-29s stationed at the base. This
transfer involved only the land not used by the Prisoner of War (POW) camp, the
Phillips Hospital, and the cantonment. 20

At the same time, Col. Ralph W. Rodieck, Base Commander, warned civilians
against trespassing on the Range proper due to the dangers involved. He pub­
licly informed the farmers, who may have dreamed of purchasing the land (in some
cases, repurchasing their land which had been condemned in early 1942) due to
reduced activity on Camp Phillips, that they would have to wait until at
least the end of the war 21 to possible reclaim the land for agricultural pur­
poses.

From May, 1979 to February, 1981, this writer was assigned to the Range as
clerk/receptionist. From time to time, he came in contact with farmers who
complained with bitterness how the Army had shoved the owners off of the land and
let it lie, seemingly dormant, after purchasing it for between $1 and $15
per acre.

Today, little remains of the World War II era there. The POW camp bordered
at has become the rifle range on the east and was one mile north of the Falun
road which, until the 1960s, was the main entrance to the Range. The foundations

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19 Salvo, October 9, 1943. The Operations Center was situated in what had
been the Camp Phillips Warehouse area according to Mr. Royal Oakes in a letter
this writer. Private Oakes was stationed at Camp Phillips in 1944.


21 Ibid.
operations building, a barracks, and the main control tower still exist. Writer learned that before the advent of jets, the bombers began their over the town of Marquette to the south. It appears that the construction of a temporary nature because the foundations were thin and probably not reinforced with steel. Today, everything has been moved to the north side of Range, a distance of about six miles. The only remaining structure of the Camp, a guard tower, stands deserted in a field. There are deserted bunkers the north entrance to the Army National Guard rifle range.

Operations

The base, built to handle heavy bombers, was staffed with a complement of 400 enlisted men, 500 officers, and a 176-bed hospital. Before the war, Smoky Hill distinguished itself as a B-29 training base, but until the became available, its mission was to serve as a processing and staging area for bombardment groups going overseas.

Name

Before the base could settle down to doing its part to win the war, the name of its name had to be settled for purposes of identification. In its early days, its "project designation" by the US Army Corps of Engineers, which charged with supervising construction, was Smoky Hill Air Base, while the Army called it the Army Air Base at Salina, Kansas. The confusion was three-fold. First, there was an army air field at Salinas, California. Second, there was the larger Camp Phillips near the base. In both cases, supplies for the base were frequently misrouted to either Salinas, CA or Camp Phillips. Finally,

22 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center, Maxwell AFB, AL. Cited reference is undated and untitled, on file in author's notes.

the fact that air bases were usually named for cities or deceased
name, some supplies never got delivered when the Corps of Engineers project
was used, as Smoky Hill, Kansas did not exist and no "Smoky" Hill ever
formed a heroic deed while serving the United States as a military pilot or
known as an aviation pioneer. Not to be overlooked in this matter is the
able confusion that existed between the various War Department offices
had to deal with the base.

Congressman Carlson announced on November 12, 1942 that he had heard that
base would be designated "Smoky Hill Army Air Field" and would be the first
named for a geographical feature. However, Lt. Col. William Cahill, Base
announced that he preferred the name "Salina Army Air Field." When
base was declared operational on December 23, 1942, it was called "Smoky
Army Air Field." When
Salvo informed its readers on February 22, 1943 that the "Salina Army Air
had changed its name to Smoky Hill Army Air Field. "The local citizens
called it that but spelled it S-M-O-K-E-Y..." Where the author
his article got his information and what took the paper so long to discover
the name of the base had been changed is unknown. Research has failed to
up with anything to indicate that the Smoky Hill Range has ever been spelled
\"e\". There is a Smokey Mountain Range, but that is in another region
the country.

Military Operation

Although the base was not operational on August 1, 1942, Lt. Col. William

26Salvo, February 23, 1943.
Base Commander; Capt. J. E. Matthews, pilot; and Capt. Paul Long, into a three-seat 0-47 observation plane (with a 975 horsepower engine), was considered obsolete, based at the Salina Municipal Airport, and landed on an unfinished runway at the base, touching down at 10:33 A.M. Colonel ill regarded the landing as a success. At this time, the runway was half finished and only the Post Headquarters Building had been completed. 27

From this time on, the tempo at the base increased. On September 10, 1942, 376th Base Headquarters Squadron was activated and organized to operate the with a complement of thirteen officers and six enlisted men. 28 This was followed seven days later by an announcement that a sub-depot under Maj. E. Stanton had been established to provide maintenance and supply to aircraft connected with the base. 29

Finally on September 24, 1942, a B-17 landed at the base carrying officers had come to inspect the base. This B-17 was the first actual combat plane land at the base, whose runways were still unfinished. 30 This was followed December with the arrival of a flight of four-engined Boeing B-17 Flying 3ress bombers. 31 It appears that there may have been a few planes on base December. Two combat units had been organized on base in October and Salina Journal reported on November 21 that a plane from the base was missing Louisiana. Hugh E. Phelan, then a Second Lieutenant and a B-17 Bombardier, on base in November, 1942 and his crew did some flying in their plane prior

27Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 6, 1942.
28Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
29Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 17, 1942.
30Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 24, 1942.
leaving Smoky Hill for overseas on December 10. 32

There was some training activity underway in November as is evidenced by Phelan's letter. The 21st Bomb Wing and the 346th Bomb Group were on base this time. 33 However, it was not until December 17, 1942 that any local newspaper picked up on this. On that date, the Salina Advertiser-Sun did an article on this training that the 21st Bomb Wing under the command of Colonel A. F. Emberger was undergoing. 34

On July 19, 1943, the Salina Journal announced that the first B-29 to use Smoky Hill's runways had landed to refuel. At long last, the plane for which the base had been designed put in its first appearance 35 and was greeted with same fanfare that is accorded the sighting of the first robin in Spring. In September, 1943, Lt. Col. Paul Tibbetts landed the first B-29 assigned the base as a member of the 58th Bomb Wing, which was the first B-29-equipped unit to go overseas. 36 Later, Colonel Tibbetts would go into training at Dover AAF, Utah and from there would command the plane that dropped the first nuclear bomb in war on Japan in 1945.

Throughout the month of September, B-29s kept arriving until there were over 252 B-29s on base and all were assigned to the 58th Bomb Wing. The XXth Bomber Command was probably on base at this time and later gained notoriety as the first B-29 unit to bomb the mainland of Japan. The unit had been or-

32 Hugh E. Phelan letter, undated, but received by this writer on August 26, 1962 and on file in author's notes.
33 The reader may notice that a unit is designated "Bomb" or "Bombardment." It means the same with the latter being formal. The AAF and later AF, seem to have used both interchangeably.
34 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 17, 1942.
36 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, April 15, 1948.
and trained at Smoky Hill. This was in addition to the complement already training there.

Hospital

In the next chapter, a rumor that Smoky Hill Army Air Field was a convalescent center for personnel suffering from emotional disorders will surface. It had already been noted that the base had a 176-bed hospital. There was also a hospital at Camp Phillips during this period. On base, the hospital had a four-part program for convalescents. The reason for this program was that the Army felt that after an operation or recovery from an illness, there was no better way of preparing personnel for a return to duty than just being furlough which the convalescent often used for "running around" his hometown area visiting friends rather than letting himself heal.

Rather than grant leave, patients were divided into four classes for convalescing purposes. Class four was for those who had recently had an operation and were unable to get out of bed. For them, classes were held in the wards. If an individual could get out of bed, he was moved to Class three and involved in calisthenics, woodworking, etc. When a patient had almost recovered but still required medical supervision, he was placed in Class two, taken out of the ward, and moved into a barracks. Class one was the last step before discharge and return to duty. Classes one and two were similar and usually involved the patients doing yard work or other similar projects. Apparently, the program evolved into something larger because the Salina Advertiser-Sun reported on August 9, 1945 that one of the activities this group was involved

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37 Salina (KS) Journal, June 16, 1944.
39 Salvo, June 3, 1944.
a swimming pool behind the Officers' Club.\textsuperscript{40}

The irony to this (besides the enlisted personnel digging a swimming pool officers without fiscal compensation) was that two years earlier there was an outbreak of polio in Salina and the troops at Camp Phillips had been forbidden to use the local swimming pools. However, Maj. A. A. Towner, Surgeon, approved continued use of local swimming pools by Smoky Hill personnel. He did not feel that one reported case of polio constituted an emergency.\textsuperscript{41} The concern then was legitimate. President Franklin Roosevelt had himself struck with polio and was considered to be lucky in that he lived and regained partial use of his legs. This period was before Dr. Jonas Salk developed a vaccine and there was little that could be done for polio victims, if they were treated.

Accidents

The exigencies brought on by the hasty demands of war-time conditions often resulted in accidents. During the war, planes from Smoky Hill were involved in at least eleven accidents. Three involved the loss of no life. Smoky Hill's first reported accident occurred on July 29, 1943 when a small training plane forced landing three miles west of McPherson, KS. There were two men on board and neither was injured. Sadly, the last accident involving a Smoky Hill plane occurred on July 9, 1945 when a B-17 returning to the base from Monroe, washed three miles south of the base at 2:20 A.M. Ten men were killed and were injured.\textsuperscript{42}

In less than three years of operation, the base lost sixty men and eight

\textsuperscript{40} Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 9, 1945.

\textsuperscript{41} Salina (KS) Journal, August 6, 1943.

Perhaps the most amusing accident, if there is such a thing, occurred on June 1945 when a Smoky Hill B-29 made an emergency landing in an Ottawa, KS field owing to a low fuel supply. It was not until July 28 that the B-29 was flown out by a team from the base. No one had been injured.\(^{43}\)

Whether or not the number of crashes by Smoky Hill planes was within the range of loss for World War II training bases is difficult to surmise. But two of the accidents occurred in Kansas. It is possible that there may have been more accidents, that for the lack of space, did not make the local papers. The majority of reported crashes involved the B-17, which seems odd since the B-29 was a new plane and surely not all of the bugs had been ironed out. This writer noticed that if the Salina Advertiser-Sun did not pick up the story of an accident, the Salina Journal did and vice versa. Nevertheless, it is easy to speculate that there may have been accidents that were not picked up by either paper.

\textit{C-47s}

The attention of the world seems to have centered more on the bombers and fighters than on the cargo planes which transported men, parts, food, and supplies wherever they were needed. The Salina Journal featured an article on June 25, 1945 informing the public that a much smaller fleet of C-47s had been received and was operating from the base since October, 1944.\(^{44}\)

\textbf{Training and Organization}

The end of the war was in sight when the Second Air Force, of which Smoky Hill Army Air Field was a part, directed its bases to start training its military personnel.\(^{45}\)

\footnotesize\textit{Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 9, 1945.}

\footnotesize\textit{Salina (KS) Journal, June 25, 1945.}
personnel to be useful in the civilian world after the war. Also, with a move towards scaling down training activities, the AAF inaugurated a reorganization of base units to correspond with the work being done by personnel. When this was started, units had personnel doing work which overlapped the missions of other units creating confusion and inefficiency. Army Air Force Regulation (AAFR) 20-50, which directed the change stated in part: "When the geographical dispersion of an AAF base unit is such that military administration will be facilitated by subdivision of the unit, lettered squadrons will be organized. . . ."46

By August 13, 1945, the end of World War II was in sight. Germany had surrendered in May permitting the Allies to devote their full energies to defeating Japan. Because the B-29 was primarily used against the Japanese, nothing had been done until August when it was announced that Smoky Hill Army Air Field was changing from an OTU mission (preparing groups for overseas duty) to a CCTS mission (concentrating on keeping the plane crews together).47

Commanders

Undoubtedly, no one influenced attitudes more than the man who, at various times, was called Station Chief, Commandant of the Air Field, and Base Commander. The kind of attitude Salina took towards the base depended in considerable measure on how well the public took towards that man and how well he accepted the public's reaction. Between April 1, 1942 and September 1, 1945, the base had seven Commanders, the last being Captain Long.

45Salina (KS) Journal, February 7, 1945. This is not as absurd as it first
46Salvo, April 1, 1945.
47Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 13, 1945.
Little is known about Capt. Paul M. Long which has not already been pre-
in this chapter. He was County Engineer for Jackson County, Missouri
City) and a reserve officer called to active duty in 1941. Construction
Hill was his second wartime assignment. Whether he had any military
and under his command has not been determined and his primary role appears
been supervisory.\textsuperscript{48} Considering the detailed information distributed
local newspapers, it would appear that the Captain enjoyed a healthy
ship with the community.

The first man actually designated to command the base was Lt. Col. William
Hill, a reserve officer, from Savannah, Georgia, who had lived in Cincin-
Ohio. He arrived in Salina on July 3, 1942 from Biggs Field, El Paso,
where he had served as executive officer and Commander. Upon his arrival,
dcovered that there was a housing shortage which would make it impossible
ve his family to the area for a while.\textsuperscript{49}

On December 18, 1942, Col. Carlton F. Bond arrived to replace Colonel
as Base Commander. Colonel Cahill's next assignment was not announced.\textsuperscript{50}

Col. Bond was from Syracuse, New York. Several weeks earlier, he had visited
base on an inspection tour. He was a veteran flyer having logged more than
6 hours in the air and had joined the Caterpillar Club in 1937 when he
out of a troubled plane in Arizona.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{48} Salvo, May 31, 1943. By the time of this article, he had been promoted
Major.

\textsuperscript{49} Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 9, 1942 and Salina (KS) Journal,
7, 1942.

\textsuperscript{50} Salina (KS) Journal, December 19, 1942. In "Wings Over Kansas," Autumn,
9, it was stated that Col. Cahill became Commander of Walker AAF, KS on
ember 19, 1942.

\textsuperscript{51} Salina (KS) Journal, January 19, 1943 and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun,
uary 25, 1943. The Caterpillar Club was a paper organization to honor those
itary personnel who were forced to leave a troubled plane by parachute.
Under Colonel Bond's leadership, base construction progressed towards commission and Smoky Hill received the first B-29s in 1943. On October 11, he was referred to another assignment and replaced by Col. Raphael Baez, Jr. Colonel came from Great Falls, Montana to take command. He had been commissioned 1917 and had logged over 5,000 hours in the air. About three months later, Baez was on his way to Ardmore AAF, Oklahoma and was replaced by Col. J. Melanson. What happened to cause this change in command has not been determined. Colonel Melanson assumed command of the base on January 5, 1944 or being on base as a member of the XXth Bomber Command. He had joined the Air Force after having opened Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho and turning it into a model air base in the Second Air Force. Before this, he had opened the heavy bomber base at Mountain Home, Idaho. Like two of his predecessors, Colonels Bond and Melanson, he had been commissioned in 1917.

As Commander of Smoky Hill, Colonel Melanson seems to have followed the established by two of his predecessors; maintaining a low profile with the local civilian population. Training with the B-29 was going full blast and the Army, which seems to have opened Camp Phillips to train men for the European theater of Operations, was scaling down operations there which would give the base Commander greater autonomy in not having a General next door to worry about.

Colonel Cahill had kept the civilian population apprised of developments at the base as they occurred. The three Colonels who succeeded him either ignored Salina or were ignored by Salina. People this writer talked to do not remember the World War II Commanders; only that they knew a lot about what was

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53 Salina (KS) Journal, January 5, 1944.
through 1942 and then there was a literal blackout until the middle of some of them thought that it was due to the nature of the training going on at the base and others thought that the Commanders saw themselves as being aloof and made no attempt to let the area get to know them.

A change in relations with the community was in the offing on July 10, 1944, when no one knew it at the time. Almost unnoticed, Lt. Col. Ralph W. Rodieck was named Colonel Melanson as Base Commander. Prior to this, he had served as an aide to Colonel Melanson. Colonel Melanson's next assignment was not clear and he vanished from the sight of Salina.

One of the first changes implemented by Colonel Rodieck was to make the position of Deputy Commander a part of the formal staff at the base. Lt. Col. A. Shedd was the first Deputy Commander to benefit from this action. This move was the start of the Deputy Commander being a part of the formal staff at the base.

It was not until October 13, 1944 that the public learned more about Colonel Rodieck. On that date, Maj. Gen. Uzel G. Ent, Commanding General of the Second Air Force, announced Colonel Rodieck's promotion to full Colonel. Colonel Rodieck was a native of Palestine, Texas and had enlisted in the regular army on June 6, 1930. In March, 1933, he entered flight training and received a commission in 1939.

As will become evident later, Colonel Rodieck seems to have made himself available to the local press more than his predecessors and as a result, seems to have been liked by Salina. His picture frequently appeared in the newspapers.

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54 Salina (KS) Journal, July 10, 1944.
55 Salina (KS) Journal, July 15, 1944.
56 Salina (KS) Journal, October 13, 1944.
the time and as will be noted later, Mrs. Rodieck was one of the sponsors of the 1944 base Christmas party. Some of this may be attributed to a couple of other factors already mentioned such as the fact that the Japanese were being acquainted with the B-29 which was no longer a military secret and the Army's presence at Camp Phillips was being reduced.

The last Commander of this period was Col. William J. Bohnaker, a native of Platteville, Wisconsin. He replaced Colonel Rodieck, who left for Washington, D.C. on June 20, 1945. Colonel Bohnaker had been rumored to be taking command for several weeks. He had been a B-17 pilot with the 19th Bombardment Group assigned to Clark Field, Philippine Islands when the Japanese attacked on December 8, 1941. This group limped out of there to Java and to Australia.

He was his second tour of duty on Smoky Hill. In August, 1943, he was Deputy Commander of the 73rd Bomb Wing when it was assigned to Smoky Hill. Later, he became Deputy Commander of the 472nd Bomb Group, also assigned to the base. 57

It is assumed that Colonel Bohnaker was a B-29 pilot by this time as the 73rd Bomb Wing was a B-29 unit.

Community Relations

Although a military assignment is often what the member makes it, the community near the base often plays a role. If the community is at least neutral towards the base, morale on the base tends to be high. If the community is hostile or negative towards the base, however, friction is often the result and contributes to low morale on the base.

From the start, Salina seemed to be interested in its southern neighbor. The completion date for the base is a secret, but the arrival of Colonel Cahill would seem to indicate that it is getting closer....This is Salina's base. 58


58 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 9, 1942, editorial.
Salvo, the base newspaper, commented about Salina in its February 23, 1943, issue: "... The war did not change Salina at first. ... True, it knew no incident for the situation of thousands of soldiers in its midst, and also that in some cases, the situation was not handled with the most possible care—but that was unusual. ..." This article noted that Salina had built Servicemen's Centers and, in most cases, the merchants were honest. 59 It was unfortunate that Salvo did not go into greater detail about the dishonest merchants as it might have provided some insight into the problems that military personnel faced in their dealings with these Salina businesses.

Security

The interest that existed in the base and the war effort was demonstrated when the Salina Journal announced on November 23, 1942 that "Clip Your Lip..." had begun at the base and the cooperation of the people of Salina was needed. People were urged to "stop careless talk, preserve secrets, and avoid gossip" about what was going on at the air base. 60 Hereafter, although people, like all residents of small communities, probably knew what was going on at the base, little of it reached the media in print.

Open Houses

When Colonel Cahill landed the first plane at the base on August 1, 1942, he admitted that the public was curious about what was going on and that he intended to hold Open Houses from time to time to acquaint the public with the progress being made. 61 Whether he intended to hold an Open House before construction was completed is doubtful and it is doubtful that he knew how long his tenure at the

59Salvo, February 23, 1943.
60Salina (KS) Journal, November 23, 1942.
61Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 6, 1942.
be would be. Unfortunately for him and Salina, he was transferred in

It fell to Colonel Bond to open the base to the public. On June 30, 1943, Salina Journal announced that the base would be open to the public on July 4, from one to five in the afternoon. Transportation would be provided for those arriving on foot at the base. No cameras would be permitted.62

Apparently, the first Open House went off without a hitch. The 16th Air-Squadron put on a show for an estimated ten thousand civilians.63 The interesting thing about this Open House is that the local press did not mention Colonel Bond's name in reference to this or few other events held at the base during this period. Whether he assigned the project to subordinates and let them run the project as they saw fit or perhaps the press did not get along with him open to speculation. For a man who was Commander of Smoky Hill for about a year, such anonymity is unusual.

A little over a year later, Colonel Rodieck announced an Open House for July 1 in honor of the thirty-seventh anniversary of the army air forces and the purchase of the first airplane by the Army. The gates would be open at 1:00 P.M. and there would be a formal retreat at 4:30 P.M. No cameras would be allowed on base. The runway areas would not be open to the public as training schedule would not be interrupted, according to Colonel Rodieck.64

63 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 8, 1943.
64 Salina (KS) Journal, July 28, 1944. Somehow, this "no camera" edict does not conform to the picture of the GI of World War II armed with a Kodak. Wonders if the military personnel assigned to Smoky Hill were permitted to have cameras. So far, this writer has been unable to locate any pictures of the base during the World War II era.
A low voter turnout was reported for the 1944 Kansas primary election held on August 1. Despite that fact, as well as the fact that the day was one of the hottest days reported to that time for that summer, a large crowd gathered at the base for an Open House/War Bond Drive.

On May 23, 1945, the Salina Journal announced yet another affair which appeared to be better planned. The public was to be allowed to see a B-29 bomber stationed at the east (main) gate for entrance to the field. It was not to be an open field day as normal training operations would be under way. Here was a chance to see the largest plane in the world, which was going to win the war, on a Sunday when most people did not have to work. However, there was an "added," unannounced feature. The Salina Advertiser-Sun revealed May 31 that the showing had been part of a war bond drive. Ten thousand people turned out to see the plane and Capt. Curtis L. Arthur was the master of ceremonies.

The last Open House of this period received little attention in the local newspapers and was held on Sunday, July 15, 1945. Five thousand people attended and the primary attraction was a glimpse of a B-29 interior.

Open Houses are a good public relations tool and the turnout can be indicative of the public's interest in the activities of the base. When one considers the fact that Salina entered this period with a population of around twenty thousand people and that fuel and tire rationing were in effect, a ten thousand

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65 Salina (KS) Journal, August 2, 1944.
was phenomenal! Neither the Salina Journal or Salina Advertiser-Sun
noted how the attendance figures were determined.

Recognition

Interest in this period when seven men commanded the air base, newspaper
indicates that only Col. Ralph W. Rodieck received any special mention
with Salina. Sometime in the middle of November, 1944, the
chamber of Commerce presented him with a silver tray in appreciation of
will existing between the military personnel at the base and the civil-
lation of Salina. The opportunity was also used to congratulate him on
unt promotion to full Colonel. Colonel Rodieck became the first and
ue Commander to be so honored until the 1950s.

ough Salinans basically seemed to receive the base with open arms, the
Jornal reported on November 29, 1944, that the American Legion had
or 400 presents to give the patients at the base hospital for Christmas
few had responded. People were reminded of their sons who were in the
and possibly spending Christmas in the hospital on a base near a strange

However, all was not bad for the men, because on December 20, the Salina
ounced that the patients of the base hospital would be the special
of the American Legion show that was to be held the following night in
Hall.70

hen just before Christmas, the public was informed that the Blue Pacific
on placed "Off Limits" to commissioned personnel at the air base.71 It
noted that this action occurred after the XXth and XXIst Bomber Commands

69Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 16, 1944.

70Salina (KS) Journal, November 29 and December 20, 1944. Memorial Hall
he city auditorium. Although it still stands, it has been replaced by Bi-
nial Center in east Salina.

71Salina (KS) Journal, December 11, 1944. The Blue Pacific was a supper
located on east US 40 or Pacific Street near the junction of Ohio Street.
pleted training and left for overseas duty!

There was a general interest in the base and the accomplishments of the
which had trained there. It is doubtful that the two local papers would
intend so much about the base had there been a lack of interest. Much of
interest was undoubtedly due to the war and the fact that many Salinans
as relatives in the armed forces. On the basis of what Roy Bailey and
Knox, editors of the Salina Journal and Salina Advertiser-Sun, respectively,
their papers, one could assume that there was some interest and sup­
er the air field. How deep this support was can not be determined but
ranged from Salina's pride in being a home of the XXth Bomber Command
bombed Tokyo to a plane that had been on the base, running out of fuel in
Perhaps the overall attitude of the public was summed up in a Salina
editorial during the last week of the war: "...Word that the
is to remain open is good news for Salina...The soldiers have been assets
ways to the community." 73

Personnel

Information about the personnel assigned to Smoky Hill during this period
minal. When the first soldiers arrived is difficult to determine because
Advertiser-Sun claimed one date and the Air Force claims another one.
ning to the Salina Advertiser-Sun, Maj. Alonzo A. Towner, a surgeon, arrived
the week of July 9, 1942 with the idea of "growing up with the base."
followed less than a week later by three men who arrived on July 15, 1942
Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona and reported to Colonel Cahill. The
enlisted men on base were: Sgt. Horance A. Blagg, Sgt. William J. Dulzer,

72 Salina (KS) Journal, November 28 and December 20, 1944.
73 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 30, 1945, editorial.
and TSgt Raymond O'Brien. Sgt. John D. Nunnery joined them a week later. Because construction was still underway, they had to live in town. The first troops did not arrive until September 10, 1942, at which time most of the work was nearing completion. The latter is in line with the Air Force view that thirteen officers and six enlisted men arrived on that date.\textsuperscript{74} Just what the difference was between the four men who arrived in July and those who arrived in September is difficult to ascertain. The latter group was housed in three buildings on base and maybe this is the difference. None of the articles made light of the duties the two groups performed in those early days.

In any event, the first arrivals found the base unprepared to receive them because it was not scheduled for opening until December 15. As a result, most of the equipment had to be improvised. Desks and chairs were made from packing cases and filing cabinets were fashioned from cardboard boxes.\textsuperscript{75}

Before these men arrived, there were civilians working on the base in connection jobs and there seem to have been Military Police (MPs) patrolling the base, because they arrested several workers for trespassing on the base during duty hours. The workers had thought that they were immune to arrest because they worked for the government.\textsuperscript{76} (It is possible that the MPs were assigned to Phillips as in those days the MPs belonged to the Army and were detached from the AAF.) Two and one-half years later, a warehouse worker, a civilian foraging agent, and a stock clerk were arrested and charged with stealing 3,100 and 1,350 pairs of sunglasses valued at $3,500. They were sched-

\textsuperscript{74}Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 9 and 15, 1942, and Salina (KS) Journal, May 6, 1948.

\textsuperscript{75}Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.

\textsuperscript{76}Salina (KS) Journal, June 19, 1942.
As sentenced in April of 1944. 77

It appears to have been an exception to the norm, because on April 26, forty-three civilian employees at the base were awarded the primary AAF of civilian service for faithful, meritorious, and exceptional service. 78 The behavior of the military personnel assigned to the base seems to have averaged. Awards for above average service were normal fare in press coverage of the base for this period. They were conferred at military retreats that occurred at 4:30 P.M., which seems to have been the time the normal business day ended at the base.

Some incidents reported were not normal. The Salina Advertiser-Sun reported an October 15, 1942 edition that a 38-year-old private committed suicide by standing in front of an approaching train one mile south of the base. Then, on March 9, 1943, the Salina Journal reported that a warrant had been issued for the arrest of a private stationed at Kearney Army Air Field, Nebraska for theft of arms and ammunition while stationed at Smoky Hill. The last incident at this level was reported in the Salina Journal on March 13, 1944 when soldiers were caught in a car at 11:30 P.M. in downtown Salina the night that had been reported stolen from the base at 10:00 P.M. Unfortunately the men, the car belonged to a Colonel. 79

One of the stranger incidents reported occurred on or about May 11, 1944 when Lt. Warren Kraft, a navigator on a B-17 bomber, fell to his death through the open bomb bay doors of his plane near Junction City, KS. 80

77 Salina (KS) Journal, January 5 and 8, and March 10, 1944.
78 Salina (KS) Journal, April 26, 1944.
79 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 15, 1942 and Salina (KS) Journal, March 9, 1943 and March 14, 1944.
80 Salina (KS) Journal, May 11, 1944.
the plane was on a routine training mission.

Courts-Martial

During this period, three courts-martial were reported in the local press. Three trials occurred between July 1, 1944 and July 5, 1945. One was held February 17, 1945 and merely mentioned the Private's name and the sentence of fifteen years at hard labor after he became eligible, and given a reprimand. 82

World War II was the era in which pilots delighted in flying under such as the Golden Gate bridge. Less well publicized was the interest of skimming houses, flying at tree-top level, etc. On July 1, 1944, a Private was found guilty of flying his B-17 low over thickly populated Kansas and serve as defense experts, jobs for which they had been found well


82 Salina (KS) Journal, July 1, 1944. "Buzzing" as it has come to be called in a popular sport in Salina, only jet aircraft makes determination of the party more difficult. While assigned to the Weapons Range, this writer to summon the Range Officer or Commander to the phone many a time because housewife felt that a plane had dived at them.

83 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 5, 1945.
Negroes were present in Salina before the war and there appears to have been no overt racial segregation in the city at this time. Blacks remain a minority in the city to this day.

During World War II, Negroes were confined to the 49th Aviation Squadron. It is known that sometime in late August, 1943, the 49th celebrated its anniversary. Whether this unit was part of the contingent organized to Smoky Hill is unknown.

On June 23, 1943, four squadrons or 104 military personnel participated in a drill competition. The Salina Journal's headline was "WAACS ARE SECOND" put on in the article to report that the "Negro boys of the 49th Aviation Squadron" won the competition. However, the Salina Advertiser-Sun's headline later was: "Aviation Squadron Wins Meet" and went on to explain that wards came in third but that the competition had been fierce. Who came fourth was not mentioned nor was the fourth group's name.

Women

As was noted in the above paragraph, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps was on the base during the war. This group was organized on the base by June 1, 1943 as the 755th WAAC Post Headquarters Company under the command of Lt. Virginia A. Barton. The Salina Journal announced on August 5, 1943 that 120 women would be drafted into the Army of the United States, Women's Army Corps (WAC) component.

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84 Salina (KS) Journal, July 7, 1942.
85 Salina (KS) Journal, August 28, 1943.
87 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, May 13, 1943.
There are 140 members in this Company, but twenty were not planning to take
as some were going home for family reasons. The actual number who
to serve in the regular Army dwindled. Just before retreat on Friday
August 6, 1943, seventy-seven women of the 755th WAC Post Headquarters
took the enlistment oath. There were twenty-two more women who were
on temporary duty in Colorado or on furlough and they were expected to
take an oath upon returning to the base. In joining the Regular Army, little
for the women. They continued to live in the same barracks. Their
roles did change in that the "auxiliary" was dropped and the full Army
option.

Military Courtesy

Shortly after the women joined the regular Army, Colonel Bond, Base Com-
decided that the base needed to become more military in appearance.
ars that some military personnel had become lax about saluting and other
courtesies. The Colonel announced a crackdown on this. Unfortunately,
no followup on how this crackdown turned out, nor were any specifics
ed.

Activities on Base

There were diversions on base which livened up the normal routine. Much
made over the fact that Clark Gable, a movie actor, was on a plane
on base for three hours refueling. Later, attention focused on General
MacArthur's plane, a B-17 converted to his use, spending a day on base
to the Pacific. Of interest was the visit by the two Royal Air Force

Salina (KS) Journal, August 5, 1943 and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun,
42, 1943. There was some confusion in the press about what the "A" in
for--Air or Army. This writer can find nothing to indicate that the
were a formal part of the AAF until it became independent of the Army in 1947.
Salvo, August 21, 1943.
who spent a day on base telling how things were in the European Theater.

Finally, after dreaming about celebrities, the base got one to it. Hank Greenberg, a former Detroit Tigers baseball player, was to the base as a special services officer. 90

Though little was mentioned about them, there were Officers and NCO Clubs which some personnel visited for a drink or two before going home. How far the end of the war, although no one knew that the end was coming, the burned down during the night of January 18, 1945. Damage amounted to for the building and $20,000 for its contents. However, the art center, located in the building, survived intact. 91 That the NCOs utilized ab of their own after this fire has not been determined from available

Praising for celebrities to visit the base or haunting the clubs did not the fancy of the personnel, they could get involved in musical groups as arles Craig of the 49th Aviation Squadron was organizing them on base. two years after the base was activated, a 2,000 volume library was opened. orders for books were received, it would have 5,000 volumes, receive fifty es, and twenty leading newspapers. There appears to have been a contest base war song because the Salina Advertiser-Sun reported on July 8, 1943, r. Gerald Dillon, editor of Salvo, the base newspaper, had written such for the base. In addition, there were USO shows and movies. The ulti-mas a "Sweetheart of the Field" contest being held on base and sponsored re. It was also announced that if the WACs desired a similar contest sir boyfriends, the paper would sponsor a contest for them. 92 How this

90 Salina (KS) Journal, February 5, 1944.


92 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 10, 1944.
turned out and whether or not the WACs got into the act has not been
ted as the local newspapers did not follow up on this and there are few
g of Salvo in existence.
ere were various non-celebrity visitors to the base. A group of school
visited the base in November, 1943. Admission to the base had been
d during the preceding months due to the war mission of the base.
that same month, the base dental clinic hosted a meeting of the Saline
Dental Society. One year later, Congressman Carlson visited the base,
hed by Colonel Rodieck, as he visited other Federal activities in his
ut.

Driving

ers of military service know that the adage about the grass being
on the other side of the fence is especially true in the military when
to jobs. One of the seemingly "easy" jobs to get into relates to
. Many people at Smoky Hill applied for driving jobs without really
ow to drive. Rather than continue rejecting applications for those
the base started a drivers' training course. This course was designed
able personnel to drive civilian vehicles. Most of the training was
ed at Camp Phillips.

apparently, the drivers' training course succeeded beyond expectations and
over a year later, the base had a reckless driving problem. In an at-

crack down on this problem, the Provost Marshall's office introduced
point safety program that was to be rigidly adhered to:

1. Orientation of all personnel as to the hazards of reckless
iding and the disciplinary action which may be taken.

Salina (KS) Journal, November 3 and 26, 1943, and November 16, 1944.
Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 10, 1944.
2. Close cooperation with civil authority.
4. If advisable, court martial action may be taken.
5. Revocation of the privilege of rationing separately and
  confining both officers and enlisted violators to live on the
  base.
6. Revocation of the privilege of driving vehicles on and off
  the base.
7. Forfeiture of gas ration coupons.
8. Impounding of the vehicles.  

Morale

Morale was probably as good at Smoky Hill as it was at other military in-
stitutions during this conflict when there was a rush to organize and train
men to win the war. There is little evidence available to indicate that morale
was good.

A unique activity by the personnel at the base was reported by the Salina
Advertiser-Sun on April 27, 1944. Capt. Herbert C. Rodde, medical supply officer, had
acquired around 1,000 chicks which would be fattened for hospital mess
menus. The hospital had a two-acre garden to go along with this project.
Proceeds from this venture were to go into the recreation fund for hospital
units and medical personnel.  

It would seem probable that other units were
involved in similar projects. After all, this was in an era in which rationing
was in effect. There was not that much to do with one's off-duty time. How-

whether any other unit involved itself with raising poultry is open to
discussion. No one has mentioned Smoky Hill personnel being awakened with the
chirping of roosters instead of with the traditional reveille.

Colonel Rodieck did not become Base Commander until July 10, 1944, but

95 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 16, 1945.
96 Salina (KS) Journal, April 27, 1944.
becoming Commander, he had been a special assistant to Colonel Melanson. He had to do with programs concerning morale before he became Commander known. But the Salina Journal reported that the House of Representatives Army Affairs Committee Investigator had visited the base during the week ending September 30, 1944 and had commended the base for its facilities. He was rated excellent for its cleanliness, food, and morale. "Much credit went to Colonel Rodieck, commandant at the field and to Lt. Col. Herbert Millat, commanding officer and surgeon at the hospital. . . ." 97 Christmas, 1944 was the third Christmas celebrated at the base and received mention in the Salina Journal. Mrs. Ralph W. Rodieck (the wife of the Base Commander) was President of the Post Women's Club which organized a Christmas party to be held on December 24 at 2:00 P.M. in the base theater for the children officers and enlisted personnel. Cartoons were to be shown and Santa Claus put in an appearance to distribute gifts. Special church services were held. The mess halls were planning to serve a lavish Christmas Day feast which military personnel would be permitted to invite their families or a 98

Housing

Smoky Hill Army Air Field was Salina's base. But one area was to cause concern in base/community relations until late 1962. Two reasons given in late and early 1942 for not giving Salina an air base were its susceptibility to flooding and insufficient housing for a large influx of people. 99 The housing in Salina would be present during the war years, although it would not be a public 97Salina (KS) Journal, September 30, 1944.
But from here on, it would be a thorn in the relations between the base community.

June 6, 1942, the Salina Journal announced that the Salina Chamber of Commerce was conducting a survey of all possible available housing facilities within a 5-mile radius of Salina to handle upwards of 20,000 soldiers. This survey included the cities of Minneapolis, Lindsborg, Marquette, Abilene, and McPherson. 100

Estimates conclude that there were at least 40,000 soldiers in the middle of 1943. This figure consists of two divisions of about 12,000 men at Camp Phillips and 5,000 at the air base. It does not include the action workers who may have been brought into the area or transient military personnel in the area for training purposes.

This article was followed by another one on July 15 which announced that the Army had asked the Office of Price Administration (OPA) to declare Salina a base area and freeze rents. The Army also asked the government to construct 600 housing units. 101

Only the Salina Advertiser-Sun took a stand on this matter. "...There were no military installations in Salina. ... Colonel Cahill, base commander, asked for six hundred houses funded by the government. ... The plans for the base seem to indicate that after the war, the base will be here. If this is the case, then the houses should be built." 102

While researching the base, this writer heard that the market had been such that dirt-floored basements were rented and anything with a roof was deemed able to rent. This is believable because the population around a military base...

100 Salina (KS) Journal, June 6, 1942.
102 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 16, 1942, editorial.
42

actuates wildly during a war or international crisis. Military personnel are trained, and then move on. Unless the individual goes overseas, the accompanying him. Salina was unprepared for the arrival of military personnel and had not received advance warning that it would be the home of two installations. The smaller towns of Smolan, Falun, and Marquette did some of the influx but there was fuel rationing to contend with which one's choice of places to live. It will come out in the next chapter that the war, this matter got worse, indicating a reluctance by real estate agents and contractors to build any new dwellings. In this instance, it is assumed that the area simply was not prepared for the influx of such a group of people. Salina had a population of around 20,000 people on or 7, 1941. It is probably fortunate for Salina that its only wartime duty was the training of military personnel and that the military did proposing for the men on base in the form of barracks.

End of the War

After Germany surrendered in May, 1945, plans were implemented to shift from Europe to the Asian theater for a possible invasion of the Japanese and. However, things began looking up for the war effort there. Russia ended war on Japan in August, 1945. Shortly after Russia declared war, the States Army Air Force B-29s dropped the only nuclear bombs ever used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Peace was around the corner.

On August 17, 1945, Colonel Bohnaker announced that the base was to continue in operation unaffected by peace negotiations. On behalf of the base, he sought the cooperation of the community as the base switched from wartime to peacetime operation. 103

103 Salina (KS) Journal, August 17, 1945.
in war as a base for a bomber that took the war directly to the
of Japan, Salinans began wondering about the future of Smoky Hill Army
field. The speculation had started in mid-1942 when the housing situation
light and the Saline Advertiser-Sun, in an editorial, had stated that
ins of the Army seemed to indicate that the base would continue in opera­
ion after the war. Thus, there was some relief when the Salina Journal
ed on August 22, 1945 that the base was to remain in operation as a B-29
base and that personnel discharged would be replaced.

The formal end of World War II occurred on September 1, 1945 aboard the
Mouri in Tokyo Bay. Already, personnel who were overaged or had enough
had been or were in the process of being discharged from the service at
Hill Army Air Field. For the base, the next period was about to begin,
which it would try to find itself. It had done well in its childhood,
period of adolescence would almost destroy it.

104 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 16, 1942, editorial.
CHAPTER III

TIP-TOE THROUGH THE SUNFLOWERS

SEPTEMBER 2, 1945 TO DECEMBER 7, 1949

September 2, 1945 was the first day of peace for the United States since
Mr 7, 1941. The work continued for the personnel at Smoky Hill Army Air
because the base was to be kept open; but for the next four years, Smoky
would tip-toe through the Sunflowers as first the Army and then the Air
Tried to decide what to do with a base that had eight runways; four 10,000
long and four 7,500 feet long. (Each strip is considered to be two runways,
and right. Although there were only four landing strips, each had a left
tight designation.) During this period, the strength would vary between
four Groups and the B-29 bomber would be the main aircraft assigned to
The base was reorganized three times and the last would culminate in
1947 with the organization of the 301st Bomb Wing which would be the parent
on Smoky Hill. The last three Groups assigned to Smoky Hill during this
the 301st, 97th, and 22nd, went on to win greater glory, only after they
transferred from the base and the latter two became full-fledged Wings.
301st Bomb Group was a formal part of the 301st Bomb Wing.)

For the next fifty-two months or until December, 1949, Smoky Hill would
through the post-war period trying to find a niche for itself in the na-
mal defense. Ten men would hold the title of Base Commander, but one would
be there for two weeks. Another would be named Base Commander but would
put in an appearance. These men would deal with a variety of problems
aged from gun play on the base to a chronic housing shortage and mercu-

rings with Salina's leaders.

though Salina had been assured that Smoky Hill would continue in operation
the war ended, there was constant uncertainty over the role that the base
play in the national defense. True, Salina was virtually in the center
United States, which meant that in the event of an enemy attack on either
planes based at Smoky Hill could easily participate in any battle to save
ation. While location may have been a positive factor, the size of Salina's
ation was a negative one. There just did not seem to be anything to do in
when the men from the base were off duty.

In this period, Smoky Hill tried to find itself and failed. However, it
see to the attention of Generals Eisenhower and LeMay, both of whom would
roles in the future of the base. Of the ten men who served as Base Com-
in this period, there is only a record of one who returned to the area
visit after they left in this writer's sources. The officer who commanded
base for two weeks in 1945 was in command of a unit assigned to the base in
but never reported with his unit when it moved to Salina. Another former
nder was favorably impressed with his assignment at the base and was a
ent visitor until he retired in the late 1950s.

Salina did not change very much. The population remained near the 27,000
throughout this period and that figure probably included the personnel as-
ed to the base. Indecision was reflected in that it could not decide if
base was permanent enough to warrant construction of new housing units which
Air Force wanted. In the end, Salina would discover that anything might
been better than nothing.

**Organization**

From its conception in April, 1942, Smoky Hill was a base of the Second
In April, 1946, the Second Air Force was renumbered the Fifteenth Air Force and Smoky Hill became one of forty-eight air fields. When the Strategic Air Command (SAC) was organized in 1946, both the Fifteenth Air Force and Smoky Hill were made a part of SAC. Smoky Hill/Schilling remained an installation of SAC until it closed in 1946.

In the first two years after the war, there was a frequent organizing and reorganizing of units on base. At the start of this period, the 485th Bomb Group and the 519th Air Service Group were assigned to the base. The 44th Bomb Group and the 405th Air Service Group were transferred to Smoky Hill from Great Bend Air Field, KS on December 13, 1945. There were no plans to merge the latter groups with existing Groups on base. However, there does appear to have been a realignment between February 7 and May 7, 1946. The 506th Bomb Squadron transferred from the 44th Bomb Group to the 485th Bomb Group and the 830th Squadron, assigned to the 485th Bomb Group, vanished from the roster.

The Salina Journal ran an article on August 29, 1946 stating that Smoky Hill would soon have "four combat units which would be a part of a long range strategic bombardment force." Colonel Lee, Base Commander, informed the Salina Journal that this was the first time that he had heard the story. However, the status of these fields was not determined although they were soon completely deactivated and declared surplus.
fing the Station List of the Army of the United States from January 15, through May 7, 1946, all of the Bomb Groups assigned to the base carried the designation "Very Heavy." This would seem to indicate that the combat units had the potential to be part of a nuclear bomber force. B-29s were the primary bomber in the United States arsenal at this time with a long-range capability. Post-war temporary duty assignments to Europe and Alaska would indicate that Smoky Hill units did handle atomic bombs.

An announcement was made on November 8, 1946 that the 97th Very Heavy Bomb Group, "a much decorated unit during World War II" and deactivated at the end of the war, had been reactivated and assigned to the base in July of 1946. The 97th (known as the 79th during the war) was the first unit assigned to the base which retained its numerical designation throughout its tenure.

The first attempt to consolidate the organizations on base occurred on July 9, 1947 when the 49th Combat Bombardment Wing (Very Heavy), Provisional, was organized and assumed responsibility for operating the base and maintaining winging functions. "In addition, it was charged with performing any special tasks assigned to it by the Fifteenth Air Force or higher headquarters, which included temporary duty assignments (TDY) overseas." Ten months later, Maj. Gordon F. Goyt, Officer-in-Charge of Conversion, informed that the base was in the process of another reorganization under the Plan. At the top of the organization was to be a Wing Headquarters and under it Combat, Maintenance and Supply, Airdrome, and Hospital.

The Combat Group was to have three squadrons, the Airdrome Group was to have six base function squadrons, and the Maintenance and Supply Group was

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6 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
maintenance and supply squadrons. The numerical designation of the 301st Bombardment Wing (Very Heavy) and it became operational on May 5, 1947, replacing the 49th Combat Bombardment Wing, Provisional, which had stationed the base since January 9, 1947.

May 1, 1948, it was announced that the 97th Bomb Group, the twenty-ninth to be stationed at Smoky Hill, was to be transferred to Biggs Air Force Base, El Paso, TX. The reason for the move was the transfer of Biggs from control of the Tactical Air Command (TAC) to SAC. This move started on May 17. At the same time, the 22nd Bomb Group was transferred from Davis-Monthan Air Base, Tucson, AZ to Smoky Hill on May 21. This unit began arriving on May 10. This unit was one of the older bombardment groups in the Air Force and had been organized on February 1, 1940 at Mitchel Field, Long Island, NY. World War II, it fought in the Asian Theater using the B-26, the B-25. By the war using the B-24 bomber. At the end of 1945, the 22nd Group was activated only to be reactivated on June 6, 1946 in Arizona. The last commander of the 22nd while it was in Arizona was Col. Walter E. Arnold, who was in command at Smoky Hill for two weeks in September, 1945. He was in command of the 22nd in Arizona from December 23, 1947 until it began its move to Smoky Hill. Unlike the 97th and 301st Groups, which carried the "Very Heavy" mission, the 22nd, although equipped with B-29 bombers, was designated for "Very Heavy" upon its arrival at Smoky Hill.

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7 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 9, 1947.
8 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
11 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, May 26 and August 5, 1948.
Sky Hill's mission was updated on March 10, 1949 when the 301st Air Re-
Squadron (ARS) was activated. The unit was equipped with the KB-29, a
version of the B-29 bomber.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, March 10, 1949.} The activation of this squadron gave
Wing greater range when it was TDY. It also saved time for Air Force
operating within range of Smoky Hill in that they did not have to land
fueling. Instead, the KB-29s of the 301st ARS could take fuel directly
planes that needed it, eliminating the need for a plane low on fuel to
fuel, and takeoff again.

After being on base less than a year, the Air Force announced that the 22nd
Group would be transferred to March Air Force Base, Riverside, CA in May.
Salina was assured by the Air Force that not only would the 301st Bomb
be transferred to Smoky Hill, but that it would be expanded and that the base would
very many men, even after the 22nd Group left.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, March 29 and May 5, 1949.} Alas, by December,
had vacated Smoky Hill and no aircraft unit would arrive to replace
all September, 1952. It is interesting to note that in nine years, the
had served on the east coast, in the southwest, in the middle of the United
and finally on the west coast.

It appears that although the 97th and 22nd Bomb Groups were equal in size
301st Wing without its support units, these units were subordinate to
1st Wing, as was the 301st Bomb Group. The only public reference to this
made in the \textit{Salina Advertiser-Sun} on March 18, 1948. The paper welcomed
Bomb Group back from its six month tour of duty in Alaska and informed
readers that the 97th would formally become a part of the 301st Bomb Wing.\footnote{Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, March 18, 1948.}
been organized during its absence. After the 97th and 22nd Bomb Groups left Smoky Hill, each became full-fledged Wings. By the time the base reopened new units, things had changed to where Groups were support units for Wings. By the time the base reopened, Smoky Hill would have two Wings under an Air Division, the latter not in use by the Air Force during this period, or for that matter, World War II.

Band

Smoky Hill had three bands during this period, which probably played an important role, not only in morale, but in community relations as well. This was before recorded music was commonplace and every army installation had a bugler for reveille and retreat ceremonies. The Smoky Hill band played on base such as Open House and when units returned from TDYs, etc. At the start of this period, the 555th AAF band was assigned to the base, was discharged in October, 1945 and replaced by the 728th AAF band in July. This band came to Smoky Hill from Pyote AAF, TX. However, the 728th band with the 745th Air Force played its first retreat ceremony on base after arriving from Colorado. Prior to its arrival, guns were fired for retreat.15

By July 11, 1949, the band played at various ceremonies on base and in surrounding communities. On July 11, 1949, the band left for a two month tour, to Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS and then Mountain Home AFB, ID.16 Thus, the band was on hand to play "Taps" when it was announced that Smoky Hill would be activated. Whether the band later made the move with the 301st Wing to Barksdale AFB, LA or was assigned to another base has not been determined.


Hospital

In this paper, allusion has been made to the 176-bed hospital established at Smoky Hill. An obstetrical clinic was established in August, 1946, at which later, the 100th baby was born. It was announced on February 17, at Captain Ervine, chief obstetrician at the base hospital, had just 17 babies in one 24-hour period for a base record. 

Col. Robert Corwin, a native of Dayton, Ohio, became Commander of the hospital in October, 1948 and started an association with the base that lasted until he retired in 1961. The association would be broken only by the years the base was closed. He came to Smoky Hill from the Pacific Air

would transfer with the 301st to Barksdale in 1949, and return to the hospital in 1951 when the base was reactivated.

Starting in late 1948, the base became a transfer point in the Air Force system. Planes with patients from Westover AFB, MA and Randolph AFB, stopped at the base for the night; the patients were unloaded and spent the night in the base hospital, were reloaded the next morning, and continued their flight. C-47 Skytrain and C-54 Skymaster transport planes were used. The fact that Smoky Hill became a stopover point was a need for refueling the planes as well as provide a rest for the patients being moved. (Here is an example where location played a role in landing Smoky Hill a mission. But one could just as easily have been utilized.)

There were volunteer workers at the base hospital, just as there are volunteer workers at civilian hospitals today. One who caught the Salina Journal's attention was

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\[Salina (KS) Journal, February 17, 1948.\]

\[Salina (KS) Journal, October 4, 1948.\]

\[Salina (KS) Journal, October 20, 1948 and June 16, 1949.\]
was Apache Joe, an 83 year old Indian, then living in Smolan. He
weaver crafts to the patients in the base hospital once a week.20

Colonel Corwin announced on June 2, 1949 that the Air Force Medical Corps
was established and that the officers and enlisted personnel under his
command had until June 6 to choose between the Army and Air Force.21 There is no
record of their selection, but later it was revealed that the Chaplains were
the same choice at about the same time and all chose to remain in the Air
Force.

Right to the end, the Air Force was making plans for ways to use the base
to advantage. Colonel Corwin announced that the base would become a center of
logistic training for units in the Fifteenth Air Force and that an officer
was named to plan the program.22 This program probably never advanced
beyond the planning stage owing to a subsequent announcement that the base was
closed.

To provide care for the families of married personnel, a mutual hospital
organization was formed in July, 1947 and 500 men joined. This organization,
charged membership dues, provided medical and emergency hospital care for
member's family. The dues were charged in order to provide replacements
for nurses transferred or discharged from the base hospital. This organization
fulfilled its purpose until it was dissolved on August 1, 1949 owing to an acute
shortage of doctors assigned to the base hospital.23

Throughout this period, the base had a 176-bed, four-ward hospital serving

tion that seldom had more than 5,000 men. In the following sections of
ter, matters will come out which seem to put the base in a bad light.
the matters concerned trouble with the Saline County Sheriff in 1946,
of criminal actions involving personnel assigned to the base, and mili-
craft accidents.
It is difficult to write about this period and overlook a rumor that came
writer's attention many a time while he was researching this paper from
of Salina and personnel assigned to the base during this period.
ese people came a rumor that the base hospital had a psychiatric ward
ation during most of this period and that the Air Force sent men to the
hospital for the treatment of emotional disorders.
le Scanlan, who as a Major was assigned to the base between 1947 and
ied that there was a psychiatric ward in the base hospital at any time
was associated with the base. The hospital did handle a psychiatric
if it came up, but there were not that many cases to establish a com-
ward. Smoky Hill did have a contract with city hospitals for psychiatric
A last resort for the hospital Commander would have been to transfer a
me type of patient to a General Military Hospital that had a psychiatric
which in this case would have been Wilford Hall at Lackland AFB, San
o, TX. The way Scanlan put this, it seems probable that this was Air
practice in all cases.
It is speculation as to how this rumor got started or why. But the fact
it did. None of the people who responded to questions about this era
that the base was any worse than other assignments of this period, but
thing just was not right. There is evidence of problems with the personnel

24 Letter from Mike Scanlan, November 29, 1982.
It was only during this period that the base was nicknamed "Smokey Hole" and getting "shafted" in People assigned to the base before this period always refer to it as Smoky Hill and people after this period refer to it as Schilling.

It is known that the Smoky Hill hospital was more than just a base hospital. Going with the November 15, 1944 edition of the Station List of the Army of the United States and going through the May 7, 1946 edition, the description of the hospital is simply listed as: "AAF Regional Hospital." It would seem that this hospital served several other bases, as the title implies, it could have a psychiatrist or psychologist on its staff. In addition, there is evidence that Smoky Hill served as a receiving station for inductees through 1946 and during the winter of 1948-1949, approximately 800 basic airmen assigned to the base for training in various jobs. It would make sense if this large a group of men were going to be on a base for training for the first time that there would be someone there who could help them adjust to a new environment.

To support how the rumor of a psychiatric ward got started may come out the following incidents: On April 20, 1946, the Salina Journal reported a Private was being held for psychiatric observation at the base hospital. He had been AWOL and apprehended after claiming that his wife had died of cancer and he had buried her in an unmarked grave. It turned out that he had never been married. Then the American Legion tried to find gifts for 200 patients at the base hospital for the Christmas of 1945 and for eighty-six men in 1946.27

27Salina (KS) Journal, December 18, 1945, April 20, and December 14, 1946.
cases, it had trouble getting people to donate gifts. There were also 
of unreported suicides in this period from sources who wrote this writer, 
which have been confirmed or negated.

Seems probable that, given the mission of the base during this period 
recruiting center, a post-induction center, a transfer point for patients 
or the east or west coast, and finally as a training center for basic 
directly out of Lackland AFB, TX, the regional hospital did have some-
its staff trained in the treatment of emotional disorders. Beyond this 
considering the fact that only Major Scanlan was positive one way or the 
it is doubtful that there was a psychiatric ward in operation at the 
hospital during this period.

Name

Smoky Hill changed its name twice during this period. From December, 1942 
ember, 1947, the base was officially known as "Smoky Hill Army Air Field" 
AAF" (and unofficially known by people who detested their assignment there 
er "Shafted" or "Smokey Hole," the latter a name which has since been 
to the Weapons Range.) In September, 1947, the Air Force became an 
endent military branch, equal in stature with the Army and Navy.

Colonel Mulzer, Commander of Smoky Hill, announced on November 20, 1947 
the noun "Army" had been dropped from the base's name and that the base 
hereafter be known as "Smoky Hill Air Field." This was followed by still 
er change in name on January 23, 1948. The Salina Journal announced that 
base would be known as "Smoky Hill Air Force Base" or "SHAFB."28

there is no difference between "field" and "base" in describing a military 
ing field. The Army still calls its air bases "fields" and Peterson Field, 
is operated by the Air Force. "Field" appears to be an informal term used 
the Air Force.
before it was announced that the base would be inactivated in August, Joe Kelly, Base Commander, announced that the Air Force had established policy of renaming bases as a memorial to the men who had died a heroic death. Smoky Hill would be renamed in honor of a late Kansas airman with an outstanding record. Colonel Kelly invited responses from the public and if valid, he would forward the suggestions on to higher headquarters for consideration. In days to come, Salina would make the first of many attempts to get the base named in honor of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a native of Salina and a licensed pilot. This attempt would not cease until 1956 when the base was named in honor of a Leavenworth man.

Mission

An air base to perform its mission, it has to have aircraft assigned to it. The B-29 remained the primary aircraft assigned to Smoky Hill during this period and was the only bomber assigned to the base. Each flying squadron had between ten and fifteen planes assigned to it and each B-29 unit had three squadrons which means that the base had at least sixty B-29s assigned during this period. In addition, C-45 and C-47 transport planes were assigned in a support capacity. By May 24, 1949, the base had been equipped with an improved version of the B-29. These planes landed on runways which were unusually large and considered "the finest in the United States." Indeed, one of the Dam Busters' trans-planes had landed on a taxiway because the pilot thought it was a runway, said! These runways were designed for large planes and as 1948 started,

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29 Salina (KS) Journal, August 23, 1949. This writer knows of at least 32 bases not named for men who died heroic deaths; Warren AFB, WY, Little AFB, AR, and Sheppard AFB, TX. All three bases are still open.

30 Salina (KS) Journal, November 18, 1947 and May 24, 1949. A definition of this improved version was not mentioned.
As announced that Smoky Hill would be getting the B-36 "Peacemaker" bomber for the future.  

As World War II ended, Salina had been aware that its air base would probably be kept open. After all, it had four (or eight, depending on how they were counted) runways; two of which were 10,000 feet long and 500 feet wide! These runways were capable of handling the largest military aircraft in the world at the time, which were the B-29 and B-36 bombers.

America had an unusually large war machine to dismantle, but it was almost impossible to let its armed forces drop back to its pre-war size. In addition to being a super world power and the nation whose leadership and resources destroyed the Axis, the United States also had the atom bomb and had shown the world that it would use it if necessary.

Smoky Hill was caught up in this post-war confusion. In August, 1945, the training mission of the base had been changed from preparing groups for overseas duty to that of preparing combat crews for duty as replacements in groups already there. But with the arrival of peace, the need for groups was greater than had been anticipated and Smoky Hill again reverted to preparing groups for overseas duty (OTU). This lasted for about forty-five days when the mission again changed to preparing combat crews for duty (CCTS). All OTU training was transferred to other bases.

Senator Clyde Reed announced on October 15, 1945 that Smoky Hill was to

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33 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 13, 1945.
34 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
operation for "some time to come." This was followed by an announce-
tober 18 that Smoky Hill was one of ninety flying fields to be kept
would receive combat units. Topeka was the only other field in Kansas
be kept open. Thus, Salina could breathe easy for a while. It
keep the air base with its payroll which was beneficial to the
omony.

if the demand by the civilian populace, the men in uniform, Congress,
need to reduce expenditures as fast as possible, the Army began dis-
men as fast as it could. Through this situation, Smoky Hill picked up
mission; that of a pre-discharge center. After the paperwork was com-
personnel were shipped to Sioux City, Iowa for final processing. By
15, 1945, more than 9,200 men had been processed through the base.
there was a catch to all of this. For in addition to preparing crews
areas duty and serving as a pre-discharge center, Smoky Hill was also
recruiting mission and made the headquarters for AAF recruiting in the
Perhaps the real role of the pre-discharge center was to attempt to
men to remain in uniform. It must have worked to some degree because
ember 8, 1945, 450 men had re-enlisted.

en. Charles F. Born, Commander of the Second Air Force, announced on
28, 1946 that Smoky Hill would remain open and would be brought up to
th by June 1. The Army Air Forces were in bad shape and to keep men in

36Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 18, 1945.
38Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
would be no unnecessary shifting of personnel. Within two years after
emplacement was made, the 97th Bomb Group would move to another base and the
next group would move in to replace it, only to move out one year later, to be
replaced.

Usually, the mission of the base was changed to the primary function of
training. By the end of 1945, the pre-discharge center had been phased out.
In May, 1946, recruiting was transferred to another base, although Smoky
continued to be an inductee-receiving station throughout most of this
time. At the same time, the Second Air Force became the Fifteenth Air Force
that training became Smoky Hill's primary and foremost function. By
November 13, 1946, the door to overseas assignments had been shut except for
duty there by a member's unit on base.

Another function assigned to the base was responsibility for Sioux City
Air Field, Iowa which was made a satellite of Smoky Hill sometime in 1946.
Civilians were assigned there as part of the caretaker force. How long
this arrangement lasted is unknown as this was the only reference made to this
particular mission in sources available to this writer.

On December 14, 1946, three B-29s of the 341st Bomb Squadron on temporary
TDY at Selfridge Field, MI under the command of Lt. Col. William C. Bacon
spanned a squadron of P-51 fighters to Alaska. This was the first of
four-two TDY missions carried out by units assigned to the base. These mis-

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41 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center.
42 Salina (KS) Journal, September 13, 1946.
and anywhere from one day to six months and involved from one plane
ups (or roughly sixty planes). In October, 1947, the 97th Bomb Group
six month tour of duty to Eilesen Air Force Base, AK, primarily to
ing in the cold weather. There were 1,730 men involved in this mission.45
the 97th Group was in Alaska, the 301st Group was involved in several
Although the B-29 had seen service in World War II, its limits were
own. On December 19, 1947, a B-29 of the 352nd Bomb Squadron, 301st
up, set a record by remaining in the air twenty-four hours, four min-
Less than eight months later, Captain Walter Abbott set a world record
5,120 miles non-stop from Germany to Marshall Field, Fort Riley, KS.
Abbott's plane was one of three to attempt the flight and the only one
at that close to Smoky Hill before low fuel forced the plane to land.47
It also found time to fly over Arlington National Cemetary in tribute to
dead and conduct over-water training flights to Hawaii and the

were also practice bombing missions which took planes from Smoky Hill
York, Utah, and Indiana. These were usually one-day missions and part
group involving over 100 planes.49 Ironically, the practice bombing
napolis, IN, involving eighteen planes of the 301st Bomb Group on May 14,
was the last TDY assigned to the base in this period. Sixteen of the

50 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, May 14, 1949.
assignments were to overseas locations. (Alaska and Hawaii were and
ordered to be overseas assignments by the Air Force.)

The 22nd and 301st Bomb Groups were TDY to England during the winter of
1948 and participated in the Berlin Airlift that lasted from June, 1948 to
September, 1949. "These units were the first to take part in the airlift drop-
plings of coal in Berlin parks and other open areas."51 It appears that only
transport planes assigned to the 22nd and 301st were used as no refer-
ence was found that B-29s performed anything more than convoy duty.52

Goodwill Missions

Another type of mission which involved planes from Smoky Hill were those
to generate and foster goodwill. It has already been mentioned that
from the base flew over Arlington National Cemetery in tribute to the
past as well as participated in the Berlin Airlift. In addition, planes
from the base participated in inaugurations for the Presidents of Mexico and
the United States. There was also participation in the various air shows held in the
area as well as lending planes to ship relief supplies to areas damaged by
hurricanes. In all, Smoky Hill participated in thirteen goodwill missions. An un-
precedented mission was conducted in January, 1949 when a Smoky Hill C-47 transport
plane assisted the State of Kansas in its annual duck census.53

Training

A function often overlooked in the activities of a military base is the

51 Flint O. DuPre, U. S. Air Force Biographical Dictionary (New York:

Watts, Inc., 1965), p. 122. The author infers that Smoky Hill was in

Berlin Airlift from the start and assigned to Germany under the command of

Major General Kelly. However, Colonel Kelly did not take command until January, 1949

when he arrived from Maxwell AFB, AL. The 22nd and 301st Groups were in England

throughout the Christmas season of 1948.


of personnel in skills needed for the national defense. Smoky Hill was home of a gunnery and a radar school in 1947 which received students at the Fifteenth Air Force. (The gunnery school was probably at the OQ Gunnery Range.) There was even a school to teach officers peacetime roles and an electronics school was established at Smoky Hill on March 29, 1949.  

In addition to this training and the TDYs, Smoky Hill was twice charged with training of reserve air forces. Colonel William Lee, Base Commander, and on September 26, 1946 that the base had been opened to train reserve officers using AT-6, AT-11, and P-51 aircraft. While in operation, this unit, known as the 142nd Army Air Force Base Unit, employed six officers, nine enlisted, and thirteen civilians full-time and had 100 reserve officers assigned to it for training. However, this program, along with a similar one in the summer of 1948, the base was host to approximately 1,000 reserve officers who served their annual training there. One group participated in the bombing of Omaha, NE. Finally, on April 8, 1949, another reserve unit was activated on base and remained there until the base was deactivated that year.

Weather

Weather is a factor that must be considered in military operations, especially when air forces are involved. The U. S. Army Air Force's Airport Information for January, 1945 listed the following specifics for Smoky Hill Army Air

54 Salina (KS) Journal, January 1 and April 8, 1948.
Precipitation—Av. mo., 0.66" (Jan.) to 4.54" (June); av. yr., 30.00"; av. mo., 0.66" (Jan.) to 4.54" (June); av. yr., 30.00"; av. mo., 0.66" (Jan.) to 4.54" (June); av. yr., 30.00"

Temperature—Av. min. and max., 42.6° to 67.0°; extremes—31° to 114°.

made Salina sound harmless, but on April 5, 1947, the base Weather grounded all flights until April 7 due to the weather. Maybe he should not have grounded until April 10 to release the planes because on April 9, there was a storm which "shipped B-29s around" even though no damage was reported.

Ring the winter of 1947-1948, forty-one inches of snow fell in the area. The base estimated that 150,000 tons of snow had been moved off of its roads and runways. But Smoky Hill was prepared for this type of weather. It had 8-ton trucks with four horizontal augurs which ground up the snow and pushed it to one side, each cutting a ten-foot wide path. The base also used a snowplow, an 8-ton snow fighter, four truck plows, and three road graders for snow removal duty.

This was a bad winter, and with all of the snow removal duty the base may have gotten careless with its consumption of gasoline, because on February 18, the base motor pool officer announced that Smoky Hill had been ordered to cut its usage of gasoline down to 272 gallons a day. Unfortunately, the officer did not mention the daily consumption rate before the order was received.

In today's era of expensive gasoline, it would have been interesting to know how much the Air Force considered wasteful back then.

On May 30, 1948, rain with winds reaching 82 miles per hour hit the base.

wrecking two C-47s and eight B-29s. Ironically, the storm barely
reached this area. Another severe storm hit the base on July 19 with 75 mile per
hour winds and barely touched the city again. This time, the base must have
escaped damage because only one C-47 was damaged. 61

Accidents

Between July, 1943 and July, 1945, eight aircraft and sixty men assigned
to Smoky Hill were lost due to accidents. Peacetime seems merely to have es-
cepted the loss. Between November 29, 1945 and September 27, 1949, Smoky Hill
planes were involved in twenty-two accidents which killed eighty-four men and
sixteen planes. Twelve of the accidents involved no loss of life.
The first accident occurred on November 29, 1945 when a C-47 transport
plane crashed at approximately 11:30 P.M. at McCook, NE shortly after takeoff,
with the pilot and co-pilot, the only two people on the plane. The plane
was able to return to Smoky Hill. 62

It was announced on August 28, 1949 that the base would be placed on care-
to status by the end of the year. As if to make this event sadder, a Smoky
Hill B-29 made a forced landing at Lambert Field (a civilian airport), St. Louis,
Missouri on September 19 with no loss of life. 63 But eight days later, a B-29 crashed
in Talihina, OK and killed all thirteen men on the plane. 64 These were the
first two accidents involving Smoky Hill planes reported in the local press during
its brief era.

In between, there were many accidents. One of the more unusual accidents

64 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 28, 1949.
November 11, 1947 when a B-29 from the base crashed into a plane
at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City, OK shortly after takeoff.
Only two men were killed and five injured, their plane crashed into
parked P-47 planes, totally demolishing four. The cost was $1.4 million
for B-47s plus $525,000 for the wrecked B-29 which with other expenses came
to two million dollars,65 a large amount of money in those days!

The safest year for the men who flew planes out of Smoky Hill was 1946.
In that year there were four accidents, no one was injured. On January 12, a C-47
planners preparing to takeoff. The plane does not appear to have been
damaged. Then on September 4 and 5, there were three accidents; a
plane crashed into a C-47, a C-45 crashed on the runway due to a faulty landing
and a B-29 blew two tires upon landing and an engine caught fire.66

Though there were only five accidents reported in 1948, all five involved
loss of a plane and four involved loss of life as well. Eighty-four men
in the 1945-1949 period but forty-five died in 1948. On May 10, a B-29
plane crashed in Arabia while on a training mission. Only
one survived. A little over four months later, a B-29 which had been loaned
and a B-29 from Smoky Hill. Some-
went wrong and the plane crashed shortly after takeoff killing all seventeen
on the plane.67

The most tragic accident in terms of life occurred on January 17, 1949 when
of the 22nd Bomb Squadron, 301st Bomb Group, crashed and burned twelve
west of Dunoon, Scotland, killing all twenty men on the plane. A resident

heard an explosion and reported it to the authorities. Four hours
shepherd found the burning wreckage. The plane had been on its way
to United States after three months TDY. 68

On March 3 and April 1, 1949, thirty-three men were forced to bail
squared B-29s. Three B-29s were lost but aside from minor bruises and
one was seriously injured. 69 All were promptly made members of the
Bar Club.

One of the weirdest mishaps occurred on October 23, 1947. A B-29 had just
for Wendover Air Force Base, UT scaring up a flock of "seagulls"
near the end of the runway. A second B-29, preparing to take off,
into the flock and was forced to abort its takeoff but not before 200
were killed, which covered most of the runway. 70 No other damage was
, although one suspects that it took a while to clean up the plane.
were twenty-two accidents in less than the fifty-two months covered
period. All but three involved the B-29. Eight of the accidents oc­
curred base or within Saline County and four occurred while the planes were
ring TDY missions overseas. The rest occurred in the mid-west and south.
were seven accidents in 1949 and this was the year that it was decided to
the base.

OQ Gunnery Range

The OQ Gunnery Range remained an integral part of the base during this
, thereby ruining the dreams of farmers who had hoped to get back the land
ment had purchased in condemnation proceedings from them in early 1942.

68 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, January 20, 1949.
ow that the war was over, apparently there was no need to keep secret the
secrets transpiring at the OQ Gunnery Range, located seventeen miles south-

of Salina. During the war, the Army Air Force had come up with the idea
of using remote-controlled robot planes to train aerial gunners who tried to
these planes down from nine turrets on the ground which were similar to
those found in the B-29. The 485th Bombardment Group, then the parent unit
of the 485th Bombardment Group, was the sixth group to use the Range.71

Apparently there was a lull in usage of the Range after the war because on
June 3, 1947, the Salina Journal warned farmers that they were apt to be shot
bombed out of their fields around Camp Phillips by planes using the Camp
Range and looking for something besides the stationary targets they
within the confines of the Range. The next day, the Salina Journal pub-
died a map showing where the planes were supposed to be doing their practicing
advising farmers to stay clear of these areas.72

It was not made clear whether the farmers were actually on the Range or
fields adjacent to the Range. Today, the bulk of the 33,000+ Range is leased
fields for grazing, haying, and crops. A series of checks has been devised
prevent the leaseholders from being injured and there is a "fan area" in
no one is permitted while the Range is being used by planes, but it is

Commanders

Ten men served as Commander of Smoky Hill during this period, one serving
times. Somewhere along the line, the ranking officer on base ceased to
as Base Commander and occupied himself with the duties involving commanding

71Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 29, 1945.
a unit (or Bombardment Wing as it came to be known) on base, but to
consistency and avoid confusion, this chapter will concern itself with
officer on base. There is some confusion as to when the Base Commander
Commander became separate positions.

William J. Bohnacker had taken command of the base on June 20, 1945
the base make the transition from wartime to peacetime operation. Noth­
otional seems to have happened on the base during his tenure and on
25, 1945, he left for a new assignment.

was replaced by Col. Walter E. Arnold of El Paso, TX, who had commanded
Bombardment Group when it was stationed at Fremont, NE. He had been
War in Germany from August, 1944 until the end of the war. It
ounced that he would only be Commander for about two weeks or until
lliam O. Eareckson arrived.73

olonel Eareckson took command of the base on October 3 and Colonel Arnold
take command of the 17th Wing at Sioux City, Iowa. The new Commander
Hill was a native of Reno, NY and a graduate of the United States Mili­
ademy, class of 1924. Prior to his assignment to the base, he had com-
ountain Home AAF, ID. On leaving his Smoky Hill command, he was assigned
University of Michigan.74

One man who was reported assuming command of the base never showed up.

Algene E. Key, Commander of Pyote AAF, TX was announced as succeeding
Eareckson on November 1.75 Then on November 5, Col. Maurice A. Preston
ed to take command and begin what turned out to be a nine-month tour of

73Salina (KS) Journal, September 25, 1945. As noted above, later Col.
Id's unit in Arizona was transferred to Smoky Hill 1948 without him.
75Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 1, 1945.
little was revealed about him save that he was a graduate of the United 
Military Academy, class of 1937. Two months after he assumed command of 
, he lambasted the city in public for not doing anything about the hous- 
tage. He had been on base two months and still did not have a place for 
ply to live. He also started out being opposed to the use of Smoky Hill's 
ut a civilian airline. By June, 1946, he did an about face and came out 
 of Salina's getting commercial air service even if it meant using the 
runways. The mission of the base was such that commercial use of the 
would not hamper the base. 76

will be recalled that Salina seems to have liked Colonel Rodieck the 
of the World War II Commanders. In this era, the Commander who seems to 
liked the best by Salina and/or who liked Salina the best, was Col. 
L. Lee, who assumed command of the base on August 15, 1946. The new 
der was a native of Weatherford, TX and a graduate of Texas A & M College 
ad entered the Army in 1929 as a Second Lieutenant and by January, 1944, 
then to the rank of temporary Brigadier General in command of the Fifteenth 
orce, then stationed in Italy. Colonel Preston left to attend the Air 
ity in Montgomery, AL. 77

ow an officer who had been dubbed a "fighting General" and had shown pro- 
of greater rank, could lose his star, came out in 1947 when Drew Pearson 
led in his newspaper column that General Lee had gotten into an argument 
friend of President Truman's while in Italy over a hotel parking space. 
and result of this, according to Pearson, was that General Lee lost his 
orary rank, returned to the rank of full Colonel, and was "exiled" to command

76Salina (KS) Journal, November 11, 1945, January 3 and 18, and June 26, 1946. 
77Salina (KS) Journal, August 15, 1946.
Hill. All that Colonel Lee would say was that the story was true, but did not regard Smoky Hill as a "place of exile." 78

Another factor that may have contributed to the Colonel's popularity was that William Lee had served in the Philippine Islands between 1936 and as a First Lieutenant. As an air officer, he taught then-Lt. Col. Dwight D. Eisenhower to fly, and assisted the Colonel in his efforts to create an air force in the Philippine Army. 79

Base factors undoubtedly contributed to making Colonel Lee a hero in petely Republican Salina. But the Colonel went farther as will later be out. As Commander of the base, he seems to have involved himself in to better the life of the base and making it more permanent. After he Smoky Hill for other assignments, he was a frequent visitor to the base.

Colonel Lee served as Commander a little over a year. On August 28, 1947, nounced that he had been named Commander of the 31st Fighter Wing at Turner AFB, Albany, GA and would leave for there around September 5. One of his last as Commander of Smoky Hill was to get SAC to request appropriations for the construction of permanent-type barracks to house 1,800 men. 80 (Requesting ap- petitions is one thing, getting the money is another.) Colonel Lee had been "led" to Smoky Hill and he turned the assignment into something more than an a. (Two ironies are worth noting here. Less than two years later, he would assigned to command of the 22nd Bomb Wing at March AFB, CA after it had left y Hill. He may also have been the first Commander of the 310th Bomb Group, signed to the base in 1952, when it was organized in 1942.)

officer who succeeded Colonel Lee was destined to command the base.

Col. Leslie G. Mulzer, a native of Columbus, Ohio, arrived from Alaska command of the base on September 15, 1947 and took up residence at Camp .81 This was the first mention that the Smoky Hill Commander had a for its Commander, which was a far cry from the day when Colonel had complained about the difficulties of finding a place for his family.

August 3, 1948, it was announced that Colonel Mulzer had been named Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, Smoky Hill's parent unit, with Arters in Colorado Springs, CO. Col. Leonard T. Nicholson, a former Com¬p of Wendover Air Force Base, Utah would serve as Commander of Smoky Hill Colonel Mulzer was gone.82

Colonel Nicholson only served as Commander for about two weeks before to attend Armed Forces Staff College in Virginia. Command of the base upon Lt. Col. John P. Gregg, a bachelor who was a native of Hugo, OK.83

Two months later, Colonel Mulzer returned to take up command of the base replacing Lieutenant Colonel Gregg, who returned to his duties as per¬officer of the 301st Wing.84 Whether there was ever any chance of Colonel being named permanent Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force is doubtful.

Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force was either a senior Brigadier Genea Major General.

Colonel Mulzer had not been back on base two months when it was announced

81 Salina (KS) Journal, September 16 and 17, 1947.
83 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 19, 1948.
84 Salina (KS) Journal, October 8, 1948.
be transferred to assume command of Maxwell Air Force Base, AL. Col. Joe Kelly would arrive on January 3, 1949 to replace him as Commander of Smoky Hill. Colonel Mulzer seems to have gotten along with Salina and quality points along the way" to let people know that Salina, Kansas.

However, it appears that he was to be "best remembered for improving the food served in the base mess halls." 85

The last Commander of Smoky Hill during this period was Col. Joe Kelly, a 1932 graduate of the United States Military Academy, who assumed command of Smoky Hill on January 3. He was a command pilot and had three children. On the day he took command, he had lunch with top city, county, and military officials, thereby starting off on the right foot in the eyes of the city.

Little is known about what happened to five of Smoky Hill's Commanders after they left Salina and Smoky Hill. Colonel Arnold was in Arizona in 1948. It is known that Colonel Preston was a Lieutenant General and that Colonel Kelly had retired that year as a full General and Commander-in-Chief of Military Air Transport Service (now known as the Military Airlift Command "MAC"). Colonel Mulzer retired as a Brigadier General in command of a depot center in Ohio in the early 1950s. It is known that Colonel Lee was in command of this center in late 1952 and believed that he retired in 1959 as Commander of the Air Force Base, TX. 87 Colonel Kelly started off his command doing the right thing by having lunch with the civic leaders. He appears to have been

civic-minded of the post-war Commanders, but despite his later rise to
 rank in the Air Force, he does not appear to have had any connections which
 may have saved the base when it was closed in 1949. Of the ten men who served
 under of Smoky Hill during this period, three probably had an above av-
 erage relationship with the town and their command.

Morale

Morale is an important factor which must be kept in perspective at all
 times in any organization. Low morale in the military hampers the effective-
 ness of a unit in the performance of its assigned mission. It has already been
 noted that Smoky Hill lost eighty-four men in twenty-two aircraft accidents and
 probably did not help morale any. From experience, this writer knows that
 draft accident does jolt an organization until the reason is determined.

Howard Frohman, an enlisted man assigned to the base during part of this
 period, noted in a letter to this writer that there were few promotions, living
 conditions on base were poor, and the food was poor plus there were no pay
 advances which would have done wonders for morale. Yet, he noted: "WE WERE DEDI-
 cated. It may even have galled the men to discover that while they had trouble
 with equipment which would have made their job more bearable from the Air
 supply system, they could go into Salina and buy such things as flight
 gear, gloves, etc., from a military surplus store. It was their dedication
 that kept morale as good as it was. "WE WERE DEDICATED!" It's
 his dedication provided a pleasant side to the base which was documented
 in the letter of Smoky Hill:

by Mr. Frohman's letters. The living and working conditions played a part in morale and the former will be discussed later in this chapter. Colonels Lee and Mulzer are on record as having tried to improve this situation.

As the base shifted to peacetime operation, work hours were reduced. In 1945, it was announced that civilians would work forty hours a week while military personnel would work forty-four hours. The base would be closed at noon Saturday and re-open for business Monday morning. 89

June 24, 1947, the base adopted new hours for the summer as part of a savings program. Personnel worked the same number of hours but reported at 7:00 A.M. and left at 3:45 P.M. instead of the former 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 schedule. 90 This, of course, was designed to give personnel more daytime to enjoy off duty.

Another means of building morale was giving recognition for outstanding service. Between October 25, 1945 and October 6, 1949, there were at least 56 ceremonies held on base in which twenty-eight men and one unit received awards for such service.

November 1, 1945, the 204th Base Unit received the Meritorious Service Award for the period October, 1944 to July, 1945. Only five organizations had received this award before the 204th at Smoky Hill. This award was given in recognition of superior performance or outstanding duty in the performance of exceptionally difficult tasks. Members receiving this award were authorized to wear a two-inch square piece of drab cloth with a golden yellow wreath on their uniform just below the shoulder.

89 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 20, 1945.
patch on the left shoulder. The recognition was for service while base units were TDY. 91 It was not mentioned specifically 1949, nine airmen received commendations for their work at Rapid Force Base, SD between January 7 and 16, 1949 when that area was buried nine airmen received commendations for their work at Rapid Base. The last award was made to 1st Lt. Jeptha D. Oliver for his role Vittles" during the Berlin Airlift. 92 It was not mentioned when 92 was involved, but presumably it was prior to January, 1949. 92 reputedly there were more awards made than were reported in the local only one such award was reported in 1946 and none were reported for the Salina Journal reported eleven of the fifteen presentations, but very vague in coverage, while the four reported by the Salina Adver very specific in nature. ting on January 1, 1948, the base operated a nursery on base so that ments could get away for awhile leaving their children in competent care. ice was available only to the men assigned to the base and was free. ry was also provided by the base chapel on Sunday mornings so that parents attend the services. 93 Alle the 97th Bomb Group was TDY in Alaska two things happened which helped The first was the creation of the Top of the World Club by personnel of nit. Membership was open to military air crews who had flown over the Pole and a card was designed for members to carry. Then near the end of TDY, Staff Sergeant Floyd B. Pivonka learned that his wife was seriously 91

salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 1, 1945.
92Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 21 and October 6, 1949.
General Born, Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, happened on an inspection tour, learned about the illness, and flew the plane back to Smoky Hill in his plane. 94

It is possible that airmen on base suffered a jolt in morale when the Post announced that the free mailing privileges for members of the military had been in effect for over five years was to end at midnight, December 31. This privilege had started shortly after the United States was attacked on December 7, 1941 and was probably the result of an immense swelling of patriotism.

The Air Force Look

Smoky Hill had always been an Army Air Force installation and was never anything but an air base, even when Camp Phillips was in operation. It has Marshall Field but uses it for helicopters and utility aircraft. It must airlift personnel, it utilized Smoky Hill/Schilling and today still has airmen owing to the size of the runways.) When the Air Force became a service in 1947, Smoky Hill became an Air Force base.

Forms and the wear of them are a part of the daily life of military personnel. Proper uniform wear is drummed into the heads of recruits in basic training and it is still possible to be punished for improper wear throughout one's military career. There is a section on combined and enlisted performance reports that call for an individual to be rated on how well he/she wears that uniform.

94 Salina (KS) Journal, February 18 and March 4, 1948. This was in the era when jet aircraft was common and it seems that most major Commanders had aircraft permanently assigned for their use. Today, major Commanders in the Air Force utilize aircraft provided from a pool and maintained by the Military Air Command or fighter aircraft, etc., if their command has them and the Commander is qualified to fly the plane.

ite the separation of the Army and Air Force, both services wore identi-
forms until 1949. A Private in the Army was identical in appearance
ute in the Air Force when in uniform, save that the airman wore a dif-
tch on his left shoulder. Undoubtedly, this caused a little confusion
the Air Force's esprit de corps. The Air Force was a separate branch
ilitary, yet it looked like the Army.

as changed in 1949 when the Air Force began altering its uniforms to ac-
"Air Force" look. The familiar winged chevrons with the star in the
for enlisted grades made their debut in February, 1949. Then it was an-
on February 12 that a new uniform, slate blue in color and identical
or for officers except for insignia, would become mandatory, along with
es and black shoes, by September 1, 1950.96 (At this time, the Army wore
shoes.)

ut before the change in uniforms occurred, the Air Force had taken steps
age car identification stickers. To gain admission to a military instal-
, some sort of identification is required. Military personnel and their
ents are issued identification cards, possession of which are required
an base. Registration of cars on base is also required. By 1948, the
ary used windshield stickers as a means of identification. It was announced
the changeover had been made from metal plates to windshield stickers and
the noun "Army" had been dropped. Red was to be issued to officers, green
listed, and blue to civilians.97

Although many people are impressed by the sight of a military uniform, the

97Salina (KS) Journal, January 19, 1948. Today, the color code is changed
time to time and the windshield sticker has given way to a two-piece bumper
cker affixed to the driver's side of the front bumper.
have to wear it everyday like a change from time to time. Thus, on 24, 1946, personnel were permitted to start wearing civilian clothing off-duty hours for the first time since the start of World War II. The permitted for this wear was 6:00 P.M. Wednesday to 8:00 A.M. Thursday and Noon Saturday to 8:00 A.M. Monday. In addition, they could wear this ing on leaves, furloughs, and passes as well as in the base clubs. This ly helped morale, although from experience, this writer suspects that the new Air Force uniforms were issued, there were a few who wore them where until people got used to the idea of seeing blue uniforms and the tired of wearing them.

Spiritual Affairs

On December 14, 1946, Colonel Lee, Base Commander, directed that personnel ten as much time off as possible between December 23 and January 3. Squad comanders were to determine what they needed for a skeleton force and make egements accordingly. In addition, a children's party was planned on ber 19 for the children of all enlisted and commissioned personnel. Although Colonel Lee's directive did not mention the spiritual aspects of celebration of Christmas, it was probably on his mind. Religion is given ominent place in Air Force life. Each unit, no matter how small, is as a Chaplain. Catholic and general Protestant services are conducted Sunday in the base chapel. If a Jewish Chaplain is assigned to the base, ves are conducted. If not, arrangements are made for a monthly visit by Jewish Chaplain from the nearest military installation which has a Jewish lain or from the nearest community with a Jewish Synagogue.

ionally, a local group makes a special effort to get base personnel to its church. Although Salinans have repeatedly told this writer that personnel were welcome at local churches and that their role in church was deeply appreciated, no special effort was made to encourage their use during this period.

One was one exception. Salina had three Negro churches: St. John's Quayle Methodist (now with predominantly white membership), and Allen AME which joined together to send buses to the base to pick up men at B. C, the Negro unit for services; taking them to different churches daily, in rotation. The average number of men from the base participating was fifty-seven. 100

Throughout most of this period, there was probably a Negro Chaplain on the base. However, the first publicly recorded Negro Chaplain was (Captain Elijah Herson) assigned to the base on November 21, 1947. 101 He was succeeded in January 1948 by James A. Mayo, an ordained Episcopalian priest from Cleveland, OH, and apparently served until the base was deactivated in 1949.

Colonel Mulzer appears to have been deeply religious and it was during his tenure as Base Commander that the greatest emphasis was placed on involvement of personnel in religious affairs. On November 4, 1947, he noted that the chimes in the base chapel be sounded daily from 12:45 to 1 in an attempt to give the base some spiritual guidance once a day. 103

102 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 26, 1948.
Thanksgiving Day, 1947 was the first major holiday celebrated on base. Colonel Mulzer’s tenure at Smoky Hill and it was celebrated with two programs on Wednesday afternoon for base personnel and the other on Thanksgiving which was open to the public. The programs were under the direction of Catholic Chaplain John Carlin and short talks were given by Colonel Mulzer and Protestant Chaplain Foster B. Perry. In addition, the choral group of the 301st Bomb Wing were TDY in England during the Christmas period of 1948, their families were invited to attend Christmas services on base. While their families were celebrating Christmas on base, the 353rd Bomb Squadron hosted a Christmas Party for thirty-nine children from Southern Children’s Home, Lincolnshire, England at their base in June. The children were between the ages of three and six. In June, 1949, the five Chaplains assigned to Smoky Hill exercised an offer of accepting Chaplain's commissions in the Air Force or joining their Army commissions, which guaranteed them a transfer to an Army base. All five joined the Air Force and moved to Louisiana six months later.

Race

Race probably figured into the affairs of the base and affected morale in 1947. The base did have a segregation policy and Negroes were confined to

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a barracks area on base and assigned first to Squadron C and then to F. They had their own Post Exchange (PX) and NCO Club (designated as Number Two).

Salina Advertiser-Sun made no reference to race when reporting on the base. However, the Salina Journal, the daily newspaper of the base, generally made it a point to distinguish between the whites and Negroes to the base when reporting on events which occurred there. Commonly today as a racist distinction, it was not an uncommon reference at the time in many newspapers. Yet, the Salina Journal reported a speech that the Chaplain Captain John Carlin, a native of Salina, made before the Rotary Club on April 28, 1947 pleading for racial and religious tolerance. By the middle of 1949, change was in the air and General Hoyt Vandenberg, Air Force Chief of Staff, ordered all bases to integrate their units. Col. Sally, 301st Bomb Wing Commander, held a mass meeting for his personnel in the base theater and informed them that all units would be integrated "as soon as possible."

Civilians

Civilians continued to play a part in the operation of the base throughout the period. On January 5, 1946, Colonel Preston announced that 263 of the 860 civilians then employed at the base would be discharged within thirty days. By February, there were only 480 civilians left and that number was being reduced by December with four assigned to the Sioux City, Iowa air base as part of a caretaker force. The final reduction occurred effective June 30, 1947, with sixty-five positions were dropped and replaced with sixty-five untenured

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Those displaced would be given first shot at these positions. 110

315 tenured positions on base and this was the last reduction-in-
(RIF) announced until the deactivation process started.

The man who survived these RIFs was Lester E. Ziegler, an employee in the
building shop for over two years, who commuted between the base and his
industry, KS in a small 85 horsepower plane he owned, using the base
with the permission of Colonel Mulzer, Base Commander. 111

Traffic

If it is true that history repeats itself, then one could say that Smoky
lived up to this adage in the area of traffic control. It had been de-
in 1944 to teach Smoky Hill personnel how to drive rather than to reject
ations for driving jobs. By 1945, the base had a reckless driving prob-
was forced to impose restrictions on those drivers.

Three years later, base personnel from states other than Kansas were re-
ed to attend a course on Kansas highway rules and regulations on base,
by the Kansas Highway Patrol. One year later, the base decided that it
"traffic deviation" problem and formed a Traffic Spotter's Committee,
d by the base Provost Marshal, to reduce deviations by personnel assigned
base. 112

It is ironic to note that the problem in 1945 occurred as the last combat
left for the Asian Theater and Smoky Hill settled down to a peacetime
on. In 1949, the irony was that the driving problem surfaced as the 22nd
Group prepared to transfer to California. (Since they were on base almost
r, maybe they were the cause of the problem!)

Personnel Difficulties

...had been fairly lucky during the war in that the personnel at the...a rule, were well-behaved in town or else the people looked the other of a sense of patriotism. But the post-war period was different. Bill Willie and Joe had returned to the civilian world and stored their in the attic. World War II had made the United States a super-power international interests to protect. These obligations required the main-of a large military force and the draft was used to fill the ranks, the pay for personnel in those days was not very good. Not all of the served were troublemakers and many who entered as troublemakers got up before they finished basic training. There were men who volunteered and made a career out of the service.

was the bad side which received plenty of attention and forty incidents reported between November 15, 1945 and September 12, 1949 in the local What is interesting about all of this is that the Salina Journal reported weight of the incidents and the Salina Advertiser-Sun reported only two; in 1946!

The first incident was reported on November 15, 1945 when entrance was to the base post office during the night of November 14 and three packages taken. Two things stand out about this incident: The first was that and only three packages were taken. Second, this incident was reported 17 of the Salina Journal. (Until August 16, 1947, the base Post Office run by the Salina Post Office as a branch and staffed by employees of that Office. After August 16, it was a contract operation. Since this theft

In 1945, it was a federal crime and probably the FBI investigated it. No mention was made of this crime so the outcome is unknown. It appears the perpetuators of this crime knew what was in the packages. Perhaps, they mailed something, regretted it, and retrieved it.

May 30, 1946, Colonel Preston, Base Commander, and Lieutenant Colonels Schidden, and Klos, squadron Commanders on base, were arrested, convicted, and for hunting quail and doves out of season. It is interesting to note after this happened Colonel Preston, who had been opposed to letting it be used for commercial air service, reversed his position.

Two airmen were charged with breaking into an ice house in Salina and with car theft. (What temporary car theft involved is unclear. It be that a car was "borrowed" for the job and returned.) Ten days later, the airmen were beaten up by a civilian in a Salina tavern. Less than six months another Private was injured by glass during a fight in a Salina restaurant and hospitalized on base. This was the last such incident reported in period.

In a following section, it will be mentioned how a Private, an MP, shot a civilian while trying to break up a fight in a Salina night spot. wood was such that there was a demand for action and the Private was charged with first degree murder and held in the Saline County jail. He claimed self-defense and was released on $10,000 bail with trial scheduled for October or ber, 1946 in Topeka. Finally, on November 28, the charges were dropped.

he continued to be held in the guardhouse on base pending review of his case.

The two biggest monetary crimes occurred in 1946. Someone went through a radon barracks during the night of July 2 and stole $1,400. During this time Air Force barracks were open bay, e.g., there were no private rooms. During the night of December 2, the Post Exchange was broken into and a safe was taken. The safe was found on December 4 in a deserted base where the door had been removed by dynamite, and the money was gone. It was discovered that entrance to the base had been gained by cutting the fence south perimeter of the base. In both cases cited in this paragraph, it was not determined whether the crimes were committed by military or civilian personnel. Whether these crimes were ever solved was never announced.

After 1946, things seem to have quieted down. The last reported major crime of this era occurred during the night of January 3, 1949 when the base payroll Office was broken into and a $2,600 payroll was taken. This money was paid to personnel who were on Christmas leave and not present for payday. But by late 1947, a Sergeant, AWOL, was found in another state and returned to Smoky Hill for a general court martial. He was sentenced to six years confinement on labor and given a dishonorable discharge.

There were six cases of car theft starting in late 1947 and ending by the end of December, 1948. Besides the temporary car theft reported in 1946, there was one other such theft reported on January 29, 1948. Again, two airmen were involved. This time, their other crime was the theft of clothing. One theft appeared unusual. In November, 1948, one Sergeant was charged with...

This case was unusual in that normally when a case involves two members of the military, the matter is handled by military authorities.

In June, 1946 and December, 1948, there were six escapes from the stockade (or jail). These escapes involved eleven men and in one escape they all got out at once, but all were quickly recaptured. Most of the men were found guilty of being absent without leave (AWOL). One of the more unusual escapes was on September 21, 1946 when two men escaped and then surrendered peacefully just to prove that it could be done. 122

A Master Sergeant was found guilty of disorderly conduct at a special court on June 25, 1947. He was reduced to the rank of Private, sentenced to six months confinement, and forfeited two-thirds of his pay for that period. On June 14, he had met a seven-year-old girl at a Salina theater and taken her to the north part of Salina to take her picture. He then returned her to the theater. 123 On August 17, 1948, the Salina Journal reported the arrest of a Private by Saline County Sheriff's officers and he was charged with the forcible rape of a fourteen-year-old girl. 124 How this case turned out is not known, but it is interesting to note that the authorities on base handled the former case but County authorities handled the latter one.

Other crimes involved a variety of things from assault and battery to theft of camera and food (from the base) for sale in town to the theft of vending machines, etc. One of these miscellaneous crimes was made public on June 15, 121

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121 Salina (KS) Journal, January 29 and November 1, 1948.
A Sergeant and an unidentified woman companion were arrested on South Sett and charged with cohabitation, but no further details were pub-

 Between January 30, 1947 and September 11, 1949, five incidents involving y were reported which took four lives. Three were labeled accidental. 

 A Private was critically injured by the accidental discharge of a prison shotgun on January 30, 1947. This article failed to mention whether 

 Private was a prisoner, bystander, passer-by, or another guard. Also, the 

 of the Private was not mentioned. 

 Almost two years later, another accidental shooting occurred. This time, 

 was walking along a sidewalk in front of a barracks when he was shot stomach. A Private in a barracks was cleaning his gun when it went off 

 bullet ricocheted off the sidewalk hitting the Private. 

 The last two incidents of this period occurred in September, 1949 and in- 

 d the loss of life. During the evening of September 4, 1949, a Corporal 

 to the 301st Air Base Group died when a pistol he was examining in a 

 KS gas station accidentally fell to the floor and fired. 

 One week later, two Privates, both members of the 301st Air Base Squadron, 

 into an argument over the right-of-way on a sidewalk near NCO Club Number 

 One was charged with pre-meditated murder of the other. No ultimate 

Military Police

The first person an individual comes in contact with when he arrives at an air base is the guard at the main gate. This individual can either permit or deny access to the base proper. Until 1948, the personnel who were charged with maintaining law and order on an air base were called Military Police (MPs). From September 1, 1948, they were called Air Police (APs), of which there were 130 assigned to the base. 130

Though their primary duty was to deter crime, the base police were also responsible for duties that involved capturing escapees from the base guardhouse, who had gone AWOL, patrolling the town, and guarding aircraft.

During the night of July 7, 1946, a Private with MP duty sought to break up a fight in the Cloverleaf Dance Hall while on town patrol in the northeast part of Salina. Something happened while he was trying to break up the fight. He shot and killed a civilian. He was arrested by civilian authorities, charged, and then charges were later dropped. 131

Two months after the above incident, an MP on guard at the base ordnance magazine in the southwest part of the base, reported that some people had broken into the magazine. Base officials informed the Salina Journal that they regarded it as a false alarm. 132

Colonel Lee, Base Commander, now cut back on the number of MPs sent out on patrol. The Sheriff was upset over this announcement and asked the Saline County Commissioners for the money to hire more men to make up what was lost as

130 Salina (KS) Journal, September 23, 1948. Today, they are called Security Police (SPs) and at each base they are organized into a squadron.

131 Salina (KS) Journal, July 8, 1946.

132 Salina (KS) Journal, September 6, 1946.
thing of a negative nature about the base. If anything negative was
in the local press, it was usually done on the pages of the daily
journal. But on October 3, 1946, the Salina Advertiser-Sun featured an
article which revealed that the MPs on base had been shooting at
vehicles along highway US 81. No one had been hurt and no explanation
was offered at this time by the base on how this matter had come about. The
base decided that the only way to curb this activity was to prohibit the
use of guns by MPs when they left the base going to town. Anyone failing
to comply with this would be arrested. 134

Reading this article, one gets the impression that this was not the first
case that had happened. One would assume that the main gate and the highway were
located together. In all probability, this threat was never carried out, for if
it had been, the question of jurisdiction would have come up since the City of
Salina was incorporated and had its own police force. Traditionally, the Sher-
iff of a Kansas county has jurisdiction only in unincorporated areas of the
county and where arrangements have been made with the municipal authorities.

An arrangement appears to have existed between the City of Salina and
Saline County.

Looking at this matter more closely, maps of the time reveal that US 81
today where it did then and that the main gate was in the same location
from 1942 to 1965, meaning that there was a distance of about two miles from
highway to the main gate. It would seem virtually impossible for anyone

133Salina (KS) Journal, October 2, 1946.
134Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 3, 1946.
The to hit anything at a distance of two miles. The story that comes to light through additional research is another story. Robert Brownfield, a retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, was assigned to the base period and his comments indicate that the press had its location noting incidents wrong. First, it was not US 81 or the main gate, but gate which was isolated and lonely.

A young and lonely soldier would be stationed there on guard and a coyote or jack rabbit would rustle the grass. In his Situation, he would see the enemy closing in and fire one or more shots. To protect himself, he would report sighting what appeared to be an enemy. However, the most feared enemy at the west gate was a woman, dressed in white, who often appeared in ghostly form. On one night when I was Officer of the Guard, the man on duty saw a headless woman with an apron full of apples, which she was trying to sell. He solved the problem temporarily by putting two men on duty at the west Gate so they could be company for each other and recommended that be made the regular practice.

On another night, men assigned to guard an area that had supposedly secret material stored in it started shooting at an imaginary enemy. They called for reinforcements and when the reinforcements arrived each group mistakenly thought the other was the enemy and a substantial amount of shooting took place before order was restored. Fortunately, the area was dark and the men were such poor marksmen that nobody was hit! 135

This writer had read of one such incident along this nature around the time the Sheriff got upset. Taking the article that appeared in the paper at face value, it would appear that those in command were neglecting their duty by letting their men shoot at cars on a public highway. But this does not appear to be the case. It is quite probable that the first time Colonel Lee, Base Commander, heard about this matter was when someone informed him to read it in the paper. It appears that the officers in charge were trying to do something about the problem as it occurred. Colonel Lee had a reputation being tough, but fair. It is doubtful that he was a Commander who let a thing happen the same way twice. There is the possibility that in light of

Of guardhouse escapes reported during this period that someone may have fled with a gun on their way out of the base and fired at what may have been his pursuers. It is also possible that, this being an election year, that events were rearranged a little to provide a campaign issue.

Conditions calmed down until December 21, 1948 when a Private escaped from the guardhouse in a stolen car. His escape was detected by a guard at the gate who commandeered a car and gave chase. Fourteen miles north of Salina, he apprehended the escapee and returned him to the base. Private Frank Krivak, an AP, was promoted to Corporal and others involved in this event were given commendations by Colonel Mulzer. They were Staff Sergeant L. E. Hemby and Claude Mulzer, a civilian working in the Civil Engineering section on base. 136

Improvements

Smoky Hill had been constructed to meet the demands of World War II. Because of this, most of the buildings on base were of temporary wooden construction and susceptible to fire. Two fires were reported during this period and caused a limited amount of damage.

During the morning of October 4, 1946, a fire broke out around 3:30 A.M. in barracks. By 4:14 A.M. the fire had been extinguished after 11,000 gallons of water had been used. Despite the prompt action of the base fire department, eleven men were injured and most of the residents lost all of their personal possessions. 137

Then a fire broke out in the Negro post exchange during the early morning hours of March 13, 1947. The barracks-type structure was "practically gutted" and damages were estimated at $5,000. The fire was made worse when the flames

137 Salina (KS) Journal, October 4, 1946.
Despite the fires, various improvements were undertaken on base starting in 1947. Before this period ended, Smoky Hill had two swimming pools, four courts, new theater seats, and air conditioning in the theater. However, permanent structures would be erected, based upon material available to this area.

It was noted in Chapter Two that as a part of the Hospital's Convalescent Program, a swimming pool was being dug for the Officers. Apparently, end of the war slowed down this project and it was not completed until early in 1948. The swimming pool officially opened on Memorial Day. It had cost $13,000 to build and had a 250,000 gallon capacity. Two days were set aside for the en- listed personnel; one day for whites and the other for Negroes. The other swimming pool was completed in December, 1948 at a cost of $136,000. The base did not mention who it was constructed for; officers, enlisted, or general usage.

Prior to 1947, heating the buildings on base had been provided by coal stoves. Plans had been afoot to convert the base to gas heat in the announcement was made that the base was to be closed. But on May 8, 1947, the order to proceed with the installation of gas for heating purposes was received. Colonel Lee was also ordered to submit work and fund requests for other improvement projects. How far the gas heating project got is hard to determine. In the next chapter, it will be mentioned that the base had a large supply of coal on hand when the base was closed that was to be moved to other

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Men personnel began arriving to staff the reactivated base in 1952, and living in a barracks still heated with a coal stove.

A project that was undoubtedly appreciated by the people who made the daily trip from Camp Phillips and the base was the bituminous surfacing of the road. Prior to this, it had been a gravel road. To get this project accomplished, Phillips furnished the manpower and the county furnished the materials. 141

October 23, 1948, the base received 1,000 new theater seats at a cost of $1,000 along with authorization to accept bids for air conditioning of the base and several other projects. 142 It was coincidental that Colonel Mulzer took up duties as temporary Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force where applications for these projects originated.

Community Relations

Base/community relations fluctuated between 1945 and 1949. There were lows in some disputes over law enforcement in 1946. The high point probably was when Colonel Lee kept the base open in 1947 and possibly in 1949 when Colonel Kelly, new Base Commander, held a luncheon for the leaders of the area.

During the war years, Smoky Hill had loaned trucks to the Salina Post Office to help deliver the mail during the Christmas rush. This continued, it was said, until the base closed and the number of trucks loaned was always six. 143

The extent of Smoky Hill's effect on the population of Salina was duly noted in the Kansas City Star in its August 1, 1948 Sunday edition. It claimed that the base helped "skyscript Salina's population from 20,000 to 27,000." Salinans read newspapers to keep abreast of events that might affect the base and its

143 Salina (KS) Journal, October 4 and 8, 1946, and December 21, 1948.
Smoky Hill brought "the world to Salina's doorstep."\textsuperscript{144}

Air Force Base did bring the world to Salina and various civicitons took advantage of this by inviting personnel to address their orations on their trips. One such event turned into a surprise birthday for Col. Joe Kelly who had been invited to address a gathering at the Country Club on January 19, 1949. Then members learned that Colonel knew to the area, had turned thirty-nine years of age, so they made it a party for him.\textsuperscript{145}

Commercial Air Service

ince at least the 1930s, Salina had had a municipal airport which was located east Crawford Street. In the early days of World War II, the first plane assigned to the area had been based there. But despite the fact that Glen Martin and the Braniff brothers had grown up in the area, Salina had not have established regular air service. Of course, few cities with a population of 20,000 did, but then few cities had an air base for a neighbor.

Continental Airlines, a national airline, made an almost continual effort to permission to use the 10,000 feet runways at the base during this period. First such effort occurred in September, 1945, which was denied by the Army. Notedly, Continental saw a lucrative business in Salina in the government facts and in airmen going home on leave and returning. However, this particular rejection was interpreted as meaning that the base would become permanent.\textsuperscript{146} Col. Maurice Preston became the first Base Commander to get involved in the issue of commercial air service for Salina. On January 17, 1946, he

\textsuperscript{144}Kansas City (MO) Star, August 1, 1948.
\textsuperscript{145}Salina (KS) Journal, January 20, 1949.
\textsuperscript{146}Salina (KS) Journal, September 19 and November 12, 1945.
the Chamber of Commerce that the training mission of Smoky Hill was
it precluded the use of the runways by civilian commercial carriers.
by June 26, he changed his mind and offered to help Salina get regular
vice. He felt that there would be no inconvenience if an airline wanted
the runways with the Army. 147
Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) acknowledged plans by the Army
continued military use of Smoky Hill, but felt that the runways could be
both without impairing the military mission of the base. The Army con-
to deny permission amid rumors that it planned to use the base as a base
planes. With a Federal civilian agency now on its side, Continental
plied for permission to use the base so that it could begin service to
Nothing came of this request.
his must have been the last straw for the Army Air Force. General Carl
Spaatz, Commander of the Army Air Forces, informed General Vaughn,
t Truman's military aide, that it was not safe or practical to have a
ry group operating beside a civilian airline and that his answer was a
No!" to requests by Continental Airlines to use the runways at Smoky Hill
Field. 149
The matter was dropped after this but Salina did eventually get regular
vice by Continental. It is interesting to note that after all of this
no one was to try to get the runways after the base closed in 1949. It
ed to figure out why Salina did not try to expand the runway at the Munici-
port if it wanted Continental that bad unless it was trying to get some-

147 Salina (KS) Journal, January 18, and June 26, 1946.
148 Salina (KS) Journal, April 9, and May 17, 1946.
149 Salina (KS) Journal, August 31, 1946.
Likewise, it is hard to figure Continental's objective in this matter. Airline had stated in 1946 that it needed a refueling stop in the area and the base runways gave it extra security in landings and takeoffs. Yet, did not try to get the runways in 1949.

Open House

Open Houses are good public relations affairs permitting both the community the base to get acquainted with each other as well as permit the military show off its latest equipment to a curious public. Between November 4, 1945 August 7, 1949, Smoky Hill opened its gates to the public thirteen times. may have helped soothe any harsh feelings that prevailed at times during a period.

The first three such events were Victory Loan Bond Drives held in November, and special offers were used to get people to purchase bonds. At the Armistice Day event, anyone purchasing a $25 bond was permitted to pilot a radio-controlled plane, like the ones used for gunnery practice at the OQ Gunnery base. However, November was a month of bad weather which hampered attendance less than $500 worth of bonds were sold. Other "attraction lures" offered re various planes in America's arsenal and the opportunity for a thorough inspection, provided that a bond was purchased. Admission to the base was free and one assumes that cameras were permitted; so even if one did not buy a bond, they could get a picture of the various planes and buildings.

Attendance at these events peaked in 1946 and the leaders of the base seem to have gone out of their way to provide interesting entertainment. A record

151Salina (KS) Journal, November 1, 10, and 20, 1945 and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 22 and 29, 1945.
People turned out to see an air show at the base on March 24, which featured the P-80 Shooting Star fighter, one of the world's fastest aircraft. The new jet planes were responsible for this large turnout. (It was reported that the P-80 was regarded as the fastest aircraft with the jet engine.)

Another Open House was held on August 7 and 8, 1947 featuring Great Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF) Squadron 617, better known as "The Dam Busters." Sixteen converted Lincoln bombers arrived for a show of goodwill to the United States and a 1949 convertible coupe was raffled off. But it was the new B-36 "Peacemaker" bomber which drew 13,500 people to this event.

Another thing that was used to promote goodwill was the holding of sales of surplus and obsolete merchandise. Besides permitting the Air Force to save the cost of moving the merchandise to storage, it also permitted people to pick and choose at reasonable prices. Between March 25, 1946 and August 11, 1947.

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153 Salina (KS) Journal, July 15, August 9 and 11, 1947. In an article announcing that the Dam Busters would be visiting Salina, residents were invited to open their homes to the British as house guests. It was not revealed whether a previous plan to do this was not realized and must be treated as one of those plans that never came off.

154 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 29, 1949 and Salina (KS) Journal, August 8, 1949. Who won the car was not mentioned nor was the amount the base raised.
Smoky Hill opened its gates to the public nine times plus item sale. At these early day garage sales, everything from nuts to buildings were sold. At the first sale, two days were set aside for veterans of World War II. These sales were usually well attended.

At these early day garage sales, everything from nuts to buildings were sold. At the first sale, two days were set aside for veterans of World War II. These sales were usually well attended.

reported on November 21, 1947 and 500 at the last sale on December 16, however, only fifty-eight attended the July 29, 1948 sale.

Fund Raising Drives

Measure of the base/community relationship can often be determined by the response to fund raising requests for charity and the publicity the drives the base's response. In 1945 and 1946, there is only one report of contributing to a fund raising drive and that was on November 1, 1945 when announced that the base had over-subscribed to its United Chest Fund ten percent. The base probably contributed to fund raising drives but they went unreported.

1947, Colonel Lee was in command of the base and the Salina Journal reported that the base gave $1,078 to the March of Dimes and $613.18 to the Cancer Society. The wives of the men assigned to the base did most of the work but Major Gates oversaw their efforts.

Colonel Kelly seems to have had a personal interest in fund raising drives, as after he took command of the base on January 3, 1949, Smoky Hill contributed over $3,262 in two reported drives. The March of Dimes received $3,600 and the Red Cross received $2,008.44, the latter being $8.44 over its


156 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 1, 1945.

Visitors

The military world greets us almost from the time we are born and stays close to our death. We are acquainted with it in our study of history, for force often appears to be the answer to diplomatic failure. In our early glimpses of history and viewing of television, we see the glories of life in front of cavalry charges. But as veterans of military service know, modern military bases can run the extremes between boring and something out of the ordinary.

"The Twilight Zone."

Part of the normal routine on a military base is preparing for and receiving visitors. The wrong kind of reception could affect a Commander's future or what he receives in appropriations and recognition.

On February 17, 1946, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a native of Abilene, visited Smoky Hill in his capacity as Army Chief of Staff and was met by Air Force Base Commander, and his staff. A little over a year later, on February 18, 1946 and April 22, 1947.

The Red Cross selected Smoky Hill Army Air Field as the site for its con- base to determine if it really should be closed. 159

Smoky Hill also provided encampments for several youth organizations. 159

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP), the official civilian auxiliary to the Air Force, consisting of twenty-four cadets and six officers, started a weekend of training on the base. The next year, 125 air scouts from several organizations held their meeting at the base on August 17, 1948. Finally, during this

will, the Boy Scouts held a one-week encampment on the base starting 1720, 1949. 160

Further the good will of the Air Force with the community, Smoky Hill 17tours for local school children. In 1948, it was estimated by the 18200 Salina children had toured the base. 161

Smoky Hill's parent unit was the Fifteenth Air Force, headquartered during 19headquarters during cod at Colorado Springs, CO. Visits by the Commander of that unit were 20routine. If there was any omen in the change of status of the base, it 21to note that Maj. Gen. Born, Brig. Gen. Johnson, and Colonel Mulzer 22ited the base twice during their tenure as Commander of this unit, 162

Subsequent Commanders of the Fifteenth Air Force visited the base, they 23ported in the local press.

A surprise visitor to the base was Admiral Halsey. He flew in for a visit 24 Colonel Lee, Base Commander, on September 28, 1946. After having lunch 25he Colonel, he continued his trip on to the west coast. 163

Shortly after Colonel Mulzer assumed command of the base, General George C. 26, Commander of SAC, paid a two day visit to the base on December 16, 1947 27left very impressed with what he had seen." In May and July of 1948, Major 28 Clements McMullen, Deputy Commander of SAC, paid visits to the base to 29 with Colonel Mulzer." This was capped on July 29 by a visit from William 30ey, special assistant to the Assistant Air Force Secretary. 164 There


the relationship between these visits and Colonel Mulzer's subsequent appointment as temporary Commander of the Fifteenth Air Force. These visits were usual for the post-war period and these individuals had to approve Mulzer's appointment.

After relinquishing command in 1947 to Colonel Mulzer, Colonel Lee returned to California where he was to assume command of the 22nd Bomb Wing (formerly Smoky Hill) at March AFB, CA. Colonel Lee paid another visit to Smoky Hill on August 14.165

Housing

One of the most important factors that figured into base/community relations was the lack of housing. During World War II, Lieutenant Colonel Cahill, Base Commander, had tried to get the government to build houses by military personnel. This effort apparently came to nothing.

Colonel Bareckson, Base Commander, in a speech before the Salina Chamber of Commerce, informed them that there was a need for adequate housing so that civilian and military personnel could be kept in their jobs. Some civilians were filling jobs that had once been held by the military.166 At this time there were over 800 civilians working at the base.

When Colonel Maurice Preston addressed the Kiwanis Club on Wednesday, May 2, 1946, he had been Commander of Smoky Hill just two months. There it was surprising that the subjects of his speech were the problems of Smoky Hill on the base and the housing shortage in Salina. Although he had

166Salina (KS) Journal, October 10, 1945.
Salina two months, he had not found a suitable place for his family to
stay. The base was permanent, yet Salina’s response to the housing shortage
indicate that they believed otherwise. 167

Smoky Hill had been built in the early days of World War II and the build-
ing to last five years. If the base were to remain open, a construc-
tion would have to be launched. On June 20, 1946, the Army announced
planned to spend $1,300 per man in the United States and $2,100 per man
for permanent barracks. Smoky Hill was at the top of that list for
this money. 168 This was one of those projects that never material-
ized for single personnel was the same for all enlisted grades. They
were long, narrow wooden structures better described as tar paper shacks
in 1942. These structures were open bay with no separate rooms and heated
stoves which left coal dust and soot on everything. There was no in-
terior paneling which made the buildings hot in the summer and cold in the
winter. The men had no wall lockers or closets to store their clothing in and
hung them on open racks which made it hard to keep their clothing clean.
Around 1948, a couple of modern barracks, which eliminated these
problems were built and were considered self-contained.

This writer, a novel feature of barracks life during this period were
latrine/bathing facilities. If a man wanted to tend the call of nature or
for this purpose. One latrine facility served four barracks. In winter,
the unofficial policy for the first man who got up to build a fire in

168 Salina (KS) Journal, June 20, 1946.
stove which heated the facility.

The first thing you notice, if you will, is that you are on a military installation with rows of long, low, narrow barracks, painted white and neatly kept. If you walk through the barracks, you will see that they were warm in the summer and cold in winter. In an attempt to make these temporary structures warmer in the winter, the Air Force authorized the installation of artificial brick siding.

That year, Colonel Mulzer, Base Commander, announced plans for a building program. If approved by the Air Force, the base would get brick and steel bachelor enlisted housing, and a residential area for single and commissioned families which included parks and playgrounds.

The artificial brick siding installed in 1947 was not completed or was temporary in nature, because the Salina Journal announced on September 1, 1948 that $37,386 was being spent on winterizing the barracks with artificial brick siding, with 208 barracks receiving this treatment.

Finally, the plans made by Colonel Mulzer in late 1947 began bearing fruit.

The House Armed Forces Committee approved $3.5 million for the construction of family quarters and barracks on Smoky Hill Air Force Base on August 21, 1949. On August 16, the Senate Armed Services Committee approved the amount. Later that month, it was decided to close the base.

Family Housing

Smoky Hill got a boost for family housing for married personnel when the

171 Salina Journal, September 1, 1948.
Administration began to move out of the Camp Phillips Hospital on June 1, 1946. The hospital was formally turned over to the base on September 7, and over forty buildings were to be occupied by base personnel. Lt. Col. H. Searles was named officer-in-charge of the housing there. For the new residents, eighty families, seventy-two for whites and eight for Negroes, were to live there. It would cost $4,100 per unit for conversion and twenty units have three bedrooms.  

While this was going on, Colonel Lee announced that 206 officers were to be released from active duty by December 31. This would alleviate the housing shortage in Salina and permit the retention of officers best suited to carry a variety of additional duties.  

By the middle of 1947, nineteen families were living in apartments built towards and sixty-eight were living in unconverted wards at Camp Phillips.  

Started in August to convert Camp Phillips into 208 apartments at a cost of $75,000. There were fifty-two wards and the facility was being planned to serve the base for ten years.  

Camp Phillips apparently did not do much for the housing shortage because J. H. Mulzer warned the Kiwanis Club that two or three thousand more men were needed in Salina and would further complicate Salina's housing shortage. The Mayor of Commerce responded by conducting a housing survey in March. By mid-1948, only twenty units had been found.  

1st Lt. Roberts, base Provost Marshal, addressed the Jaycees on August 10, 1946.

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173 Salina (KS) Journal, July 30, August 31, and December 11, 1946.
Informed them that Salina had to do something about the housing shortage if it were to expand. Otherwise, the Air Force might interpret it as a lack of faith and pull out. 177

By 1949, the situation was still bad. The base responded to the housing shortage by authorizing the establishment of a trailer park on base near the Phillips Village School. Colonel Joe Kelly, Base Commander, gave the authorization provided the men put up their own showers and rest rooms, and laid the sewage lines in town time. Thirty-four families were involved and organized a small council-type government. 178

Phillips Village School handled the influx of children living in the Camp Phillips Housing area. The Army and Salina opened up a school there in the fall of 1948. Although the projected enrollment was for 200 children, enrollment peaked at 139 and the school was closed on November 18, 1949 as the personnel from the base and their families moved to Barksdale AFB, LA. 179

Closing

Throughout this period, there were rumors and more rumors regarding the closing of the base. Once, plans were actually being put into effect for closing the base until Congress gave the Army more money and responsible officials decided to keep the base open. The rumors were contradictory. On one hand, the Army was considering closing the base, and on the other hand more money was to be spent to make the base permanent. Commanders and other military officials kept warning Salina to do something about the housing shortage if it

177 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 12, 1948.
to keep the base, yet nothing seems to have happened, save that Salina
Air Force Academy, when it was giving little indication that it
was to handle an active military base.

October 18, 1945, the Salina Journal informed its readers that Smoky
status was that of an "interim station" pending a decision as to the
mission of the Army Air Force. Then on March 26, this paper announced
there were rumors of a building program to commence at the base and that
would start arriving around April 1 to bring the base up to full
strength of between 4,000 and 5,000 men.\(^{180}\)

The First Closing

Nothing further was mentioned about the future of the base until January,

On January 20, 1947, Colonel Lee, Base Commander, addressed the Salina
Club and informed his audience that he believed Smoky Hill's permanence
was almost a certainty. The base was at a strategic location in the defense
structure with 10,000 feet runways and over thirty million dollars worth of
permanent buildings.\(^{181}\)

Colonel Lee seems to have reversed his position by February 27. He thought
with the proposed budget cuts, "Smoky Hill was a base that would have to be
closed." By then, work on the conversion of the Camp Phillips' Hospital
housing units had been stopped.\(^{182}\)

The tempo picked up and rumors began circulating that the base was to be
closed. Salina and the Chamber of Commerce moved to get assurances of the perma-
nancy of the base to no avail. On March 28, Washington, D. C. announced that

\(^{180}\)Salina (KS) Journal, October 18, 1945 and March 26, 1946.


\(^{182}\)Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 27, 1947.
would be reduced to caretaker status "as soon as practicable." Rumor
that Colonel Lee had received a telegram citing May 31 as that date.
It was possible that Smoky Hill could be leased to civilian air lines."  
March 29, the rumor had been confirmed and June 30, 1947 was the date
the base would become inactive. The Salina Chamber of Commerce moved into
by urging the Rotarians to join them in trying to get the decision re-
citing the 10,000 feet runways and 75% flying weather as a factor that
be considered in keeping the base open.  

In an editorial on April 3, the Salina Advertiser-Sun asked for information
the projected closing of Smoky Hill:

"People don't understand about what is going on. They know that
the base is to be reduced to inactive status by June 30. . .Salina
would like to keep the base here. But they want to know if the an-
ouncement means a permanent shut-down or merely a closing for re-
modeling and then a reopening. . .If the base is to be closed, why
have more men been sent in here recently? Why have contracts been
leased for repainting and remodeling the buildings at the base?
Why is the base being closed?  

Why was the base being closed? Congressman Wint Smith and Senator Arthur
or had evidence that the closing was political (but what that evidence was
not come to light) "contrary to what Senator (Clyde) Reed found out." Salina
rallied and began waging a fight to keep Smoky Hill open claiming that
Army people felt that the base was superior to all others with runways,
ars, and servicing equipment outstanding.  

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185 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, April 3, 1947, editorial.
186 Salina (KS) Journal, April 22, 1947. Congressman Smith (R-Jewell) and
ator Reed (R-Parsons) were not politically supported by Roy Bailey. Smith
defeated Bailey for the nomination to Congress in 1946. Reed was publisher
the rival Parsons (KS) Sun and not as conservative in his thinking as Bailey
ought a Senator from Kansas should be.
The base open, fifteen Bachelor Officers Quarters at the base were de-
Inadequate and between fifty and sixty single officers moved into Salina.187
April 24, Colonel Lee announced that an inspection had revealed that
$5,000 was needed for adequate barracks and this would bring the base
war. This encouraged a group from Salina to visit General Eisenhower,
Head of Staff, at his Pentagon office, to see what he could do to keep the
base open. He informed them that General Spaatz and three Generals, who would
be in charge, there seemed to be "a cause for hope."189
On May 5, it was announced that General Spaatz had decided to keep the base
rather than reduce it to standby status. Colonel Lee was active in efforts to
keep the base open and was praised for his efforts. Salina promised to con-
tinue to reduce housing units in an attempt to relieve the housing shortage.190 It
promise that was not kept in this period.
General Eisenhower may have played a larger role in keeping Smoky Hill Air
Base open than was supposed or imagined at the time. From 1943 on, there
frequent talk of General Eisenhower becoming a candidate for the office of
President which surfaced in the national press. Relatives and friends of this

served in units commanded by General Eisenhower have stated their
that if those units had a predominance of Kansans or Nebraskans in them,
they wanted they got, including autographs and pictures of the General.
these people believed that Ike had his eye on a political office then
have been obsessed with the idea of identifying himself in History as
forty-fourth President just as Kansas was known as the thirty-fourth state.
Eisenhower was involved in keeping the base open, he may have been
it and used the chain of command to have his wishes carried out with the
of controversy. After all, he had spent most of his military career in
positions and knew how to covertly get his wishes carried out.
Ladislas Farago in The Last Days of Patton states that General Patton had
by the middle of 1945 that General Eisenhower had "political aspirations"
instructed his victorious Generals on how they would conduct themselves
war then over.191
General Eisenhower's role was minimal in this matter, then the role of
Lee must be looked at. He had been the one to teach Dwight Eisenhower
and seems to have assisted him in getting trainer planes for the Phili-
.192 It is possible that once Colonel Lee became aware that Salina
keep the base and might construct more housing, he got in touch with
former student. The Salina Journal did note Colonel Lee's role in saving
base but how many knew about his past is not known, but a few probably did.

In Between Closings: The Air Force Academy

In December, 1947, General Kenney, Commander of SAC, announced that Smoky

1981), p. 65. Ike was very discreet about this. The Eisenhower Library
not have anything on file about the base.

192Ferrell, The Eisenhower Diaries, pps. 29, 30, 399, and 400.
be a permanent installation and assigned a complement of 5,000 men to the 2,000 men then assigned. He urged Salina to construct more to accommodate the men. A possibility existed that B-36 bombers might go there. 193

Salina Advertiser-Sun was elated and in an editorial, stated that it would be a sudden shift to have 2,000 men pass through the base and then assign another 5,000 men. He urged Salina to construct more homes for the men. A possibility existed that B-36 bombers might go there. 193

Salina Advertiser-Sun was elated and in an editorial, stated that it relief the minds of Salina businessmen who wondered if they would have to go through another period of uncertainty. The announcement should encourage the city to support the base. Homes should be constructed for Air Force families. 194

1947 had been a near-miss for the closing of the base, 1948 was a year of uncertainty. Three times, rumors surfaced about closing the base and three times the rumors subsided. Colonel Mulzer assured the Salina Journal that the base was permanent. It was interesting to note that the Salina Journal was the paper which published the first official announcement that the base was permanent. However, in the late 1940s, the need existed for officers trained in an air environment. The Salina Journal took a stand on the need for such officers in one of its then-rare editorials while Roy Bailey was editor: 

194 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 11, 1947, editorial.
train future air force officers is Salina, which is strategically in the center of the United States and Smoky Hill Air Force Base can start of the institution." At this time, it was assumed that the would soon be pouring money into the base to improve it.

Salina probably felt that it had advantages in acquiring the Academy. It was the center of the United States and at the crossroads of highways US 40 then major highways that literally split the continental United States. But when such a plum as a permanent government institution like an academy is available, everyone wants it. Salina may have had an air base, but there was no law in effect that said a military academy had to be located near a city with a military base. By March, 1949, four of the six Congressmen were seeking it for their districts. One wonders why the two Kansas Congressmen did not get into the act. Maybe they were more states in their appraisal of the Academy.

The Air Force Academy would have been a plum worth seeking for any commun- but for Salina it would have ended its worries about the loss of a military base. Until the first class of cadets reported at Lowry AFB, Colorado Springs, 1954, Salina continued attempts to get the Academy.

It is doubtful that anyone knew that 1949 would be the last year that the Academy would be active during this decade and the Salina Journal did not know it. It editorialized about the base's future on March 13:

Word from Washington that the new military appropriation bill provides for continuation of the Smoky Hill Air Force Base is good news indeed.

Frankly Salina has a selfish interest in the base. It would fool no one to pretend otherwise. A good many merchants depend upon

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The officers and airmen spend here. The whole town bene-
in one way or another...

In the middle of Kansas and in the middle of the nation, SHAPE
theless is on the front line of our global defenses. The base
is the long-striking bombers of our strategic air force. They
our decisive arm.

It is the best of tactics to have those bombers located centrally
safely. The flat Saline prairie, the open Kansas climate are
for air operations.

So far so good for SHAPE. There is one other essential that only
pess can provide. That is the facilities for men and machines,
s and operational equipment are important but equally so are
ential, comfortable, permanent barracks for the airmen who pre-
and fly the ships. As any experienced military commander knows,
human factor is probably No. 1 on the priority list.

It appears congress is now in the process of providing that es-
ial for Smoky Hill. If the job is done, that will be the best
of all.197

editorial recognized that living quarters were essential, but it looked
air Force. Of course, permanent barracks would have made the base seem
permanent, but nothing was said about Salina providing housing for married
al.

The Final Closing

hen the closing was announced on August 24, 1949, Salinans were thinking
es for the base. The Associated Press reported that day that Smoky Hill
be inactivated but kept on a caretaker basis for possible future use in
n a nation-wide economy move which would lay off 135,000 workers and close
bases.198 This was confirmed by the Salina Advertiser-Sun on August 26
stated that no time had been set for the movement of the 301st Bomb Wing
Gradele AFB, Shreveport, LA but it would be around December 1. The closing
ot due to political reasons but to the poor re-enlistment record of the
. At this time, the 301st Wing had forty-five B-29s and twenty tankers but

It is possible, of course, Secretary (of Defense) Johnson will change his mind. Congress may apply the pressure, fork over the money otherwise persuade him the military establishment should not be reduced so drastically. There is a chance Smoky Hill air force base would not be inactivated after all, although a slim one.

But if the base is closed, what's ahead for Salina? Nearly every town will discover some personal loss. Temporarily merchants will have less trade, workers less work. The rent problem may be more solved. So much for the dark side.

Salina was a good and growing town before the war. It was and is a prime marketing and distributing center. It is the capital of a prosperous agricultural area. It has not achieved its full possibilities as a manufacturing site; and the westward trend of industry raises Salina's potential considerably. Above all, it is a beautiful, friendly, friendly town, with fine parks, attractive homes, and substantial citizens. It is an ideal place to live and rear children.

...Sure, it's a shame the base may be closed. But that very setback can be turned into an incentive. We can stand on our own feet with or without a prop from Washington. Salinans are of too strong stuff to fear the challenge.

This was a philosophical approach to the base closing. Salina had barely the base in 1947. But this time, there was no one in Washington to turn to save the base. General Eisenhower had retired and was President of Columbia University in New York and not on the best of terms with President Truman. General LeMay was in Europe and Colonel Lee was in California. Senator Capper had retired and Senator Reed was in ill-health. That left Congressman Smith who was regarded as a maverick by Salina. Therefore, the Salina Journal's editorial on the closing is surprising:

...The unofficial explanation for the closing of the base was that it was in bad shape as far as living quarters went for the single personnel. The tar paper shacks were about to fall down and would not have held out another winter. Everything else about the base

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200 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 26, 1949, editorial.
ideal. But it simply would have cost too much--more than Congress
to spend. Salina should have cultivated its political sources
a ago. Maybe the next time, it will.201

Surprising part of the editorial lies in the last two sentences. Presi-
mom was not blamed, but overlooked was the fact that Kansas had a new
ates Senator and the other one was very ill. Congressman Smith was in
year in Congress. Congress was also controlled by the Democrats,in 1947, the Republicans had controlled both houses. Salina had used
itical pull in 1947 to keep the base open.

September 22, it was announced that it would cost over three million
move the 301st Wing to Barksdale. One of the reasons Smoky Hill was
was because it did not have permanent-type buildings. However, the Air
ater claimed that the decision to close the base was made on the basis
ational as well as security reasons. It would have cost between twenty
y-five million dollars to provide the needed permanent buildings.

Hill was a temporary World War II base."202 The reader is reminded that
Hill may have been a temporary World War II base, but its runways were
than most temporary bases had received.

Most of the base's personnel were to leave by November 7. Approximately
en officers, 100 enlisted, and 152 civilians would remain behind to do
cleaning and final packing.203

The last chance of keeping the base open passed on October 20 when President
an impounded 615 million dollars of Air Force appropriations. Thus, the
us from the base continued and, when completed, the 4108th Base Service

203Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 20, 1949.
commanded by Lt. Col. Dailey M. Jones, would be activated and charged
the base in order for any possible reactivation. 204

December 7, the situation at the base compelled the issuance of a theft

The fact that the base had been closed did not mean that people could
never they wanted from the base or Camp Phillips. If people saw some­
y wanted, they were invited to contact the base as it might be surplus. 205

Salina Advertiser-Sun raised the question one last time on why the base

closed in an editorial on December 8:

Smoky Hill Air Force base is being deactivated. Forbes Air
base at Topeka has suffered a similar fate. And even the
valry post at Ft. Riley, once the largest in the world, is "down
its last horse."

. . . But the airplane is the most potent factor in our prepara­
don for war, and it seems that the government is missing a bet by

etting our good runways at Smoky Hill Air Force base go to waste.
There are rumors that men transferred to Shreveport are finding
the base crowded and pretty unsatisfactory for so large a force.
here are rumors that there are signs that the buildings at SHAFB
ay be improved or replaced by better ones.

Of course, Dame Rumor has had a field day when it comes to the
ase, but we hope she is right, for once, and that this means the
government intends to reactivate SHAFB at some future date. It
ould seem to be wiser and more economical than crowding too many
irmen into inadequate fields in the south.

In the meantime, however, we are wondering, as we consider the
withdrawal of airbases from this state: "What's the matter with
ansas?" Are we being punished for our political "sins"? 206

Taps

December, 1949 was the last month of full-scale operation of the base in
period. The next chapter will cover Smoky Hill's fallow period, a period
ich around twenty-one men kept up the base while waiting to either leave
other assignments or become part of a nucleus that would reactivate the base.

206 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 8, 1949, editorial.
would seem that the decision to place the base on caretaker status was
made by its condition and reputation. It was frequently known as "Smokey
Shafted." In a way, there were those who saw this era as a step
in history for the base in which it seemed to pretend to be a frontier
cattle town. Colonels Lee and Mulzer, while temporary Commander of
Seventh Air Force, do appear to have tried to get money for the base.
An overall impression of this period is that maybe Colonels Lee and
were trying to keep the base open without sufficient cooperation from
Colonels Eareckson, Preston, Lee, and Mulzer went on record as saying
Salina needed to build homes if the base were to be kept open.

While overall Air Force accident statistics were not available to this
for this period, the accident rate at Smoky Hill may have been a factor
in demise. In 1948, forty-five men had died in four aircraft accidents and
1949, eighty-five men had died between 1945 and 1949 in twenty-two aircraft
accidents.

By 1949, Salina's situation had become precarious. Although it did not
see it, it lost a friend when General Eisenhower stepped down as Army
Chief of Staff to become President of Columbia University. Colonel Lee was in
California and probably waiting for the day when he would regain his General's
rank. General LeMay was in Europe. Thus it seems that the Air Force probably
placed the base on a "caretaker status" to wait and see what would happen in the
world of politics and international events. Probably the runways kept the base
on the Air Force inventory.

Throughout this period, the Air Force had tip-toed through the Sunflowers,
so often it appeared that Salina was not eager to join it. If Salina had
dedicated more housing, it seems possible that Salina might have had a better
chance of getting the Air Force Academy or an Air Command headquarters. If
had tried to meet the Air Force part of the way, money might have been to improve the base. Yet, in many ways, the Air Force did not seem to even very much thought to improving the base. Two questions that could about this period are: What would have happened if Salina had con-
ed even 1,000 more housing units? Would this have been enough to keep be open?
CHAPTER IV

INACTIVE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

DECEMBER 8, 1949 TO AUGUST 2, 1951

With runways 10,000 feet long, Smoky Hill Air Force Base had given Salina, of the United States. Few installations could of having runways that size. At the same time, there were references to age of "Smokey Hole" or "Shafted." Salina had gone to great lengths to becoming another "Junction City," but there were those who said that it come one during the 1945-1949 period. By December 7, 1949, the Air Force reduced the base to "stand-by status," staffed at first by a force of 500 and civilian personnel. Later that force was reduced to a staff of officer, four military, and nineteen civilian personnel. As long as this remained on station, there was hope that the base would be reactivated. It is hard to figure out what had happened to Smoky Hill. The Air Force claimed that the poor re-enlistment rate and condition of the buildings factors in closing the base. Yet, in the first place, Smoky Hill had given those large runways. Secondly, the Air Force might have protected investment by sending in another Colonel Lee to resolve the personnel problen. Money for barracks may have been a problem, but when thought was given closing the base in 1947, the Air Force had estimated that $125,000 was ded to fix them.

Above all else, though, were "the runways." Runways can be built, but it
that there was something special about the runways at Smoky Hill. As a
member of the Air Force, long after the base was closed in 1967, this writer
would recall many pilots who, upon discovering that this writer was from the
area, would heap praise, not upon the base itself, but "those beautiful
runways." Those who referred to "Smokey Hole" may have seen a miniature fron­t
edge City, but the weather, runways, and hangars seem to have made it
possible to keep the base in the Air Force inventory.

Smoky Hill Air Force Base would be inactive but not forgotten during this
time. For one incident reported in 1951 when the Assistant Secretary of
Air Force could not find any reference to the base in his files. Salina
made another attempt to get the Air Force Academy, keep an ear cocked in
direction of Washington for any rumor of reactivation, and finally rejoice
the news of the reactivation of the base and news that the base would be
better than before as plans were made for a virtual facelift of the base in
expectation of receiving two Bomb Wings, an Air Division, and around 8,000
personnel courtesy of General Curtis LeMay, Commander of SAC.

During this period, there would be many rumors in circulation concerning
future of the base. Proposals were made on what to do with the base and
Air Force would seem to be approving them, while nothing actually happened.

The commander of the base for most of this period was Capt. Bernard J. Nied,
with his small force of men kept watch over the property, consisting of
base proper, Camp Phillips, and the OQ Gunnery Range. No one lived on the
base between April, 1950 and February, 1951, when a force of approximately
fifty men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Leslie Farnham arrived from
Empire AFB, Topeka, KS to reactivate the OQ Gunnery Range and occupied three
arracks on the base. Later, these men found themselves comprising the nucleus
of the units that would arrive on base after August, 1951 to reactivate it.
December 7, 1949, the bulk of the 301st Bomb Wing had moved to its new home at Barksdale AFB, LA. In its wake, the 4108th Base Service Squadron, consisting of approximately 500 military and civilian personnel, were left behind up the base. On January 1, 1950, the *Salina Journal* gloomily lamented "the airmen moved out before the holiday season began" and the closing of the base left Salina losing a ten million dollar annual payroll. But privately, Salinans probably felt relieved that they had not yielded to Air Force pressure to build more housing. The vacation of the base would have left a lot of empty homes if new ones had been built.

The Air Force Academy

The matter of the Air Force Academy had been put to rest on a back burner since March, 1949 and did not surface again until December, 1949. Despite the fact that Smoky Hill was in the process of being closed, it was announced that Salina was being considered as a site for the Air Force Academy. Whether Salina was merely chasing after a rainbow or whether the Air Force was giving Salina a chance to redeem itself is speculative. In Salina's favor besides the site was the fact that its military installation could easily expand in any direction it desired without fear of displacing a large segment of population. If the Air Force Academy to locate at the base or OQ Gunnery Range, it could expand in any direction and still be within a few minutes of any major north/south or east/west highway. By this time, Salina had regular air service and railroad depots. The drawbacks were the housing situation and the size of Salina which made it hard to find very much to do in off-duty hours. Perhaps, the Air Force was using a "carrot on a stick" approach to entice Salina to.

more housing in anticipation of a reactivated Smoky Hill Air Force Base.

On January 1, 1950, the Salina Journal announced that Salina was to be in-
ed as a possible site for the Air Force Academy by a three-man team on
January 5. To help the Air Force in making its decision, Congress-
man Smith "had introduced a bill to make Salina the official choice." To
is the matter of whether he really expected the bill to get anywhere.
all, Wint Smith was only a second-term Republican Congressman without much
ience in a body controlled by the Democrats.

The visit went off without a hitch. Salina was surveyed as a possible
but the team informed the Salina Journal that 150 other sites were under
ideration, including eight in Kansas. This was the last time that the
er of an Air Force Academy being located in Salina was mentioned in the
press until the base was reactivated.

Personnel

Little is known about Lt. Col. Dailey M. Jones who was Commander of the
8th Base Service Squadron at the start of this period. He was succeeded by
atin Bernard J. Nied on April 20, 1949. Captain Nied was 51 years old, had
listed in the Army in 1921, and was commissioned in 1943. By the end of 1949,
w Salvage and Disposal Officer. Throughout this period, he was the Com-
ander of the base, and when it was reactivated in 1951 he was the first Base
mander until his transfer to California in late 1951 for the purpose of re-
ing from the Air Force.

By January 17, 1950, there were fewer than 500 men assigned to the base,

and ninety civilians. This group was assigned the
of packing what was left of the 301st Wing and shipping it to Barksdale
LA. Most of the men left behind were married and lived with their families
proper. However, there were a few single men still living on the base
These men were moved out of the many barracks into the few closest to the
Service club which had been rehabilitated. Because the base had been vir-
ly closed, the base theater had been shut down. However, morale became a
m and when the men were moved into "new" barracks, the base theater was
ured and movies were shown three times a week. In addition, the food in
mess hall improved.6

A little over a year later, the Kansas City Star reported that Captain
commanded a force of four enlisted and nineteen civilians. Sixteen of
civilians were fire fighters/guards, two were utility maintenance men, and
was a clerk.7

OQ Gunnery Range

When Smoky Hill Air Force Base was deactivated, use of the Gunnery Range
ased. It does not appear that any men had been assigned there since the end
World War II and any work performed there was done by men assigned to the
ac. However, to permit 30,000+ acres to lie fallow for any period of time
wasteful. The OQ Range, approximately seventeen miles southwest of Salina,
been used periodically since around 1943 by planes assigned to the base.
It is assumed that during the inactive period of the base, at least part of
Range was leased to area farmers for use as pasture and crop land.

In the early days of 1951, rumors circulated concerning the possible reac-

7Kansas City (MO) Star, February 25, 1951.
of the base. On May 18, 1951, the *Salina Journal* announced that thirty-
TDY from Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS, were working at the Range and living 
In June, Johnson-Sampson Construction Company of Salina received con-
totaling $39,289 for construction of launching tracks on the Range which 
be used by planes from Forbes AFB and Olathe Naval Air Station (NAS).8 
Mon was made of possible use of the Range by units assigned to a reacti-
Smoky Hill Air Force Base.

Little else is known about the activities that transpired at the Range 
this period save that by August 2, 1951, there were sixty men working 
Range, TDY from Forbes, and living in three barracks on base. Lt. Col. 
G. Farnham was in command of this group.9

**Operations/Activities**

Smoky Hill had been a large base in terms of runways. When it was deacti-
enough equipment was left behind to handle the first phase of reactiva-
if that ever happened. The mission of the 4108th Base Service Squadron 
be basic upkeep of the base and no more. They seemed to be 
king for something to happen; either more activity or complete disposal of 
base.

As early as January 17, 1950, it was apparent that the base was in worse 
be than had been previously publicized. The *Salina Journal* commented that 
are was no grass in the streets—yet. Some tarpaper shacks are succumbing 
weather." However, had the base remained open, it would have received 
,514,000 for family quarters and barracks. This appropriation was removed

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8*Salina (KS) Journal*, May 18 and June 21, 1951.
9*Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun*, August 2, 1951.
The FY 1950 budget in February, 1950. Most of the buildings were to be
when the base was reactivated prior to the assignment of very many military
nel.11

During this period, the matter of pigeons and coyotes arose. It seems that
any activity to speak of on the base, the pigeons moved into the hangars
The coyotes took over the base proper. Captain Nied invited local citizens
to the base for a pigeon shoot one time in 1951 and a coyote hunt on the
we another time. Both events were well attended.12 There may have been
incentive for the coyotes to frequent the base. The base proper had
leased to a Texas sheep rancher for grazing in 1951!13

The Community

It has already been noted that the Salina Journal had complained that the
en had left before the Christmas shopping season had begun in Salina. In
ther section, the matter of rumors regarding the base will be mentioned.
ite the fact that there were few people assigned to the base, Salina re-
med attentive to it and the possibility that it might be reactivated.

In the last chapter, it was mentioned that the base had a large supply of
al on hand when the decision was made to deactivate the base. By March 2,
0, only three furnaces were in use on base but there were 10,000 tons of
al on hand which was being shipped to other air bases. This did not make any

11Salina (KS) Journal, June 20, 1951.
12Impact, January 9, 1953.
13Salina (KS) Journal, June 17, 1951. Coyote hunting remains a popular
port in this area. This writer was surprised by this popularity when he first
ved into the area in 1969 and the lengths that some people would go to get
just one coyote.
Salina as there was a coal shortage in the nation and Salina felt that it should be kept in the area.  

While the base was on "stand-by status" 2,000 new homes were built in the area.  

Whether these homes had been on the drawing board prior to the deactivation was not mentioned but to have built them after the base was closed did make any sense in terms of usefulness for base personnel. On May 3, 1951, rumors getting more frequent that the base would be reactivated, it was noted that Salina, Inc. had been formed to generate housing for possibly airmen. The Air Force had informed Salina that it wanted assurances that if it were declared surplus. As previously mentioned, a Texas rancher was fitted to graze sheep on the base proper in 1951. Prior to that, the 127th Tactical Fighter Squadron of the Kansas Air National Guard, stationed in Salina, requested and received permission to hold its two-week summer camp at the base from June 10 to June 24, 1950.

Proposed Usage of the Base

While the base was on "stand-by status" and rumors were circulating as to future of the base, Salina looked around to see what could be done with the base if it were declared surplus. As previously mentioned, a Texas rancher was fitted to graze sheep on the base proper in 1951. Prior to that, the 127th Tactical Fighter Squadron of the Kansas Air National Guard, stationed in Salina, requested and received permission to hold its two-week summer camp at the base from June 10 to June 24, 1950.

Carl Rice, a farmer and Democrat candidate for Governor of Kansas, proposed

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15 Salina (KS) Journal, February 8, 1951.
16 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, May 3, 1951.
26, 1950 that Smoky Hill Air Force Base be used as a grain storage

The rent would be used to keep up the base in case the Air Force decided to activate it at some future date. The question can be asked about storing grain in facilities designed for five years use and which seemed at the time to be in a high state of disrepair. Still, it must have caused a great deal of concern to start thinking about possible uses for the base.

June 15, 1950, the Salina Advertiser-Sun announced that 500 government-owned buildings "are now offered for lease to public industry. Invitations are invited for bids to lease the entire facility, including the land, with privilege of sub-leasing. Included in the 500 buildings are seven hangars ranging in size from 141' x 158' to 202' x 211'. . . ." This proposal would only be feasible if the Air Force agreed to permit bids to be accepted without having any plans of military usage of the base unless an all-out war broke out.

Nothing seems to have come of this decision. The government invited bids but never acted upon them. Shortly after this, the Korean Conflict began, but strong rumors of possible reactivation did not start surfacing until 1951. Whether the war had anything to do with this is unknown. It is possible that the Air Force agreed to permit bids to be accepted without having any plans of leasing the base. Then, it could be that Salina's size was a handicap to any industry thinking of leasing the base. At this time, Salina's population was not over 27,000 people and its economy was agricultural-based without much of a supporting labor force. No announcement was ever made in the local press to whatever happened or to the cessation of accepting bids. Maybe the bids were too low for the government's acceptance.

19 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 15, 1950.
Rumors on Reactivation

Almost from the time the base was officially deactivated, rumors started that the base would be reactivated, as though the Pentagon had real-mistake and wanted to keep the base open. The first rumor surfaced January 17, 1950 when the Salina Journal announced that there were "rumors of engineers coming in this spring to fix up the runways. . . . New men have been assigned to the base. They were forty fire fighters who had those who went with the 301st Wing to Barksdale. The men were TDY from bases."\(^{20}\)

Then on March 8, 1950, someone called Salina radio station KSAL with a story that the base would be reactivated. Colonel Jones, Base Commander, denied the story and the FBI and base Provost Marshal were investigating the source of rumor.\(^ {21}\) It seems preposterous that this much official attention would be given to a rumor unless there was more to the story than the Salina Journal mentioned.

All was well until February 1, 1951. On that date, the Salina Advertiser-Sun ran a story on the announcement that Salinans were wondering why "it was necessary to spend over $37 million for an air base at Wichita when Smoky Hill already existed. . . . The only reason given by the Air Force was the superior and recreational facilities in the larger city."\(^ {22}\)

Seven days later, the Air Force announced that one reason that the base had not been reactivated was due to a lack of trained men and planes. This was followed by an announcement that the Air Force had included a request for money


\(^{22}\)Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 1, 1951.
ivate the base in a budget submitted to Congress. A spokesman for the
stated that the opening of the base in Wichita would not affect

the February 12, 1951 issue of Newsweek an article appeared concerning
Congressman Wint Smith had with the Assistant Secretary of the Air
Harold C. Stuart, to find out why Smoky Hill Air Force Base was being
of consideration for reactivation when it had cost nearly $20 million
old in World War II and "is now on caretaker status. Stuart could not
my record of the base. Smith replied: 'My God--its one of the largest
uses in the country and you mean to tell me you have no record of it here!?'
A later informed the Congressman that he had misplaced the list on his

The Salina Advertiser-Sun informed its readers on March 15, 1951 that the
ivation of Smoky Hill depended largely on the cooperation of Salina in
ence to the housing problem. The government also intended to review such
ors as recreation facilities, golf courses, parks, transportation, and
ols. 25 Salina still prides itself on its parks and schools. Salina has
y parks and tries to keep them up to par. As for schools, it had only one
hool, but for higher education it had Kansas Wesleyan University and
mount College, the latter then being a women's college.

 Reactivation

On June 21, 1951, Senator Andrew Schoppel announced that 1,000 officers,
oo men, and 800 civilians would be assigned to the base when it was reac-

The mission of the base would be combat training with medium and
bombers. Salina and Smoky Hill were to be given a second chance. The
training question was: When would the base be reopened?

*Salina Journal* announced on July 30, 1951 that SAC had not received
reactivate the base, and that when it did, it planned to raze most of
paper shacks and replace them with "substantial quarters" and provide
bases for new jet bombers. SAC wanted $24 million to turn Smoky Hill into
stone in the nation's defenses. No air units would be sent in until the
construction was under way." Captain Nied, Base Commander, thought that
uld be eight months to a year before the base was in full operation. For
first time since the base was closed, the main gate was being manned. Al-
175 barracks were in the process of being torn down and would be replaced
new ones. The runways were to be inspected and repaired. The guarding
the base was being done by the men who were TDY from Forbes AFB and who had
finally been sent to Salina to work on the OQ Gunnery Range.27

Two days later, the banner headline of the August 1, 1951 edition of the
*Salina Journal* was: "SHAFB OPENED TODAY." Beneath the headline was a picture
of a B-29 bomber landing on the base. Although the picture was an old one from
days when the base had previously been active, it did express the elation
that Salina felt about the reopening of the base. The picture did not mean that
planes would be assigned to the base right away. On this date, Captain Nied had
air airmen and twenty-one civilians directly assigned to the base, an increase
of two people since 1950. The Gunnery Range was not ready for use, but planes
from Forbes AFB were using the Range as it was. Salina was getting reacquainted


sounds of military aircraft. At the end of the articles announcing activation of the base was the reaction of Salina to this news. "Dear [name] -
activation of Smoky Hill Air Force base is the best news Salina has had in a while. The reopening of Smoky Hill in 1951 was similar to its opening 28 years ago. Its conception had been during the dark days of World War II when the U.S. was over-running American defenses in the Pacific. The reopening coincided with involvement in the Korean Conflict. However, the similarity ended there. This time, Smoky Hill had over eighty people assigned to it. In addition, it had runways and buildings, which although not in the best of shape, the base partially ready and able to accept a few men. Salina had completed over 2,000 new homes which were ready for the men assigned to the base. The problem that arose was that there would not be enough homes and when men of the 310th Bomb Wing, which had been reactivated at Forbes AFB, got word that they were moving to Smoky Hill, many rushed to Salina and acquired the homes, either the less-foresighted and the men of the 40th Wing, reactivated at Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ and assigned to Smoky Hill, to fend for themselves.

On August 1, 1951, Salina had received good news. This date commenced the start of a new era that would last over thirteen years. For Salina, the future never looked brighter. Nevertheless, Salina in believing that this time things would work out and that the city would keep the base forever. Sadly, the city neglected to use the time to build up a solid economic base that would absorb any losses if the base were closed again.

This time, Salina and the Air Force began an experiment that succeeded to the point that over 125 towns with military installations in them would either

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28 Salina (KS) Journal, August 1, 1951 and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 2, 1951.
Salina Chamber of Commerce or send delegations to Salina for a first-at what seemed to be a "fairy tale" in base/community relations. Community relations would never be described as anything less than "excel-though it would not be until the early 1960s that the housing situation remedied. Then, Salina would over react to the construction activity at the base and build too many.
The base had been formally reactivated on August 1, 1951. Smoky Hill and were to have a second chance and both sides would take advantage of it. Everything was done in a manner as though it were the first time it had ever been done. But before the base was formally reactivated, it was evident that there was in the air. Old buildings were being razed and over sixty-five people were working there, some of whom were manning the main gate, something which had been done since early 1950.

It had been announced on July 30, 1951 just before the base was officially activated that the base would be a keystone in the nation's defense and no one was expected to be assigned to the base until new construction was well underway. The runways had to be inspected and repaired before the base could receive aircraft.  

Although no bugles blew and no banners were unfurled to commemorate the reactivation, change was evident. It was announced on November 29, 1951 that the reactivation process would be completed by September, 1952. The base was being constructed with the thought that it would be active for at least ten years instead of the "usual" five years (as had been the case in 1942). It was estimated that eighty per cent of the 8,000 men assigned to the base would be single.

1 Salina (KS) Journal, July 30, 1951.
For these single men, there would be modern dormitories to
as opposed to the old "open bay" barracks still common in the military
time.

Construction projects must have been bid for less than the government had
ated because the Salina Journal learned on December 7, 1951 that the
opening the base would be one million dollars less than originally
1.3 This started Smoky Hill/Schilling's reputation for being cost-con­-
which would culminate in 1964 with the base being number one in the De-
ment of Defense for cost consciousness.

Construction was going full blast by January, 1952. There were to be at
7,000 men assigned to the base and B-47 jet bombers were expected to ar-
base by late 1952.4 Actually, the B-47s would not arrive until late
and there would be an estimated 8,000 men assigned to the base.

Just two months later, Lt. Col. Miles W. Johnston, Base Executive Officer,
nounced that the first Bomb Wing would arrive in January, 1953 and that pre-
tions were being made to receive it.5 This was another piece of misinfor-
on. The first Wing arrived ahead of this schedule in September of 1952.

ver, Colonel Johnston's announcement was partially correct. In January,
3, the 40th Bomb Wing, the second Wing assigned to the base, was arriving.

At the same time, Colonel Frank W. Ellis, assigned to Strategic Air Command
quarters, Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE, informed the Salina Journal that SAC had
jected that the base payroll would amount to approximately $1,633,000 a month.

Hill would need 1,600 family housing units. The base would be used for
monal purposes rather than training.\(^6\)

Before then, there was preparation work that had to be done. Col. Bud
Base Commander, made an appeal through the *Salina Journal* for furniture
ish the barracks' dayrooms at the base until new furniture arrived.
Furniture will be an assist in creating a positive relationship between
own and the base."\(^7\) Whether this appeal was successful was not revealed,
is interesting to note that the plea appealed to the spirit of base/com-
relations.

Smoky Hill had been formally active for about ten months when Colonel
or, Base Commander, in a speech at the Salina Public Library, announced that,
500 men then on the base, the first significant increase in manpower would
by June 30, 1952 when another 500 men were expected. After this, things
did pick up. There would be 2,500 men on base by September, and 6,500 by
1953. A high percentage would be married men who, expressing a more stable
would want an active involvement in local affairs. The base planned to be
al with three-day passes to keep morale high. An estimated five per cent
the personnel assigned to the base would be Negroes.\(^8\) This would be the only
etion of Negroes in this period. Note, too, the variations in figures as to
many men were to be assigned to the base thus far in this chapter.

Undoubtedly, first arrivals at the reactivated base had heard of its old
putation of "Smokey Hole" and "shafted." There is evidence to suggest that
early arrivals may have lived in old World War II-era barracks for up to a


\(^7\) *Salina (KS) Journal*, April 19, 1952.

\(^8\) *Salina (KS) Journal*, June 5, 1952.
For the 310th Wing arrived on base and they may have been detailed to
run up the base which had been in a state of neglect since 1949.
To get the base ready for operation, it was revealed that the Air Force
was putting men from other bases in temporary duty (TDY) status. At the same
time, permanently assigned to the base were arriving daily. In addition,
TDY from Forbes AFB, KS to open the OQ Gunnery Range, most of whom
had been permanently assigned to the base, but when this happened was never re-
in newspaper sources.

Lieutenant Colonel Johnston, Deputy Base Commander, had announced on June 17,
that when all of the personnel arrived on station, there would be 8,000
with their families, this would give Salina a military population of 25,000
which would be equal to Salina's civilian population. This announcement
caused consternation for the Salina School Board which was trying to figure out
how many military children would be in the area that fall. The Board knew that
needed more teachers but the issue was how much the budget would need to be
raised to meet the added expense.

Enough people were on base by August 14 for the announcement that the base
newspaper would be out that Friday. The first press run would be 2,500 copies
to be published by Globe Imprint Company of Salina. For the time being,
the base newspaper would be unnamed but a contest would be held at a later date to
name it.

More personnel were expected in November. On August 27, in the name of
base/community relations, furnishings were solicited for a nursery that

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to be placed in operation on base. Nurses from the base hospital

12 This would seem like a waste of manpower but the nurses did

much to do, which will come out in another section in this chapter.

August 29, the base theater reopened for the first time since early

September there were 906 "plush new opera-type chairs to greet the patrons." To

mark this event, Colonel Cather, Base Commander, made a brief speech

when the movie began. Roughly four months later, the theater was given ap-

proval to start showing movies every night starting December 28. In the second

quarter of December, 1952, attendance had risen to 2,262 adults and forty-three

women.

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310th Bomb Wing began arriving on base in early September and base of-
ficials expected some personnel to experience difficulty in adjusting to their

new roles. Lt. Col. Miles Johnston, Deputy Base Commander, was designated to

take care of problems that arose during this period. 14

Everything was being done for the first time in this period. Chaplain

Cather conducted the first Protestant services in the Phillips Village Chapel

May, September 7, 1952; the base gas station reopened on December 19 sel-
ing Phillips 66 products; and on April 18, 1953, the Commissary (the military

store) opened. 15

Lastly, Bethany College, Lindsborg, and Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina,

offering college courses to the personnel at the base starting in 1953. Bethany

held its classes on base while KWU conducted the courses on its campus.


13 Impact, August 29 and December 19, 1952.

14 Impact, September 26, 1952.

15 Impact, September 5 and December 19, 1952 and April 18, 1953.
Salina. A variety of courses ranging from Art to Speech were offered. The government encouraged enrollment by paying three-fourths of the costs. By March, 1956, Bethany College reported an enrollment of seventy-five people in its on-base courses. Enrollment for base personnel at KWU this period was not revealed in the newspaper accounts available to this study.

OQ Gunnery Range

The OQ Gunnery Range had been reactivated in March, 1951 by thirty men under command of Lt. Col. Leslie Farnham. Most of the men lived on base, and when reactivated they were detailed to guard the base. Throughout this period, the range was manned by personnel assigned to the base but was used by units on continental Air Force bases. By December 16, 1951, four targets had been set up and were being used by B-29s. Sgt. Luke Crabtree was the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge and there were still thirty-five men assigned to the range.

There were two parts to the Range. The air-to-ground part received the attention, but on January 15, 1953, the Salina Advertiser-Sun focused attention on the Basic Rifle Range located two miles southwest of Camp Phillips. Air Force Regulations at the time required "every airman to qualify at least during every calendar year" in the weapon assigned to him. Since opening, men had fired for scoring. Forty men were scheduled for each working day. Fire was taken five hours according to Tech Sergeant Joseph R. Ross.

\[16\] Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 18, September 3, and December 17, 1953.

In today's Air Force, few men ever see a gun after leaving basic training but some pilots are required to qualify in the use of a hand gun.
On August 23, 1955 it was near-disaster in the offing when the Air Force planned to use the Range at night starting on September 6 for purposes of night reconnaissance missions. The pilots dropped bombs to light up the area they were photographing. Unfortunately, they completely missed the Range and dropped their bombs on farm fields near Smoky Hill, KS, south of the Range. The blasts broke windows in homes all about the Range and convinced many that the Russians had finally attacked. It is not known how the pilots missed 32,000 acres in an eight by eleven mile area, dropped their bombs six miles southwest, and did not discover the mistake until people began calling the authorities. This was the last time that night reconnaissance missions were reported during this period. Fortunately, the damage was confined to glass windows and holes in the fields.

Shortly after this incident, and perhaps partly as a result of it, members of the 2700th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron, from Hill AFB, UT, arrived at Smoky Hill to begin "a routine clearance of all unexploded ordnance which accumulated over the past few years." There were twenty-three men assigned to this group and they were assisted by fifteen men from the base. This was the first time that the Range had been cleared since it was opened during World War II. The group reported finding an average of fifteen live shells and bombs.

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than a week after the Range had been cleared of unexploded ordnance, a target plane with a ten-foot wing span, snapped a control cable and into a storage shed. When it hit the shed, it was going between eighty miles per hour. Fortunately, no one was reported injured.

During the first three weeks of October, 1956, SAC F-84 planes used the during SAC's first annual combat capability competition. Apparently the force feared a repetition of the mishap which occurred one year earlier, this time the Air Force assured the people in the area that the planes, dropping twenty-five pound practice bombs, would utilize targets located center of the Range to "avoid chances of the bombs landing on farms." Moreover, planes involved in this competition would not fly over cities or

Construction

On September 25, 1951, the Salina Journal ran a request from the Chamber of Commerce requesting labor registration by those interested in working at the base. The next day, the paper pleaded for workers. The tone was literally one you asked for the base, now provide the labor needed so that we can keep The wage scale varied between $1.25 and $3.00 an hour. The first bids for nine buildings were to be opened on October 21, 1951.

1969, $1.25 an hour was a common hourly wage for unskilled labor in this
communications, photo lab, secure storage, three squadron headquarters
of an airmen's club, an officers' club, and a cold storage warehouse.\(^{25}\)

By for the new buildings, 102 old buildings were to be sold in sealed
among them were barracks, wash racks, a fire station, and guard houses.\(^{26}\)

The buildings were to be sold was not mentioned. Another thing worth
here is that apparently not all of the barracks were in bad shape unless
ings were merely being sold for their lumber content.

February, 1952, it was announced that twenty-one two-story frame dormi-
our frame mess and administration buildings were to be built. Hope
essed in the article making this announcement that these buildings would
ent.\(^{27}\)

May, the Air Force revealed that it would take over thirty million dol-
reactivate the base. This money would be spent on acquiring land, air-
ements, and facilities for operations, aircraft maintenance, storage,
ities.\(^{28}\)

May 15, 1952, the fifteenth contract involving $6.1 million was released
iding. This contract involved the construction of a trainer building,
ilities, and street repair as well as a gasoline distribution system
il oil storage farm. The contract went to a Lubbock, TX firm.\(^{29}\)

 Colonel Cather, Base Commander, took the Salina Chamber of Commerce's Mili-
ares Committee on a tour of the base on July 28, 1952 and informed them

\(^{25}\)Salina (KS) Journal, October 20, 1951.


\(^{27}\)Salina (KS) Journal, February 8, 21, 22, and March 7, 1952.

\(^{28}\)Salina (KS) Journal, May 1, 5, 8, 13, and 15, 1952.

\(^{29}\)Salina (KS) Journal, May 12 and June 27, 1952.
Air Force was pleased with construction progress. Barracks construction was well ahead of schedule. He informed the committee that eventually the base would be based at Smoky Hill which would require eighteen-inch-thick concrete runways.  

Rehabilitation work had been completed by August 3, 1952. Thirty-one buildings had been reconditioned and contractors were trying to complete ten dormitories and two mess halls by September 1. Work on runways and parking was also expected to be completed by that date. The construction program included twenty-one dormitories, four mess halls, and two Bachelor of Quarters (BOQs). A planned 1953 project was an access road north to 31st Street which was to supplement the road running east to US 81. Condition work was going on at a high pitch that month preparing the base for arrival of the 310th Bomb Wing and its 1,200 men.

Construction had begun on December 28, 1951 and was eighty percent complete by September 21, 1952. Approximately 900 men were working on construction jobs each of that work was cleanup. Rehabilitation of 108 buildings was ninety-percent complete and a dormitory was eighty-four percent complete.  

Whitley Austin, editor of the Salina Journal, informed his readers in an editorial on September 23, 1952 that architects had told him that Smoky Hill was being rebuilt with an honest and serious attempt at economy. Frills had been eliminated. In the editor's opinion, a personal inspection confirmed the editors.

31Salina (KS) Journal, August 3 and 20, 1952.  
Base Exchange (BX) is the military version of the civilian department. In the Air Force it is commonly referred to as the "BX" while in the civilian world it is known as the PX or Post Exchange. At Smoky Hill, $35,000 was allocated to rehabilitate the building which opened at 12:30 P.M. on November 20.

An Air Force base with a huge plane inventory needs a capacity for plenty. On January 13, 1953, a twenty-five mile long pipeline with an eight-inch circumference was "blown-out" or tested and officially opened for use by the Force. This line started northeast of McPherson, KS and ran to the base. This mon is the home of several pipeline terminals and is thirty miles south of Salina on then highway US 81. Another reason for this pipeline will be mentioned later in this section.

On April 2, 1953, contracts totalling $13.8 million were released for the construction of four dormitories, a mess hall, a BOQ, alert and readiness hall, and an air installation office warehouse. Seven bids were received and contracts went to a Salina firm. Work was to begin within fifteen days. 17

Brought the number of new barracks under construction to twenty-five for a facility of 3,450 men and five dining halls.

By July 10, 1953, the Air Force had spent over $16 million in construction rehabilitation projects since the base was reactivated and $65 million more was being planned. This money was to be spent on airfield improvements, operations, training facilities, and land purchase. Work included extending one runway 2,000 feet and strengthening another with twelve to fifteen inches of

34 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 20, 1952.
36 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, April 2, 1953 and Salina (KS) Journal, February 6, March 27, and April 23, 1953.
The Government also planned to buy 160 acres of land. Five new squad-
buildings were to be built to complement the two Wing Headquarters
already under construction. When construction got underway on these
in June, 1954, three were to be north of the warehouse area and two
south. These buildings were 145 feet long and thirty-seven feet wide.
44th, and 45th Bomb Squadrons of the 40th Bomb Wing, would move into
buildings north of the warehouse area and the 310th and 40th ARS would move
south buildings which would be completed in 300 working days.37

While construction plans were being made, other plans were discussed to
are of the roads leading from Salina to the base. First, the Air Force
Salina clashed over the type of bridge that was to be built over Dry Creek.
The Force felt that since the road (now Schilling Road) was soon to be
the County would be better off to build a steel bridge while the County
and a wooden bridge. Then the State (of Kansas) began condemning land to
US 81 from its junction with US 40 to the base into a four-lane high-

Peter Kiewitt and Sons of Omaha, NE received a contract on August 18, 1954
$56,142 to extend the concrete parking area and make it seventeen inches
39 The thickness of the runways, taxiways, and parking aprons deserves
bod from here on as this writer's research and interviews will be contra-
tory later on which will be explained in the conclusion of this paper.

The base had used a control tower and operations building constructed in

37 Salina (KS) Journal, July 10 and August 9, 1953 and Salina (KS) Adver-

38 Salina (KS) Journal, July 24 and August 11, 1953.

Activated Smoky Hill found these facilities too small and on October 20, 1955, were taken to construct new facilities. The Operations Building on the base is what civilians would call a terminal building. "Ops" has the station, an In-Flight kitchen or snack bar, and other such things as its civilian counterpart.

W. Eby of Wichita, KS, was awarded contracts of approximately $1.46 million in a thirty-day period in 1955. On March 30, he was awarded a $1.2 million contract to build eleven concrete igloo-type air-conditioned ordnance facilities, an inspection building, auxiliary power plant, gate house, utilities and security fencing. This work had to be completed within 180 days after the start of the work. Then the firm received a $206,000 contract for a permanent three-story dormitory of concrete-block construction measuring forty-one by 204 feet. The work was to be completed in 270 days.

Construction Industries of Salina received two of three contracts put up for bidding on October 20, 1955. This firm bid $180,000 for the crash and fire protection building and $66,000 for a new Air Police headquarters. L. R. Foy of Hutchinson, KS, bid $7,300 for a pyro magazine storage building.

A $50,000 Base Operations building opened on November 30, 1955. It was a concrete-block building at the south end of the flight line. The central part of the building was two stories high with one-story wings on each side. It housed base operations, weather, and the In-Flight kitchen.

On May 23, 1956, there were several construction projects underway. On October 20, 1954.


Laborer's Union local 685 halted construction work at the base, posting at the three main entrances. They were trying to organize Jarvis Construction Company, a major contractor on base. Roughly forty of the 170 men in construction projects on base crossed the picket line. On June 12, eighteen employees of Jarvis Construction Company went to court to get the picket line withdrawn. The order was granted on June 13 and seventy-five of the workers returned to work. 44

A national organization has already been made of the twenty-five mile long pipeline which was completed in 1953. On December 19, 1956, it was announced that Kaneb Pipeline Co of El Dorado, KS was engaged in pumping jet fuel for the base into six round caverns in western McPherson County. Each cavern held 50,000 barrels of jet fuel. There were twenty-four such caverns which used to be salt mines, located thirty-two miles south of the base. Smoky Hill was leasing six of them. 45

Naturally a tie-in to the base pipeline was effected at this time.

The $300,000 T-shaped gym was completed and ready for inspection by Air Force engineers on January 7, 1957. It was scheduled for opening on February 1. The feature of the gym was the large parking lot in front of the building. 46

Between July 9, 1953 and July 12, 1955, the Air Force "surprised" Smoky Hill by requesting approximately $30 million in appropriations from Congress, later turned out to be for construction projects. Each time, Smoky Hill officials responded to queries with the line that they did not know what the money was to be used for. In response to a request for $12.4 million on January 14, 1955, engineers at the base stated that they were confused because they had not

have any plans for it. 47

Organization

June 11, 1952, the Salina Journal announced that Col. John H. de Russy was to be temporary Commander of the 802nd Air Division (AD). He had commanded the 3902nd Bomb Wing at Offutt AFB, NE before arriving at Smoky Hill.

II was to get two bomb wings; the 40th and 310th, with the Colonel as Commander of the latter unit. Colonel Cather was Commander of the Air Base Group (ABG) which was in charge of housekeeping on base. The post would be larger in terms of personnel than it had been in World War II. 48

Two groups of personnel assigned to the 310th Bomb Wing arrived on August 28, 1952. One group arrived on a chartered United Airlines plane at Salina's Municipal Airport. The other group, basic airmen from Lackland AFB, San Antonio, TX, arrived by train. These groups were different in the means by which they arrived in town. "Servicemen of World War 2 will notice that the airmen now carry duffel cases. The big duffle bags are missing. And the airmen were transported to AFB by bus instead of trucks." 49

The bulk of the 310th Wing arrived on September 4, 1953 from Forbes AFB, KS. Some of the men had to live in barracks left over from World War II. The rest were to live in the new barracks which each had forty-eight rooms, three to a room. A majority of this group arrived by car and truck in a convoy listed by the Kansas Highway Patrol. A parade was scheduled for 10:30 A.M.,

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49 Salina (KS) Journal, August 27 and 28, 1952. The use of the term "airman" from here on in its lower case state can mean all personnel of the Air Force; officers and enlisted alike. It is an accepted and common term in the Air Force. Those familiar with these circumstances know that carrying duffle bags was "still military" as late as 1975 for some personnel!
to celebrate the arrival and the public was invited. Stanley Donovan arrived sometime in late 1952 at Smoky Hill. But for being on base was not officially announced until January 18, Congressman Wint Smith announced that the 40th Bomb Wing was to be Smoky Hill "immediately," involving the movement of 400 officers and airmen. The 40th Wing was a medium bomb wing and organized at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ with B-29 bombers. "Immediate" seems to have had a different meaning to the Air Force, because it was not until March that the 40th Tactical Maintenance Squadron began moving from Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ to Smoky Hill.

One month later, the 310th Wing completed its organization and celebrated its first birthday. No special ceremony was held save for a birthday cake prepared by a civilian secretary at the Wing Headquarters. There were four flying squadrons assigned to the Wing: the 379th Bomb Squadron (BS), the 380th BS, the 310th BS, and the 310th Air Refueling Squadron (ARS) along with five support squadrons.

In 1955, the Air Force gave the 40th and 310th Wings a World War II heritage. There had been a 40th and a 310th Bombardment Group in World War II that were officially recognized as the ancestors of the Wings assigned to Smoky Hill. This action gave the Wings the right to claim the background, history, honors, and colors of the units of that war. Now, the 40th and 310th Wings had heritages to live up to and improve upon.

50Salina (KS) Journal, August 29 and September 4, 1952.
52Salina (KS) Journal, April 2, 1953.
the start of this period, the units assigned to the base were under the command of the 15th AF, headquartered at March AFB, Riverside, CA. On July 1, 1952, the 8th AF, headquartered at Westover AFB, MA, assumed command with no change in Commanders because General Robert Sweeney, Commander of the 15th AF, transferred to Westover AFB, MA as Commander of the 8th AF. 54

Air Police

One of the first groups to arrive at Smoky Hill after it was reactivated was a twenty-five man Air Police (AP) detail under the supervision of T. Sgt. Tom Jenne, a native of Summerfield, KS. This group took over the guarding of the base which had been done by men TDY from Forbes AFB, KS to reactivate Gunnery Range. 55

Contrary to the reputation they seemed to have acquired in the 1940s, this group of Air Police was a better-disciplined group. In late 1952, the APs assisted local police in tracking down a gunman on the loose in the area. But their main job remained the security of the base which included patrolling over ten miles of fence. There was also traffic control and town patrol which had seven men assigned to it at that time. 56

Until October, 1952, access to the base appears to have been relatively easy and it was open to anyone who wanted to drive around and see what was going on. But on October 24, 1952, the Provost Marshal's office on base announced that dependent of Air Force personnel would have to show identification if they wanted to gain admission to the base. 57

July, 1955, there were sentry dogs assigned to the base. There was a Dog section of the 802nd APS which had thirteen men and thirteen dogs. The men and dogs were assigned to Smoky Hill, they underwent a training together for eight weeks at Fort Carson, CO. A sentry dog was good for seven years of duty and it cost about $500 to train and equip the dog. They were fed once a day and consumed about thirty pounds of horsemeat a day.

Band

In 1953, the 537th Air Force Band was activated at Smoky Hill. On June 16, 1953, there was a fear that budget cuts by Congress might force activation. The Band had eleven men assigned to it at this time but at strength, it was supposed to have thirty-four men with a Warrant Officer Conductor. By April 29, 1954, the 537th's future was secure. It had sixteen members: three trombones, four trumpets, two drums, two bass horns, and saxophones. Instead of a Warrant Officer for a Conductor, it had T. Sgt. Ad Jones, a trumpet player, who doubled as Conductor. More men were expected assignment to the band in the future. 59

Hospital

Lt. Col. Robert Corwin had been Commander of the Smoky Hill Air Force Base in 1949 when the base was closed. He was transferred to the Barksdale LA Hospital at that time. On July 1, 1952, he returned to Smoky Hill to open the hospital, a task that he accomplished in thirty days. 60

59Salina (KS) Journal, August 16, 1953 and April 29, 1954. The Air Force longer has any Warrant Officers. They were replaced with the "super" grades Senior and Chief Master Sergeants starting in the late 1950s.
help Colonel Corwin reopen the hospital, the man who had been his adju-
1949, Maj. William R. Cotner, returned. Three nurses were also on
ving arrived ahead of Colonel Corwin and Major Cotner, but they had no
in the hospital 61 and later assisted in opening the base nursery. Re-
the hospital must not have been the same as being totally operational.

On October 17, 1952, Impact, the base newspaper, reported that Colonel
her, Base Commander, had been hospitalized at St. John's Hospital, Salina,
removal of his appendix. 62 Obstetrical care became available on November
2 and became the first type of care available to military dependents.
ly later, a nine-pound boy was born to the wife of S. Sgt. J. H. Collins
base hospital, making this the first birth of the decade at the base. 63
uary 9, 1953, visitors were barred from the hospital for an indefinite

A "number of respiratory cases" had suddenly cropped up and an investi-
was then underway to determine the cause. 64

Two years later in 1955, the Air Force Surgeon General visited the hospital
urvey the facilities. Little had changed since the World War II era as the
ital was located where it had always been in the same buildings and it was
ir conditioned. There is a suggestion that a new hospital would be in
r. 65

On April 8, 1956, it was announced that a new system for the medical care
pendents had been inaugurated at the base hospital. Appointments were no

61 Ibid.
62 Impact, October 17, 1952.
64 Salina (KS) Journal, January 9, 1953.
- 1957, on file in the Kansas Room, Salina Public Library, states that the
ital only had sixty beds. This is one-third of the beds available in 1949.
necessary because a general sick call for dependents had been started. 
were from 1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M. on week days. 66

one aspect, there was a big change in the care of the families of Air
personnel assigned to Smoky Hill. During the last years of the first era,
found themselves forming a mutual hospital association to provide care 
for families. That had changed, probably for the better. At least they 
contributing money to hire nurses.

**Operations**

30th ARS found itself with a strange problem in June, 1954. Some 
and flown on to the base and decided to make their home in a KC-97. They 
to get into the fuselage but were defeated, so they accepted the area 
the flaps on the left wing. The base tried to get rid of them by taxiing 
planes around the runways at speeds of 100 mph but this failed. Plans were 
made for a routine mission in which the bees would be frozen to death at 
altitudes. 67 This must have worked as this was the last time the matter 
mentioned.

A flock of dead birds were found on the flight line in the morning hours 
Octoher 7, 1954 and stumped base officials as to what caused the deaths. 
finally decided that the birds had been attracted to the bright lights on 
runways and then flew through a cloud of toxic fumes while migrating south. 
or "several thousand" more birds were found on the runways during the 1955 
ating season, the base decided to dim the runway lights during future mi-
ting seasons. By this time, the base had decided that the birds were either 
orarly blinded or the lights blunted their sense of direction and they

For some reason, this only happened on the southward flights. Interest is that by September, 1955, the base was worth $356,952,251, to Lt. Col. Charles Vinson, Base Comptroller. The planes were worth and the payroll was $14.8 million for the 1955 Fiscal Year.

Mission

The story of Smoky Hill Air Force Base is the story of a Strategic Air bomber-base of the 1950s. In 1954, Salina tried to get the Air Force once more and when that failed, the planes and the mission the base and became a matter of greater interest to Salina. New aircraft and immissions could be interpreted as a sign of the importance of the base Air Force which meant to Salina the permanence of the base.

After the base was reactivated, there was speculation about the kind of that the base would be assigned. It was learned in December, 1951 that called for two wings of B-47s to be stationed at the base in a training site. But Lieutenant Colonel Johnston, Base Commander, stated in March, what he believed that the base would be used for operational purposes rather training

On September 5, 1952, it was learned that there would be four flying squadassigned to the 310th Wing. While the 310th Bomb Wing was settling down, Nolan, 310th Wing Commander, informed the press that Smoky Hill was to training base. The base would shortly receive thirty B-29s and get down work. An average of thirty planes would be assigned to each Wing. In the

B-29s would be assigned to the base, the same plane that had been to the base from 1944 to 1949. Eleven men were assigned to each plane, 1,200 men to each Wing. Each pilot was to receive forty hours of time each month. The composition of that crew was five officers and six for a plane commander, first pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, navigator, engineer, radio operator, and four gunners. 72

Joe Varga, who had been at Smoky Hill as a first lieutenant in 1949, the first B-29 at the base at 6:04 P.M., Thursday, September 11, 1952. The plane stopped in front of the Base Operations building, Colonel Nolan, Bomb Wing Commander, announced to the crowd present for the event: "Smoky is back in business." The plane had been reconditioned and flown in from Lockheed plant in Marietta, GA. 73 What makes this interesting is that the had been built by Boeing.

The B-29 bomber would soon be replaced by the B-47 but another plane assigned to the base would remain until 1963. That plane was the KC-97 tanker, of refueling planes in mid-air. On November 14, 1952, the first KC-97 to be permanently assigned to Smoky Hill landed and was assigned to the ARS. 74

Thus, with KC-97s assigned to the base in what would become two squadrons, base was assured of more than a training mission for the KC-97s meant at a support mission. With the arrival of B-47s, the mission of units assigned to the base was probably more combat-oriented than training although the latter could be considered synonymous in the peacetime military.

74 Impact, November 14, 1952.
Though the 40th Bomb Wing had not arrived from Arizona, the 40th ARS had planes at Smoky Hill and was fully operational on January 9, 1953 when ten fully-trained crews arrived on base. Each refueling squadron was to have twenty planes with a crew of three officers and four enlisted. 75

KC-97s assigned to the 40th and 310th Air Refueling Squadrons had engaged in refueling missions from the time they arrived on base. The first recorded refueling mission was on December 9, 1953 when a 40th ARS refueled an F-84 assigned to Bergstrom, Austin, TX and F-84 developed engine trouble. The KC-97 towed it back to Bergstrom.

had some power, but the fuel hookup enabled the plane to remain in the air it could glide to a landing. 76

February 28, 1954, the 40th and 310th ARS were sent on a temporary duty assignment which lasted longer than one day. The B-29s of Smoky Hill were involved in this mission. On March 9, the 40th ARS returned but the 310th did not return until March 29. One of the jobs both units performed was assisting the 22nd Bomb Wing (assigned to Smoky Hill from 1948 to 1949) make move from England back to March AFB, CA. 77

While the air refueling squadrons were TDY, Impact, the base newspaper, had an announcement from Colonel de Russy, 310th Wing Commander, that the wing would begin conversion from B-29s to B-47s within ninety days. However, 40th Wing would retain its B-29s "a while longer." The obsolete B-29s would be flown to Tinker AFB, OK and Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ for storage. Preparation receiving the B-47 had been underway since the base was reactivated in

75 Impact, January 9, 1953.
76 Salina (KS) Journal, December 9, 1953.
Each Smoky Hill Wing was to have forty-five planes assigned to it. The number of personnel assigned to each Wing would be increased. The medium bomber capable of flying 600 miles per hour and had a three-engine configuration entirely of officers. 

Currently, the transition was underway by March 18, 1954. There were five B-29s still assigned to the 310th Bomb Wing and these planes were to leave on March 25, 27, and 29. The 40th Bomb Wing was to retain until a later date; however, all medium bomb wings of SAC were to be replaced with B-47s by the end of 1955. 

The 310th Bomb Wing prepared to dispose of its B-29s for jets, the 310th Wing had not been back from its first TDY a week, was sent to Ernest Harmon Air Foundation for a short TDY. It was relieved by the 40th ARS in May and was to spend forty-five days there. This writer got the impression that there may have been a shortage of refueling units at this time owing to the succession of TDYs for the two air refueling squadrons assigned to the Wing. 

Less than three months after the first B-29 from the 310th Wing left for a TDY, the first B-47 arrived to replace it and touched down at 12:32 P.M. on May 2, 1954. The three million dollar plane was piloted by Colonel de Russy, Wing Commander. Since this was a new plane to the area, the crew first flew the plane low over the base before landing to let the small group of spectators get a look at the plane in motion.

79 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, March 18, 1954.
for the conversion of the 40th Bomb Wing to B-47s were advanced and 27, 1954, the 40th Wing received its first B-47 at 3:00 P.M. This flown by Colonel Nolan, Deputy 40th Wing Commander, in from Wichita, it had been built. The Wing was expected to have a full complement by October, 1954. 82

Finally, the Air Force was ready to receive the 1,000th B-47 built. Tech­ the plane was supposed to go to the 40th Wing to round out its comple­ the Air Force and SAC considered giving the plane to a base in need publicity that went with it. However, base and civic officials protested announced on December 9 that the 40th Wing would get the plane. 83

11:00 A.M., Saturday, December 17, 1954, the 1,000th B-47 landed before crowd in front of Base Operations. It was greeted by the 537th AF Band, is from Boeing Aircraft, General Sweeney, 15th AF Commander, and General Band, 802nd AD Commander. After the ritual of transferring the title of plane from Boeing to the 15th AF to the 802nd AD to the 40th Bomb Wing was ted, Donna Lindsey stepped forward and with a bottle of champagne, chris­ the plane the "City of Salina." 84

Although the plane had been in the Air Force inventory since 1949 (the Bomb Wing had been equipped with the plane upon its arrival at Barksdale LA after leaving Smoky Hill in 1949), little was known about the plane in c. All that Salina knew about the plane was that there were nearly 100 men in two Wings at the base and that the 40th Wing had received the 1,000th built. It fell to Colonel James Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, to enlighten 82Salina (KS) Journal, August 29, 1954.
83Salina (KS) Journal, December 1 and 9, 1954.
84Salina (KS) Journal, December 9, 14, 16, and 17, 1954.
In construction, speed, and striking power, it is a magnificent

1. Each jet costs $3 million making the base fleet of 100
   with $300 million.

2. A B-47's fuel weighs one and one-half times as much as
   plane. (An empty plane weighs forty tons but carries sixty
   of fuel.)

3. The fuel weighs more than a fully loaded B-17 of World War
   fame.

4. The wings are so flexible that the tips flex up and down
   five feet in flight and this can increase to twenty feet
   during a wind storm.

5. It can withstand sudden change in atmospheric pressure.

6. Engine fires have been reduced by the installation of a
   feature where a pilot can press a button and snuff it out.

7. The plane can do a million times more damage than a B-17

This was an interesting view of the plane that would be assigned to the
or the rest of the history of the base. The B-47 could do more damage
it could deliver a nuclear bomb which the B-17 was not created to do.
quipped with the new B-47s, the Wings assigned to the base were ready for

During the week of March 9, 1955, all 1,500 men of the 310th Wing left
ninety-day TDY to England. This mission included the 310th ARS and the
was to replace the 321st Wing of Pinecastle AFB, FL. There were forty-five
involved in this mission. Of course, the families were not allowed to
pany the units. Shortly after the 310th Wing left for England, the 40th
participated in the ninth birthday celebration of the Strategic Air Command
Strutt AFB, NE. Four planes representing the 25th BS, 40th ARS, 44th BS, and
BS joined other SAC units in a fly-by demonstration and returned to their

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310th Bomb Wing began returning to Smoky Hill from its first TDY on and was met by the 537th AF Band. General LeMay, Commander of SAC, had the Wing while it was in England and had been impressed with what he had seen. The Wing had been performing its mission exceptionally well with a great deal of problems and morale was high.

In June, the 40th Bomb Wing left on its first TDY since the unit transferred to Smoky Hill in 1953. It began returning on September 7. It had gone for its mission was not announced and has not been determined by writer.

Late 1955, the 310th ARS left for an undisclosed location. It returned early 1956. At this time, the unit had twenty-four KC-97s and 300 assigned to it. Four months later, the 40th ARS left for two and one-half TDY to an undisclosed location. It returned on September 5, 1956. Impact announced on June 8, 1956 that the 310th Wing had received the improved B-47E aircraft which had a more accurate bombing system than the older that the Wing had been using. In October of 1956, the 40th Wing began using the same model.

It was announced on August 12, 1956 that a 381st BS, 310th Wing, B-47 had been chosen to participate in a General Electric speed race on September 2 at B-47s from the 22nd and 301st Bomb Wings. On September 3, 1956, the times were posted. The 22nd was first with an average speed of 601.1 mph; the 301st was second with a speed of 600.1 mph; and the 310th was last with a speed of 598.5 mph.

88 Salina (KS) Journal, September 6, 7, and 8, 1955.
What is interesting about the 310th's performance is that the B-47 had set a speed record of 603 mph in January, 1956 which was detailed in another section of this paper. The reader may also recall that the 22nd and 301st had been assigned to the base in the 1940s.

On October 4, 1956, it was learned that the whole 310th Wing was leaving for an undisclosed period of time to an undisclosed place, which was learned by press to be England. The Wing returned to the base on January 7, 1957. Shortly after the 310th Wing left on its TDY, the 40th ARS took off for a week TDY to an undisclosed base, leaving only the 40th Bomb Wing and the ABG on base. The 40th ARS returned to the base on December 4 in time to celebrate Christmas. Salina was assured that this TDY was in no way related to the Crisis in the Middle East.

There were at least 140 planes assigned to the base by the end of this period. The slow, ungraceful four-engine propeller-driven KC-97 (which did duty as a cargo and passenger plane) and the graceful swept-wing six-engine B-47 jet bomber, the "long rifle" of SAC, were assigned to the base. Hill seemed to have one foot in the modern era of warfare and one foot in the past with the old KC-97 which was being planned for replacement by the four-engined KC-135 jet, the military version of the Boeing 707. There were fewer planes assigned to the base under the command of the 802nd ABG which will come out later. These planes were piloted by officers assigned to administrative duties on a part-time basis due to regulations which required personnel to put in time in the air in order to collect flight pay.

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During this period, units from Smoky Hill Air Force Base participated in TDYs which lasted from one day to ninety days or three months and from one plane to sixty-nine. Smoky Hill started out with the B-29 pro-driven bomber and closed this period with B-47 jets.

Smoky Hill's runways played a very important role in the mission of the base. Runways play in the role of any air base. Their length and width determine the kind of aircraft which would be based there and the role that the base and its units would play in the Air Force mission. It was learned on November 29, 1953 that the north/south runway was to be strengthened in the north end extended 1,100 feet to be ready for the B-47 when it arrived. This was confirmed on March 26, 1954 when it was announced that bids would be opened for the runway overlay job, which was made necessary by the decision to build B-47s on base. The 10,000 foot north/south runway was to be "beefed up a center 200 foot strip with thirteen additional inches of concrete. Edges of this overlay were to be tapered with crushed rock and asphalt to the present edges. As of the time of this article, the runways were eight feet thick.  

Apparently the runway was not extended 1,100 feet because it was announced January 14, 1955 that the north/south runway was to be extended 2,300 feet. The Kiewit Construction Company of Wichita got the $1.7 million contract to be completed within 300 work days after the work started.

This necessitated closing West Cloud street which had been the northern boundary of the base. Why the Air Force did not go south is unknown. In those days, the whole area was a flood plain of the Smoky Hill River and all of it

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It would have been just as easy to have gone south and county road as to have gone the way it did and close a major thorough-

1. Jack Randolph, Base Commander, met with County Commissioners on 6, 1955 to discuss reopening the street. He informed them that money available to reopen the street which would jog it around the northern tip runay. This plan would have virtually merged it with Crawford Street. was not acceptable to the County, no definite plans had been made by ar 30, 1955 concerning the street. But on March 7, 1957, a federal com- mended that the Air Force pay Saline County $20,374 for its loss.96 result of closing part of Cloud Street was that Crawford Street became ns major east/west thoroughfare.

The drainage ditch which had killed four men in an accident on July 13, (mentioned in the following section) was finally converted into a culvert cost of $56,000. The grading project had been scheduled prior to the acci-

but delays of an unspecified nature occurred. The project was completed ember, 1956. Had the ditch not been there, four men would still have alive at the end of this period.97

Accidents

During the sixty-seven months covered in this period, there were only four-

- accidents, involving the loss of nineteen lives and nine aircraft, of ch six were B-47s reported in the local press.

The first accident, if it can be called that, occurred on June 13, 1953 en a B-29 belonging to the 380th BS, 310th Wing, developed engine trouble

Denver, CO. Three men parachuted out of the plane before the trouble in flight and the plane landed safely in Denver.98 The men were later
1. Whether this qualified them for membership in the Caterpillar Club mentioned.

Another accident which was hair-raising and caused more parachuting occurred in the desert, forty miles south of Gila Bend, AZ. A Davis-Monthan AFB-based KC-97 slid with a Smoky Hill 40th ARS KC-97 while attempting to refuel. Both landed safely at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ after most of the 40th ARS crew 
ed to safety. No one was injured.99 Although it was not mentioned, the craft commander and co-pilot were probably the ones who stayed with the plane and landed it.

Four accidents between September 5, 1954 and April 20, 1955 involved no loss of life or required parachuting from troubled planes. A 379th BS B-47
landed on the runway on base and burned during the night of September 27, 1954. An explosion happened during the night of December 1 which caused an explosion and 3 million dollars in damage to a 310th Wing B-47.100 The two other accidents noted in the local press were similar in nature.

The first loss of life in an accident since Smoky Hill was reactivated was the worst accident reported in this period. The accident occurred ninety
1. Nine lives were lost in a KC-97 which belonged to the 310th ARS. It was assumed that the cause of this accident was engine failure.101

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98 Impact, June 19, 1953.
99 Impact, September 11, 1953.
The last three accidents of this period took ten lives and involved the 40th Bomb Wing. Two belonged to the 40th Bomb Wing and the accidents all occurred within the State of Kansas. Worse was the fact that all occurred within seven months of 1956.

Broken plexiglass canopy and its loss was blamed for the loss of a 379th Wing B-47, which crashed three miles south of Westmoreland, KS on July 10, 1956. Four men, one an enlisted crew chief, died in this crash as investigated by a nineteen-man accident board from the base. 102

Four months later, while on final approach to the base, a B-47 belonging to 25th BS, 40th Wing, burst into flames and crashed one-half mile south of Mentor, KS killing all three men on the plane. The plane gave no distress indicating trouble and the Smoky Hill investigating board believed that the pilot's error probably caused the crash. 103

The last accident of this period occurred just seventeen days after the first, near Mentor and it occurred less than a half-mile from the end of the runway, just as it was preparing to take off. This accident killed all four men aboard. Some sort of engine trouble developed and the pilot tried to abort take-off but hit a three-foot drainage ditch at the end of the runway. Had it not been for that ditch, the base believed that the plane could have skidded to a safe stop. The plane belonged to the 45th BS, 40th Wing, and the crew was one of the "top five" in the 40th Wing. 104 This ditch became known as "Death Ditch" as a result of this accident and its removal received priority in base planning as has been noted in an earlier section of this chapter.

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As was a mild period for the base in terms of loss of life and planes. The 40th Wing lost four planes of which three were B-47s; the 310th Wing lost planes of which two were B-47s; and the 802nd ABG lost two transports. The 40th Wing only lost six men while the 310th lost thirteen men, nine of whom perished in one crash. Compared to the 1942 to 1945 and 1945 to 1949 periods, the losses were negligible but then the bomber crews were smaller after 1954. The standard crew of a B-47 was three men: an Aircraft Commander, pilot, and navigator. Approximately thirty-nine people would have been killed in the last three accidents reported in this period had the planes not been B-29s.

There were accidents but there were also a series of safety programs aimed at preventing accidents. On November 26, 1953, Smoky Hill was rated third in an October Safety contest and was just behind Lake Charles AFB, LA and Joliet AFB, TX. In September, the base had been fourth amongst twenty-four bases in the United States. One month later, Smoky Hill was first, Walker AFB, NM was second, and MacDill AFB, FL was third.¹⁰⁵ Little was heard about the safety programs until March 6, 1955 when it was announced that the 802nd ABG had been named to the Flying Safety Division Hall of Fame in SAC. The 802nd ABG was one of the first entries and had won the honor for flying over two years without an accident. At this time, the 802nd ABG operated the T-33 jet trainer, C-47 and C-119 transports, C-45 passenger, and various bomber planes.¹⁰⁶

Training

Training is an ongoing process in the military. There is a belief that

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men never receive too much training. During this period, training was conducted in a variety of ways including competition between units. The men of Smoky Hill awaited the arrival of their planes, they underwent what was called "obstinate" training. Much of it was done at the OQ Gunnery Range, where nine gunnery turrets similar to those found in the B-29 which was the plane being assigned to the base.

Other means of training was the use of a simulator which conditioned the men to high altitudes. The altitude chamber at Smoky Hill was capable of simulating flight at 34,000 feet without their ever leaving the ground. Fire-fighting crews were taught the latest in fire-fighting techniques and drills were held to see how well they had learned their lessons. One such simulated operation, simulating an aircraft crash, was held at the OQ Gunnery Range on March 4. The simulated reality was far greater than the base had planned because a man called the base reporting a crash in the area.

In March, 1954, six officers went to the Boeing Aircraft plant in Wichita for the purpose of attending a thirteen-week course to learn how to fly the B-47 which was to be assigned to the base later that year. These men were the first assigned to the base to attend this course. While the officers were learning to fly the B-47, ten airmen assigned to Smoky Hill left to attend a month course on maintenance of the B-47. The school was held at Amarillo, TX.

Later in 1954, after the B-47 had arrived at Smoky Hill and been assigned 110

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107 Impact, September 26, 1952.
Flying squadrons, two 380th BS crews became the first to be combat-ready 10th Wing on December 1. In February, 1955, two 25th BS crews achieved honor for the 40th Wing. 111

An "alert" is another form of training in which attack conditions are treated as realistically as possible. In the 1950s, it entailed setting up posts outside of the "attack" area. The first of many alerts occurred on A.M. on July 6, 1955 when base sirens went off. Two convoys of military vehicles evacuated the base as a part of the alert. One convoy of five vehicles went north to Bennington, KS and the other went west on highway US 40. Another alert was held on October 28, 1955. 112

A new idea in Air Force technical training at the time was tested at Smoky Hill in 1956 on an experimental basis. The idea was to cut down the time and expense in training by sending units from the technical schools to the base and of sending groups of men to the schools. 113 It was thought that it would be cheaper to send instructors from base to base but it probably took time to get whole segments fully trained.

Flight simulators had been in operation at the base since B-29s were as- 114 in 1952. SAC had three types of simulators in 1956 for its three major types: the B-52, B-47, and B-36. Only the B-47 simulator was available at Smoky Hill. Each simulator was designed capable of putting a pilot through possible condition he might encounter in actual flight which included ty-five malfunctions for the B-47, including a "nerve-tingling crash." The realism was such that many students left the session exhausted and dripping in sweat.

Each simulator cost $500,000 (compared with $3 million for the plane) and consisted of 700 vacuum tubes and thirty-five miles of wiring.\textsuperscript{114} As before the advent of transistors and circuit boards.

In February 3, 1957, all officers assigned to the base attended a day-long session in the base theater to learn about the Air Force mission and their role in the peace-time Air Force.\textsuperscript{115} Thus for one day, the enlisted personnel at Smoky Hill literally ran the base.

Two crews of the 310th Bomb Wing participated in SAC's sixth annual Bombing Navigation Competition held at Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, LA, using the B-47 for the first time in 1954. The 380th BS team commanded by Capt. William T. Dunn came in third. This contest involved bomb raids on Denver, CO and NE as well as practice bomb drops on Smoky Hill's OQ Gunnery Range.\textsuperscript{116}

In May of 1955, a 25th BS, 40th Wing, B-47 was honored for outstanding performance in the 15th AF's "Operation Parade Ground," an evaluation mission.\textsuperscript{117} At this time, Smoky Hill was under the jurisdiction of the 15th AF. This was the first time such recognition had been conferred on a Smoky Hill B-47 crew.

Smoky Hill sent four teams to the seventh annual SAC Bombing and Navigation Competition held from August 24 to August 29, 1955. At the end of the first day of competition, a 381st BS, 310th Wing, B-47, with Maj. Robert Foss as draft Commander, was in third place. However, something went wrong and when the final results were posted on September 3, the 310th Wing placed twenty-fifth.

\textsuperscript{114}\textit{Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun}, June 21, 1956.
\textsuperscript{115}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, February 3, 1957.
168

168th Wing placed thirty-second. 118 How many units were involved in the
was not mentioned, but obviously there were at least thirty-two.
310th Bomb Wing received a late Christmas present on December 28. In
at Westover APF, MA, General Robert Sweeney presented the Brigadier
Jack Roberts Memorial Trophy to Col. Selmon Wells, 310th Wing Commander.
Wing won the 8th AF bombing competition held from December 7 to
14, 1955. The trophy would be retired by the first unit to win it
was. 119

In early 1956, the 8th AF held a Commander's bombing competition to
rise Commanders with problems confronting their crews. Lt. Col. William
Commander of the 45th BS, 40th Wing, placed ninth and Lt. Col. Samuel A.
ll, Commander of the 380th BS, 310th Wing, placed tenth. Ironically,
Sutherland, Commander of the 802nd AD, placed eleventh. 120 These showings
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to be good.

44th BS, 40th Wing, B-47 set a speed record from Smoky Hill to Marietta,
January 11, 1956. The average speed for the 810-mile trip was 603 mph.
pose of the mission was to fit the plane with drop tanks. 121 This speed
miles an hour faster than a Smoky Hill B-47 did in the General Electric
Race in 1955. With a speed of 603 mph, Smoky Hill would have won the race.
tanks are fuel tanks which give the plane additional mileage and are usually
ed on the wings. However, they are often dropped or removed when the plane
ed on a combat mission. They are also dropped in times of emergency for

such as engine malfunctions.\textsuperscript{122}

General Sutherland was leaving Smoky Hill for another assignment in February, before he left, the 310th Wing gave him a farewell present by winning its Trophy a second consecutive time. The Wing only needed one more the Trophy was its to keep, permanently.\textsuperscript{123} This leads this writer to that the competition was held similarly to an "alert," e.g., that it suddenly" sprung by higher headquarters with few knowing the exact time it start.

The 40th Wing barely beat the 310th Wing in competition for the Roberts Trophy on May 3, 1956. Had the 310th Wing won the competition, the Trophy would men retired. Still, the Trophy remained at Smoky Hill, even though it ed buildings.\textsuperscript{124}

In the eighth annual SAC Bombing and Navigation Competition held at Lockbourne and Loring AFB, Limestone, ME near the end of August, 1956, the 310th placed fourth. The crew responsible for this accomplishment was commanded Clayton Balch, 380th BS. There were sixty-six crews competing, includ­two each from the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings.\textsuperscript{125}

The last competition held in this period was for the Roberts Trophy which held in November, 1956. Because the 310th was TDY in England, it did not to participate in the eighth 8th AF "Pacesetter" bombing competition as it come to be known. While the 40th Wing finished a close second, it was not high to stop the 340th Wing of Whiteman AFB, Knob Noster, MO from winning the


\textsuperscript{123}Salina (KS) Journal, January 29, 1956.


\textsuperscript{125}Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 22 and 30, 1956.
second time, thereby tying it with the 310th Wing.\textsuperscript{126}

Weather

At the time the base was reactivated in 1951, technology had made flying radar and improved forecasting techniques made it easier to determine routes. Still, the unpredictability of Kansas weather sometimes failed.

November 24, 1952, Col. Julian M. Bleyer, acting Commander of the base, ordered all but essential operations at the base at 1:30 P.M. due to areas of turbulent, a "sudden" blizzard. Normal operation was expected to resume the next day.\textsuperscript{127} It has been reported to this writer that it is believed that this blizzard have kept the base closed for as long as three days. People recall this blizzard being unusually severe for that early in the winter season.

The organization charged with observing and forecasting the weather was Detachment 17 of the 2nd Weather Squadron headquartered at Westover AFB, MA. At the end of 1956, Detachment 17 was rated "tops" by its parent unit. The unit was commanded by Maj. Charles E. Archambault.\textsuperscript{128}

Salina, Kansas is considered to be in the center of "Tornado Alley," an area which seems to get more than its share of tornadoes. In 1954, the 6th Weather Squadron (Mobile) from Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City, OK spent the summer tracking tornadoes.\textsuperscript{129}

The base maintenance men of the 802nd Installation Squadron were charged with snow removal during this period. When snow fell and reached a cumulative

\textsuperscript{126} *Salina (KS) Journal*, November 18, 1956.

\textsuperscript{127} *Salina (KS) Journal*, November 25, 1952.

\textsuperscript{128} *Salina (KS) Journal*, May 13, 1956.

\textsuperscript{129} *Salina (KS) Journal*, June 27, 1954.
men worked rotating twenty-four shifts until the snow was removed. Ativation, it was reported that the base had been closed only once due to snow and that was for one hour in December, 1954. The Base Operations Officer took command of the 802nd Air Base Group after it was organized sometime in 1952. 130 Apparently, the incident for 24, 1952 was not remembered.

Commanders
There were four major command units above the squadron level on Smoky Hill Air Force Base, Commanders

The 802nd Air Division, the 802nd Air Base Group, the 310th Air Base Wing, and the 40th Bomb Wing. The Base Commander during this period also had command of the 802nd Air Base Group after it was organized sometime in 1952. He was directly subservient to the 802nd Air Division Commander whose command also included the two Bomb Wings assigned to the base. The Commander of the 802nd Air Division (AD), as Commander of the highest organization on base, set the tone for the base and was assisted by the Base Commander of the 802nd Air Base Group (ABG), who was the Base Commander and Base Commander of the 40th Bomb Wing. The Wing Commanders had direct control of the planes and had the most men under their immediate command. In terms of rank, the AD Commander was anything from a full Colonel to a Major General. The ABG Commander was usually a full Colonel although in the early days of this period, a Captain, Major, and Lieutenant Colonel held the title of Base Commander and at the close of this period, a Lieutenant Colonel was Base Commander. Throughout this period, the Wing Commanders were always full Colonels.

802nd Air Division
The first Commander of the 802nd Air Division was Col. John F. de Russey, 130

of the Korean Conflict and a graduate of the United States Mili-

day, Class of 1936. Colonel de Russy arrived on base from Forbes AFB, in June, 1952 where he had organized the 310th Bomb Wing. On November the relinquished command of the 802nd AD and resumed command of the. He served as Commander of the 310th Wing until August 18, 1955.
as transferred to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH to work on atomic-powered. Before he left, he was honored by an informal party at the Salina club where the Chamber of Commerce presented him a resolution of grati-

During his tenure as the first Commander of the 802nd AD, the base nized and completed its first stages of reactivation as well as received aircraft assigned to the base since 1949.

Gen. Wiley D. Ganey had the distinction of becoming the first General permanently assigned to the base and took command of the 802nd AD on 25, 1952. General Ganey was a bachelor from Andalusia, AL who had "wings" in 1931. Prior to arriving at Smoky Hill, he had commanded the 81st Bomb Wing (once assigned to Smoky Hill) and the 12th AD at March AFB, CA. This tenure at Smoky Hill, which lasted until mid-April, 1954, he worked to develop the base and in December, 1952, described the facilities at Smoky to the Salina Journal as the "best he had ever seen" in his career. Before he was transferred to another assignment, he was promoted to Major and married a Fairfax, VA woman. General Ganey was serving in a position normally held by senior Colonels or junior Brigadier Generals and once he promoted to Major General could expect a new assignment. It was announced March 2, 1954 that he was being transferred to Washington, D. C. to become


Director of Operations by May 1 and would be replaced by Brig. Gen. Herland, then assigned to Headquarters, USAF, Washington, D.C. General Ganey left, he sent the city of Salina a "thank you" note and Commission voted to "respond in kind."\(^{133}\)

April 24, 1954, Brig. Gen. John R. Sutherland, 44 years old, a native of NY, and a graduate of the United States Military Academy, Class of 1930, became the third Commander of the 802nd AD. In 1933, he had transferred Cavalry to the Air Corps, and during World War II had been involved in development of the atomic bomb. He had been promoted to Brigadier General on September 9, 1953. Upon his arrival in Salina on April 10, 1954, he spent the first few days shopping and getting acquainted with Salina. He informed the Salina Gazette that "Salina and Smoky Hill were highly recommended to him by people in the Air Force." This was a far cry from 1946 when Colonel Lee had been "exiled" to another base. Seven months later, General Sutherland turned 45 years of age and was promoted to command pilot's rating "as a present from the Air Force."\(^{134}\) At age 45, to get a command pilot's rating, one needed fifteen years in the service and 3,000 hours in the air as a pilot.

It was announced on January 9, 1956 that General Sutherland was leaving Salina to become Chief of Staff of the 15th AF at March AFB, Riverside, CA. The successor was announced until January 26, 1956 when Col. James W. Wilson was announced as the base from Florida to look at his new command. It was also announced on January 9 that Col. Berton Burns, 40th Bomb Wing Commander, would serve as Acting Commander of the 802nd AD until Colonel Wilson could arrive after transferring command of his unit in Florida to a new Commander. General Sutherland


AFB on February 5, 1956 leaving Colonel Burns in command. Colonel was to take command of the 802nd AD on February 24 from MacDill AFB, had commanded the 305th Bomb Wing. He was 36 years old, a native of WY, and had won his wings in 1940. Colonel was described as "soft spoken" and the B-47 was his "favorite. He thrived on competition. One of his first surprises upon arriving was to discover that Salina was "as big as it was." He informed the that one of his first projects would be to remodel the Officers' Club to allow townspeople to become members. Next, NCO Councils would be established in all base squadrons. Military courtesy would be emphasized at all other innovation which helped morale and community relations was his decision to permit himself and the Base Commander to be interviewed once a month by the editor of Impact, the base newspaper, on Salina radio station KSAL. permitted the community to get an insight into the affairs of the base and created a feeling of camaraderie with base personnel. All of this probably helped Colonel Wilson's career because it was announced on September 26, 1956 that he had been selected for promotion to Brigadier General on January 1, 1957. The effective date was later changed to December 1, 1956. Promotion to Brigadier General capped a seventeen-year military career. In the time that he had commanded the 802nd AD, many changes had been implemented; the 40-hour work week had been instituted for the military, Commander's Calls had been eliminated at all levels, and he visited with Officers and NCOs leaving the service

at why they were leaving. As a result of this action, the re-enlist-
at the base had climbed to 48.9 percent, an all time high. 138

General de Russy had taken the base through its first phase of reactivation;
Kaney had emphasized discipline; and General Sutherland had guided his
through the transition from propeller-driven B-29 bombers to jet-powered
Colonel Wilson established once and for all the esprit de corps which
make Smoky Hill enviable to other Air Force units. Nothing seemed to be
possible for the men of Smoky Hill to accomplish.

802nd Air Base Group

Smoky Hill was reactivated on August 1, 1951, few, if any, knew what
would be assigned to the base. There were only sixty-five military and
civilians assigned to the base, of which thirty-five were really
able to operate the OQ Gunnery Range. It is hard to determine, based upon the
be readily at hand, when the 802nd ABG took "possession" of the base from
the 38th Base Service Squadron, but it is assumed that the changeover occurred
the first full Colonel arrived in 1952.

The first Commander of the reactivated base was Captain Bernard J. Nied,
and taken command of the 4108th Base Service Squadron on April 20, 1950.
Served as Base Commander until September 21, 1951 when he was transferred
Tavis AFB, CA for the purpose of retiring from the Air Force. 139 During
in Nied’s tenure as Base Commander, the base had been placed on caretaker
us and then gradually reactivated. The first signs came when thirty-five
arrived TDY to reactivate the Gunnery Range. When he left, buildings were
were razed and plans for new ones inaugurated. He served as Commander for

138 Salina (KS) Journal, October 26 and December 6, 1956.
139 Salina (KS) Journal, September 21, 1951 and January 1, 1953.
months which was a record for the base up to that time and would go unrivalled in the history of the base.

Leon Russell took command of the base on September 21, 1951. He arrived at Fairchild AFB, WA on that date.\textsuperscript{140} About all that he had time to watch the base change. It is doubtful that he expected to remain in command very long. The man who succeeded him was Lt. Col. Miles W. Johnston, and he arrived on January 8, 1952. Colonel Johnston was a reserve officer who had been recalled to active duty in 1951 due to the manpower needs of the Korean Conflict. Major Russell became Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of Condon.\textsuperscript{141}

Col. Myers B. "Bud" Cather, 34, a native of Nebraska as well as a veteran of the Korean Conflict, arrived to assume command of the base on March 4, 1952. At his arrival, Colonel Johnston became Executive Officer.\textsuperscript{142} Colonel Cather, the first full Colonel to be assigned to the base since Colonel Joe Kelly left in December, 1949, was born in Buffalo, WY, although he identified himself to be a Nebraskan, and had been commissioned in June of 1943.

Almost fourteen months later, it was announced that Colonel Cather was going to Smoky Hill to assume command of Lincoln AFB, NE and would be replaced by Col. Robert Thacker, Deputy Base Commander, on May 10, 1953. Colonel Thacker arrived on base on April 1, 1953 from Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ where

\textsuperscript{140}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{141}\textbf{Salina (KS) Journal}, January 8, 1952.

\textsuperscript{142}\textbf{Salina (KS) Journal}, March 4, 1952.

\textsuperscript{143}\textit{Impact}, August 15, 1952.
Deputy Base Commander. He was a native of El Centro, CA.\textsuperscript{144}

Colonel Thacker, recognizing the living difficulties of single men in the barracks with few opportunities for personal privacy, much less an assortment of other difficulties, decided on an experiment. He assigned eight squadron Commanders to live in the barracks for one week and have their families during this period.\textsuperscript{145} Unfortunately, we have no record of the results of this experiment.

February 10, 1954, Colonel Thacker relinquished command of the 802nd Bomb Wing and moved to the position of Director of Operations for the 310th Bomb Wing. He was succeeded by Col. John R. Kane, 47, a Medal of Honor winner, who was a native of Shreveport, LA. He had entered the Air Corps in 1931 as a 2nd lieutenant.

During World War II, Luftwaffe (the German Air Force) Intelligence had designated Colonel Kane "Killer Kane" owing to his skill as a B-24 pilot. He won the Medal of Honor for his work during the August 1, 1943 raid on the Ploesti oil refineries. Separated from his main group, his plane arrived on the scene to find their assigned target destroyed by the earlier group. Kane's plane, flying through heavy flak and destroyed the main refinery. Shortly after his arrival at Smoky Hill, he requested and was granted an honorable discharge from the service on May 10, 1954.\textsuperscript{147} Why he did not remain in the service is not known.

\textsuperscript{144}Salina (KS) Journal, April 15 and 28, 1953, Impact, April 17, 1953, and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, April 30, 1953.

\textsuperscript{145}Salina (KS) Journal, October 22, 1953. The men of the 802nd Supply Squadron fixed a CARE package for their Commander to compensate him for being away from his family for a week.

\textsuperscript{146}Salina (KS) Journal, February 11, 1954.

\textsuperscript{147}Dupre, pp. 118 and 119.
Jack L. Randolph, 45, a father of two boys and a member of the Air
1931, succeeded Colonel Kane as Commander on April 29, 1954. Colo-
olph came to Smoky Hill from Norton AFB, San Bernadino, CA. Although
andolph served as Base Commander for twenty-two months, little is
ut him. However, during his tenure, the runways were extended, the
aced the B-29, and construction became permanent in nature. He left
ell AFB, Hopkinsville, KY on March 7, 1956 and his residence at Phillips
as taken over by Colonel Wilson, 802nd AD Commander.148
"Salina Journal" announced on March 7, 1956 that Lt. Col. Gordon E.
uty Base Commander, and former base Manpower Officer, had become "tem-
ase Commander" (and 802nd ABG Commander, as well)"pending the arrival
manent successor to Colonel Randolph."149 When this appointment became
it is unknown and it is possible that this unusual honor for a Lieutenant
had been planned all along. Three months later, he was being inter-
once a month on Salina radio station KSAL with Colonel Wilson, 802nd AD
der, in his capacity as Base Commander, but little else is known about
ight men held the title of Base Commander during this period. One started
in a temporary capacity and wound up serving in a permanent capacity. Anoth-
old the Medal of Honor, which is the highest military decoration possible
in United States, but only served as Base Commander for approximately three
ns. Captain Neid, Major Russell, and Lieutenant Colonel Johnston probably
ot expect to hold the job very long owing to the activities burgeoning on
. Colonel Cather wanted to return to his native Nebraska and got that wish.

seemed to accept their assignment as part of their commitment to
mission.

310th Bomb Wing

Robert J. Nolan, 34, was to enjoy a unique reputation at Smoky Hill
period in that he commanded at one time or the other, both Bomb
base. He was a native of Trenton, NJ, had been commissioned in 1941,
veteran of Korea. Colonel Nolan assumed command of the 310th Wing
was still being organized at Forbes AFB, KS so that Colonel de Russy
ve to Smoky Hill as Commander of the 802nd AD. He brought the Wing to
l in September, 1952 and served as Commander until November 5, 1952
lonel de Russy relinquished command of the 802nd AD to General Ganey
amed command of the 310th Wing. At that time, Colonel Nolan became Deputy
mander and held that job until August 2, 1953 when he became Deputy Wing
er of the 40th Wing on base.150

olonel de Russy assumed command of the 310th Wing for the second time on
er 5, 1952.151 As has already been mentioned in this section, he left
ight-Patterson AFB, OH in August, 1955 after having served close to three
 as Commander of the 310th Bomb Wing. In the Air Force, he was known as
mentor but at Smoky Hill, he had provided stability to the 310th Wing in
ormative days.

It was announced on August 7, 1955 that Col. Selmon Wells would arrive
Mountain Home AFB, ID, where he commanded a Wing of B-36 bombers, to re-
e Colonel de Russy in mid-August. Colonel was 39 years old and had five
ldren. The Colonel served as Commander of the 310th Wing until July 5, 1956

150 Impact, September 12, 1952 and Salina (KS) Journal, November 5, 1952
August 2, 1953.

It was assumed by the 99th Bomb Wing then being moved from Fairchild AFB, WA to Westover AFB, MA and equipped with B-52 bombers, the third Wing equipped. Although he had been hand-picked for the job, he was not about the assignment and tried to get out of it to no avail. 152

A new Commander was named, Col. D. P. Woods, 310th Wing Deputy Commander was named temporary Commander. Colonel Woods held this job until 21, 1956 when he resumed his post as Deputy Wing Commander. 153

One of the ironies concerning the new 310th Wing Commander, Col. Bryson was that for the previous one and one-half years, he had commanded the 40th Bomb Wing at Fairchild AFB, WA while it was equipped with B-36 bombers. 154

Wing was the one that Colonel Wells had been named Commander of despite tests.

40th Bomb Wing

The second Wing to be assigned to Smoky Hill had been activated at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ in 1952. To command it, Col. Stanley J. Donovan, 42, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, Class of 1934, and a full Colonel November, 1942 was brought in from Forbes AFB, KS on December 8, 1952. Expected the Wing to be brought up to full strength by spring. 155

The Air Force must have decided that the organization of the Wing had been accomplished because on May 2, 1953, Colonel Donovan left for Travis AFB, CA to be command of the 14th AD. 156 His tenure was brief but it must have been

156 Impact, April 17, 1953.
Because command of an Air Division was a promotion involving supervision of more Wings.

David A. Burchinal, a native of Washington, PA, and the father of two, arrived from a two-year tour of duty in the Pentagon on May 2, 1953. Although plans were underway to convert the unit to B-47 stratojets, he that he assumed Command of the 40th Wing, it was still equipped with "although plans were underway to convert the unit to B-47 stratojets. October, 1953, Col. Robert J. Nolan, former Commander of the 310th Wing, temporary command of the 40th Wing so that Colonel Burchinal could attend flying courses at Wichita AFB, KS on October 26, 1953. It is believed writer that the courses were to teach Colonel Burchinal how to fly the because his next assignment was with a B-47 Wing.

W. William R. Large, junior, Chief of the Operations Branch, Directorateations at Headquarters, SAC, Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE was named to replace Burchinal "in early January, 1954." A native of Dallas, TX, he had EB-24 Group Commander with the 15th AF in Italy during World War II. Hisessor had been named Commander of the 43rd Bomb Wing at Davis-Monthan base where the 40th Wing had been activated in late, 1952.

is interesting about Colonel Large is that the normally very informative Advertiser-Sun did not provide any details about him.

Something must have happened or this was a planned brief tour of duty as el Large's tenure was cut short. It was announced on June 14, 1954 that "Berton H. Burns who had "served here from December, 1943 to March, 1944"

158 Impact, October 30, 1953.
159 Impact, December 18, 1953 and Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 24, 1953. This writer went through every edition of the Salina Journal, Salina Advertiser-Sun, and Impact, the base newspaper, on file in Salina and found little information on any Wing Commander of this period.
Colonel Burns of Port Arthur, TX and arrived at the base from a tour of duty in

After this, command stabilized for the 40th Wing. As has

Colonel Burns assumed temporary-command of the 802nd AD in 1956
friend, Colonel Wilson, moved in. There may have been more than
involved. Colonel Burns was the senior Commander at Smoky Hill.
men each commanded the 802nd AD, 310th, and 40th Bomb Wings which
include the two extra tours of duty Colonel Nolan served as Commander

the end of this period, Brigadier General Wilson commanded the 802nd AD
been in command of the 802nd AD for twelve and one-half months. Lieu-
Colonel Hein was Commander of the 802nd ABG/Base and had held his com-
twelve months and one week. Colonel Bailey commanded the 310th Wing
been in command for five months and three weeks. Colonel Burns was
with thirty-three months at the helm of the 40th Bomb Wing.

terms of command stability, the 802nd AD appears to have been the most
Of the five Commanders, only two had commanded it less than a year and
it is known that Colonel Burns assumed command temporarily in February,
probably by virtue of his seniority on base, it is assumed that Colonel

as first Commander of the 802nd AD, entered his duties with the know-
that it was a temporary arrangement.

Command of the base was another matter. Captain Neid only served fifty-
days as Commander in this period, but he accumulated seventeen months over-

After March, 1952, command was generally stable with the exception of

who served two months three weeks and was discharged or retired.

40th Bomb Wing’s command was also fairly stable. The shortest ten- 

of those of Colonels Nolan and Woods. The former served as the first 

of the Wing at Smoky Hill and probably it was in a temporary capacity 

de Russy could move over from the 802nd AD. Colonel Woods’ tenure 

tility temporary.
the 40th Wing seems to have lacked stability at the top save for the 

ing Commander who was Colonel Nolan. There exists the possibility that 

Wing was a trial ground for future Commanders whom SAC was interested 

ing to higher levels. The first two Commanders, Colonels Donovan and 

went on to greater things after about five months as Commander of 

a Wing. In a nine-month period starting on October 21, 1953, Colonel 

ogged at least three months as Commander of this Wing. Then in June, 

Colonel Burns assumed command and stayed in command. Colonel Large ar-

from SAC Headquarters and served approximately five months.

Economic Impact

Although Salina was an agricultural city, with the return of the Air Force 

vention of war became its major industry. Everything Salina did econom-

was dependent one way or another on the money spent by the Air Force and 

personnel at Smoky Hill. On June 5, 1952, it was announced that "the first 

al at the base was $40,000." The number of men stationed at the base at 

time was "a secret."161 Using figures presented later in this chapter, 

writer estimates that there were approximately 270 military personnel on 

ation at this time.

Economic impact of the base was felt in many ways. The military payroll and commercial bills with no breakdown available. If one were to the breakdown, one only had to wait one more year. Then the curious that "2,042 military plus 383 civilian families earned most or all of income from direct employment at the base. There were 4.1 people in each family or $231 per family or $279.50 for each civilian and $209.31 for military as for a rough total of $1½ million dollars a month. 163

was announced in July, 1955 that for the first time in the history of Hill, all personnel would be paid by check starting with the mid-July.

A machine that could sign 5,000 checks an hour had been installed on base. Officers and NCOs could have their checks mailed directly to their reserve banks. This announcement was met with joy in Salina because it meant local businesses would have to keep more cash on hand to cash the checks the base. 164

Salina was reminded again on July 21, 1955 of the importance of Smoky Hill to the local economy. During the 1955 fiscal year, a local purchasing and contracting program pumped $1½ million into the local economy according to Colonel

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162Salina (KS) Journal, April 12, 1953.
A little over a year, Leonard Ritchard, Base Comptroller, revealed that it cost $61 million to operate the base. There were approximately 6,000 military and civilian personnel, giving the base a population of around 10,000 people. (The figures must have included the families at Phillips Village.) The 1955 payroll was $14.5 million or $1.5 million a month, while local services cost $133,667 a month, and $7.2 million for improvements made in 1956. Salina $84 million, and assuming that most of the money was spent in the area, it was a very hefty asset to the local economy as opposed to the years 1951 when there was little military activity in the area.

As the permanency of the base was of vital concern to the area, construction was well underway when Colonel Cather, Base Commander, announced that the Air Force had decided to convert construction from a ten-year planned use to a fifty-year planned use which would cost $275,000 to make adjustments accordingly on buildings then under construction. Apparently, this was a premature announcement. In Air Force language, a five-year base was a permanent base and it was wise to stop and figure out if Smoky Hill were really that important. On June 7, 1953, the base announced that it had been made permanent, but that the twenty-five year construction plans had not been approved.

There is some confusion here because it was not until nearly three years later that the Air Force Times, the unofficial weekly newspaper about the Air Force, published the news that the construction was being made permanent.

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primarily aimed at readership by airmen and their families, announced
Hill Air Force Base was one of ninety-eight continental and thirteen
air bases that had been "listed as permanent" by Headquarters, USAF.

For permanency were: A firm and continuing need for the site; base
exclusive Air Force or Federal control; government has a clear title to
property; and it must have community support, e.g., the local people want

Community Relations

Howard Frohman, who had been assigned to Smoky Hill in 1946 and 1947 as
returned to the base in November, 1952 as a First Lieutenant. One of
able differences he noticed was in base/community relations. The Country

If course was open to personnel assigned to the base, free. The atti-
Salina towards the base was 100 per cent better. 170

Impact, the base newspaper, announced on December 19, 1952 that the 802nd
Vehicle Squadron (MVS) was loaning eight trucks to the Salina Post Office
list in the Christmas mail delivery. 171 It was a significant gesture in
the second era of the history of Smoky Hill Air Force Base. Community
ions with the base had taken a nose-dive in 1946, but near the end of the
era Salina appeared to have arrived approximate consensus on how the base
be treated when it began inviting base leaders to address civic organi-
ments about their overseas experiences. At that time, it appears to have
too little, too late. When the base was reactivated, things were different.

By the middle of 1953, the United States recognized that something unusual

169 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, March 1, 1956 and Salina (KS) Journal,
February 24, 1956.


171 Impact, December 19, 1952.
in the center of Kansas. It fell to the *Air Force Times* to publish.

In a report it published, the paper cited Smoky Hill Air

was being one of four air bases in the continental United States to

itionally good harmony with the city outside its main gate. The

bases were: Ent AFB, CO; Lowry AFB, CO; and Francis E. Warren

November, 1954, the *Salina Journal* featured an article on night opera-
the base and reported that the noise of the jets might keep Salinans
ight. Readers were assured that the noise also kept the airmen living

ume. The Air Force was taking steps to head off complaints, although

ation was expected to get worse when the main north/south runway was

To ease this situation, flight patterns had been changed so that
all aircraft no longer flew over the city and takeoffs turned away from
as fast as possible. Smoky Hill was considering the feasibility of

ing blast deflectors. Above all else, Smoky Hill and the Air Force were

ed to avoid the warfare surrounding other bases over the noise problem.

it were relations between the base and community as good as they seemed

in the local press? F. J. Feehan wrote a letter to the editor of the

Journal which appeared in the November 13, 1952 edition complaining that

Police were harassing the airmen from the base. It appeared that the

were being treated like second-class citizens. The editor responded

the Air Force and city officials were striving to change all of this:
ina considers the personnel at the base as first class citizens and is

g everything possible to make them feel at home."

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over two years later, Mrs. Billie Hilton wrote a letter to the Salina Journal stating that Salina needed to be friendlier to the airmen: "It is common for the utility company to charge airmen $40 for the service. Some landlords charge airmen $25 a month more for apartments. Contrary to popular belief, airmen do pay income tax. . . . Salina needs to open its arms to the men at the base and make them feel at home."175

In 1953, with the base at full strength, airmen assigned to Smoky Hill Air Force Base found themselves in a quandary over where to buy car tags. County Treasurer John Simpson refused to sell car tags to Air Force personnel assigned to the base, stating that the men were not residents of Saline County, but did not wish to uphold the residency requirements. The Salina Journal wondered, on behalf of the men, just what they had to do to establish residency. The airmen did establish residency in Saline County.176

It is unknown how long this issue had been building or determined, but the State Vehicle Commission announced the next day that it had received an anonymous letter from Salina complaining about the situation. It had given Simpson no authority to deny tags to Smoky Hill airmen and was investigating the situation in cooperation with the base. On page two of the same edition of the Salina Journal was an announcement that Mr. Simpson had decided to sell car tags to Smoky Hill airmen on instructions from Topeka. His reason for refusing to sell car tags to the airmen was because "the regulations are confusing. He had wanted to sell the tags but had had inquiries from other counties with military installations in them seeking his opinion and had decided to raise the issue even though the other counties had gone ahead and sold tags.

Mr. Simpson appears to have accepted the situation, making an
attempt with the base to set aside January 15 to February 5 for airmen to
make use of the base. Civilians could buy car tags on those days, but airmen would be
exempt. Presumably, although it was not stated, the airmen had to be

Another controversy that developed in 1953 was the issue of cab fares from
the base to Smoky Hill Air Force Base and vice versa. The rate had been one dollar for the trip
and vice versa. The rate had been one dollar for the trip
cab owners complained to the City Commission that they were losing money
and for an increase to two dollars. On June 8, the City Commission agreed
to the suggestion that cabs wait for a full load before driving out to the
base.

Finally, on June 23, a compromise was reached and the cab owners got just
all that they had originally asked for. The base had asked for a dollar
person in a full cab but agreed on $1.25 and 25¢ for each additional person
and 25¢ for each additional person
a dollar for a full cab.181

Civic groups in the area found a ready supply of speakers in the reacti-

\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, February 20, 1953.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, January 7, 1955.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, June 9, 1953.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, June 16, 1953.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, June 23, 1953.}\]
pages of the Salina Journal and the Salina Advertiser-Sun. In the latter normally thorough in its reporting, little else was given beyond the topic. During this period, six such visits by military personnel to the front two pages of the Salina Journal but none made it off the pages of the Salina Advertiser-Sun.

The first address of this period was made to the Rotarians on August 18, Maj. Alex Thomson, base Manpower Management Officer. He explained how implementing Air Force plans to conserve manpower, money, and material were assured that the taxpayers were getting the maximum for their 182

Later that year, Colonel de Russy, Commander of the 310th Bomb Wing and a of the Korean Conflict, addressed the Kiwanis Club on December 2. The of his speech was bombing, which he compared to striking an octopus. One be careful that while striking one part, another tentacle did not reach strike from a different direction. 183

One week later, General Ganey, Commander of the 802nd AD and a veteran of Korean Conflict, addressed the monthly convocation at Kansas Wesleyan Uni- ty, Salina. He talked about the role of the Air Force in the 1950s and of his experiences in Korea where he observed that the B-29 was "the work of that conflict." 184 It was coincidental that the B-29 was also the draft assigned in the greatest number to his command.

Two months later, General Ganey addressed the Lions Club. This time he on a subject that always interested Salina--the potential of Smoky Hill

The General praised Smoky Hill as having the clearest aircraft approaches and for having the most favorable "potential for expansion of a large air base in the United States."\(^{185}\) Although no rumors appeared this period about closing the base (which would have been ludicrous after over $20 million to rebuild it), the Air Force was constantly telling how permanent the base was. General Ganey's address on the subject may have calmed down any such sub-surface fears that the base was anything less permanent and been responsible for the lack of rumors about closing the base during this period.

On March 22, 1955, General Sutherland, General Ganey's successor as Commander of the 802nd AD, addressed the Lions Club. His topic was base/community relations. "All taxpayers are stock holders in the Air Force." When the men were assigned there, they did a better job which meant that the taxpayers got a bigger return on their investment in the nation's defense. Therefore, it was important for the locals to accept the airmen as members of their community.\(^{186}\) Although this writer could find no evidence that the community was concerned over anything involving the base and vice versa, something may have changed to prompt General Sutherland's selection of this topic.

The last major appearance before a civic group during this period, if it can be called that, was during the fourth annual "Honor the Uniform Week" on November 12, 1956 before the Sunflower Lions Club. Seven men from the base gave short talks on their work at the base.\(^{187}\)

\(^{185}\) Salina (KS) Journal, February 18, 1953.
Honor The Uniform Week

The base newspaper, announced the chief vehicle through which Salina achieve its objective of keeping its air base. That vehicle was "Honor Uniform" Week. As of September 18, 1953, it was in the planning stages of the Salina Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee. Special prices would be offered to personnel in Class A (dress) uniforms.

The date selected to kick off the week was Saturday, October 31, 1953. Prices would then be in effect for seven days at most businesses in the area. This established a tradition and through 1964, "Honor the Uniform" Week would be held usually during the first half of November.

Robert E. Thacker, Base Commander, expressed his appreciation for the "Honor the Uniform" Week in an open letter to the people of Salina which he wrote on November 26, 1953 in the Salina Advertiser-Sun:

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the citizens and many business firms who so willingly participated in "Honor the Uniform Week." I am sure that the officers and airmen of the base share my sentiments.

The friendliness and many benefits extended to the men of the base clearly shows that they have been recognized as a part of the community and that the people of Salina appreciate them. Though the men of Smoky Hill hail from every corner of the nation, the thoughtfulness, friendliness and cooperation of the citizens of Salina have done much to make our job more enjoyable and provide us with a home away from home. . . .

In 1954, the second annual "Honor the Uniform" Week was held from November 12. At least 125 local firms and businesses were participating. Salinans and "urged to forget formal introductions and buy airmen a cup of coffee. During this week, it is considered proper for women to do the

188 Impact, September 18, 1953.
190 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 26, 1953.
the Salina Chamber of Commerce informed the *Salina Journal* that airmen got acquainted with thousands of airmen. A total of 7,975 airmen for prizes and over seventy took them.  

There is no denying that "Uniform" Week was becoming a successful Salina tradition. However, one must dispute the 7,975 airmen cited as having registered for prizes. In fact, there were no more than 8,000 airmen assigned to the base. Allowing for normal fluctuation of personnel arriving on station, departing for new assignments, leaves, and TDYs, there had to be more than twenty-five men away from the base that week. Is it possible that some men registered more than once under a variation of their name, rank, and unit?

The third annual "Honor the Uniform" Week was held from November 5 to 11, 1955. Seventy-five merchants contributed over $2,000 in prizes for the Bingo party held on the night of November 7, open only to the merchants.

By 1955, the Air Force was aware of "Honor the Uniform" Week and liked it. It saw, for it meant that Salina was one place where the Air Force was liked and that few irate citizens would complain to Congress about the noise at the base. General Robert Sweeney, Commander of the 8th AF of which Smoky was a part, sent the Salina Chamber of Commerce a letter made public on November 7, 1955 commending Salina for its "Honor the Uniform" Week project. It was concrete evidence of the cordial hospitality which has always existed in Salina.

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193 *Salina (KS) Journal*, November 6, 8, and 11, 1955.
Sutherland, Commander of Smoky Hill's 802nd AD, gave a brief speech to the Rotary Club on November 8, 1955. His speech covered the history of his uniform and praised Salina for its "Honor the Uniform" Week. He encountered anything even remotely like it before in his military experience.

November 10, 1956, the fourth annual "Honor the Uniform" Week started. In addition to the special prices, prizes, and Bingo game, airmen got to run airdrome roads for a day. The idea was to acquaint the airmen with how civilians ran airdrome roads.

All of the positions except the City Commission were filled by Master Sergeants (department level officers) and those positions were filled by Master Sergeants (then the best enlisted rank possible).

While the adage "an assignment is what one makes it" is especially true in civilian assignment, the attitude of the civilian populace in the immediate community outside the base plays a strong role and often affects morale. If things are too unbearable for a civilian, he/she can quit his/her job and move. Fortunately, most military careers are subject to the whims of Fate disguised in "orders. With few exceptions, when PCS orders are received, the individual carries out the move.

Salina was motivated by leadership which consisted of World War II veterans, who remembered base/community relations in 1946, and an overwhelming desire to avoid becoming another Junction City. This time, Salina succeeded.

196 Salina (KS) Journal, November 9 and 12, 1956.
Uniform" Week also permitted Salinans to see airmen in dress uniforms. In doing research on the base, this writer wrote friends whose parents had in the Air Force, as well as friends who were making the Air Force or who had been stationed at bases near small towns, asking about the as of this event. Only one of those friends did not consider it unique, did not name a city or town that had honored its airmen, soldiers, or more than once in the manner that Salina did annually. A careful in-
don by this writer failed to discover anything like an "Honor the Uni-
week anywhere in the nation. It is surprising that the Air Force did ear to try to get other communities to try something like this or that al who had been transferred from Smoky Hill/Schilling did not try to an event organized at their new assignments.

Open Houses/Receptions
Salina and the base truly found themselves during this era. Everything differently than it had been the first time and innovation became a life when it came to relations with the base. "Honor the Uniform" Week the most visible, but there were other projects such as receptions and houses which seemed to be a constant reciprocal venture that mushroomed owned to dominate base/community relations.

The first event during this period was a reception, labeled a "Smoker," any military personnel assigned to the base and out-of-town contractors. as staged on July 31, 1952 at the Lamer Hotel in Salina. The host of this it was the Salina Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee.197

197Salina (KS) Journal, July 24, 1952. Unfortunately, this was in the days of the reactivated base and follow-up articles do not appear to have done. Lamer Hotel was a popular place at the time and was located where City/County square is today.
workers were first invited to the base on August 4, 1952 at 8:00 P.M. to be a night of games and the purpose was to raise money for the base’s Welfare Fund. Visitors were to be directed to the dining hall from gate. Bingo was scheduled with prizes offered by Salina merchants who would serve refreshments.

An unusual reception was planned for Thanksgiving, 1952. A Solomon (KS) of two sons, Mrs. William Neahr, decided to offer a Thanksgiving dinner by airmen from the base (the airmen were to be chosen by the Base Command), because if her sons were in the military, it was the sort of thing she would want people to do for them. Chicken was to be served in place of ham and the people of Solomon were assisting by making contributions. If the event, which had been moved to the community hall, was successful, it would be seated at Christmas and made an annual event. Unfortunately, this dinner was cancelled due to the blizzard that hit the area about the time that this dinner was scheduled and to the best of this writer’s knowledge, it was not held.

As has been stated in earlier chapters, Open Houses were a popular device in Salina, enabling the Air Force and City to associate with each other. It enabled the Air Force to show off its latest hardware and improvements to the base. There were concession stands operated by various units on base to raise funds for their activities, such as unit parties and to celebrate the notation of a successful inspection.

The first Open House of this era was held on Sunday, May 16, 1953. Colonel


Solomon, KS is roughly mid-way between Salina and Abilene, KS on US 40. Today, it has an approximate population of 1,200 people.
Base Commander, issued a blanket invitation to the public to attend was welcome. \(^{200}\) How this event turned out is unknown, but the cameras were welcome would seem to indicate that nothing of a classi­fication was out in the open on the base at this time. (The B-47 jets had arrived.)

A year later, another Open House was held in observance of Armed Forces Day. Col. Walter Hardzog, Deputy Base Commander, was project officer and that no cameras would be permitted near the flight line. Visitors seen Colonel Randolph, Base Commander, review 1,800 airmen in formal review. as expected 5,000 people to show up. \(^{201}\) By this time, the 310th Wing wased with the B-47 jet which had many advanced classified features on it is probably explains the "no camera near the flight line" edict. Whether people showed up is not known.

The Salina Chamber of Commerce came up with another unique reception and was a Stag party for junior airmen in which "no brass" were invited. y 425 people, of which 225 were airmen, attended this event which was held Memorial Hall on March 15, 1955. \(^{202}\) On Saturday, May 21, 1955, another House was held in observance of Armed Forces Day and the gates were open the public from 9:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The Mayor of Salina signed a procla­mation for the Day on May 18 and urged citizens to visit Smoky Hill during Open on May 21. This Open House went off without a hitch and 2,000 people ended it. Those attending were supposed to be treated to a mid-air refueling

\(^{200}\) Salina (KS) Journal, April 24 and May 14, 1953.

\(^{201}\) Salina (KS) Journal, May 7, 12, and 14, 1954.

ation, but turbulent air forced the cancellation of this event. 203

bring goodbye is always hard to do and Salina made it harder for General
and, 802nd AD Commander, to leave when a farewell party was held for him
February 27, 1956 at the Salina Country Club. 204 Logic would seem to indicate
General Ganey had received a farewell party when he left because he sent
a "thank you" note after he left.

The Military Affairs Committee of the Salina Chamber of Commerce had honored
airmen with a stag party in 1955 which proved to be popular. Another
was scheduled for March 26, 1956 with two changes. First, it was to be a
and second, each businessman was to invite "at least one and not more
two airmen" to the event. Another change was that it was opened to all
personnel. Nearly 500 people attended, of which 225 were airmen.
no officers were in attendance. 205

Less than a month later, a reception to welcome Col. James Wilson, new
Commander of the 802nd AD, was planned and executed. It was held at the Salina
Country Club and was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs
Committee. 206

On Saturday, May 19, 1956, Armed Forces Day was celebrated with another
House. Maj. M. E. Saunders, Base Director of Operations, was the Officer-
Charge of this event. This time, visitors were treated to the sight of
forty-four B-47s taking off for a fly-by over Washington, D. C. as well as to
static display of aircraft on the flight line. Busses took 7,000 guests up

the flight line to see hangars and aircraft.

That year, a hamburger fry was planned for Lieutenants and Captains October 25, 1956. Expecting 600 officers and 150 civilians to attend, it was to begin at 6:30 P.M. in Memorial Hall. This writer was unable to follow-up article on this event.

Last event of this period, with the full cooperation of the Salina Commerce, was an event designed strictly to raise money for the welsh of the various units assigned to the base, as well as improve the living halls. It was a carnival-type operation called "Air Force Jubilee," the highlight of this event was the "Miss Stratojet Beauty Contest" held just 18. This affair lasted from 2:00 P.M. to Midnight and was opened, once, to the public. Miss Sonja Sheets, 18, Salina, was crowned "Miss Jet" from a field of thirty-eight women. Her uncle was Sergeant Rich t, a member of the 25th BS, 40th Wing.

Goodwill

Although it could be considered "easy publicity," one form of goodwill gained plenty of attention was taking members of the press on plane rides. First such ride was reported on November 28, 1954 when John Schmedeler, a writer for the Salina Journal, took his first flight in a T-33 jet trainer. T-33 was formerly a fighter plane. Arrangements for this flight had been by Lieutenant Leon Shaddox, Base Information Officer.

This was followed by the same reporter accompanying General Sutherland,

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209 Salina (KS) Journal, July 16, August 8, 12, 13, and 19, 1956.
Commander, on a visit to the 310th Wing, then TDY in England in April, was given the rank of honorary Major and was gone from for three weeks, during which time he reported on what a unit did while TDY.  

Foot, a Salina Journal reporter, took two trips in planes belonging to the 310th Wing spaced two weeks apart in 1956. The first flight was in a B-47 on March 30, 1956 and the last was in a 310th ARS KC-97 on April 14. During the latter ride, the reader learned that the KC-97 carried 15,000 gallons of jet fuel and could dispense it at a rate of 700 gallons a minute.  

Open House and the Uniform" Week, the base contributed to a charity fund-raising drive put up its high rate of contributions to the last days it was open. On December 5, 1952, Smoky Hill presented a check for $2,900 to officials of the Salina Community Chest Drive. This was over 200% of its share and was collected in two drives. In the first drive, 100% had been reached and Smoky Hill was falling short of its goal, so the base held another drive to Smoky Hill and thereby established "another link in the chain of friendly relations between Salina and the base."  

Although nothing was reported on fund-raising drives at the base in 1953, figures available to this writer through the local press, Smoky Hill contributed an average of $11,000 a year to charity without the figures for that year. The amount contributed each year on an average is probably over, as this writer believes that the base did contribute to fund-raising.

212 Salina (KS) Journal, April 1 and April 15, 1956.
year. An example of Smoky Hill's generosity came in 1956. In that year. Col. Jim Wilson commanding the 802nd AD, the base gave $43,750 to the base, or between $5.47 and $6.84 per person assigned to the base. As has been noted, Colonel Wilson was described as a "go-getter" type and this helps to explain the base's interest in charity drives. Of course, all of this helped further base/community relations. It certainly did not hinder them. Other events enhanced relations. During the morning of June 19, 1955, three airmen, who were members of the 802nd Air Installation Squadron, were hitch-hiking on South 9th Street to the base when they were attacked by electrical wiring around a Dillon's store sign and promptly felled it. One week later, for saving his store, the manager presented each airmen a check for fifty dollars as a reward at a special formation for the occasion. 215

The next year, the Kansas Landscape and Nursery Company of Salina gave the base trees for a barracks general beautification project. Workers from the firm removed the trees from the firm's field on East North Street. In return for the trees, the airmen cleaned up the field. 216 It was a pleasant pro quo and the fruits of this arrangement are still in evidence on the base proper.

Two weeks later, another arrangement was worked out similar in nature but time with the City of Salina. This time, it concerned the removal of a chimney. In 1954, the city had purchased an abandoned brick plant near 12th and Iowa Streets for the expansion of Indian Rock Park. However, there

A seventy-foot tall brick smokestack that needed to be disposed of. A demonstrator from the base offered to do the task in exchange for salvagable bricks intended to use for a patio at the Officers' Club. It was charges to bring down the smokestack which had been built in 1912 and considered to be a landmark in Salina. 217

Evacuation

The 1950s was a decade of getting a "bigger bang for a buck" in defense. It was also a period in which going to the brink of war with an enemy hoping that the other side would back down before war broke out was a mainstay of American foreign policy. This was called "brinkmanship" and hied with the "Domino" theory, which held that if one nation in a given area succumbed to Communism, it was only a matter of time before its neighbors succumbed.

Military might was the keystone to this policy and Smoky Hill Air Force, with its force of ninety "long rifle" B-47 stratojets and forty KC-97 tankers, located strategically in the center of the nation, was considered a last ditch stand could be made or in the event of an attack on our coast, planes could be launched with relative ease. But if the enemy through coastal and Artic-area defenses, Salina was a probable target.

Salinans were warned on May 25, 1956 that the city's role had changed from that of a refugee center to that of a target due to the base. It was possible in the event of conflict, Salina could be attacked by nuclear weapons, such as bombs or missiles. There would probably be some warning and 100 Salinans are volunteer members of the Ground Observation Corps (GOC). In the event

time and that Salina could be evacuated, the evacuation would be in the same direction as the prevailing winds to escape nuclear fallout. 218

On 2, 1956, the Salina Journal again reminded its readers that Salina was a possible target in the event of an enemy nuclear attack because of the People within a twenty-mile radius of the base would have to be evacuated. 219

Air Force Academy

Since at least January, 1949, Salina had been trying to acquire the proposed Air Force Academy, perhaps converting the air base into a permanent-type facility subject to the whims of the Department of Defense and the national government. In 1954, Salina made one last try, perhaps believing that having a relocated air base near President Eisenhower's childhood home would give it an advantage in acquiring the Academy.

The Salina Advertiser-Sun informed its readers on January 28, 1954 that officials and the Chamber of Commerce "were involved in activity aimed at urging Congress to designate Salina as a site for the proposed Air Academy school is given approval by the nation's legislature. No predictions were made on the outcome owing to the competition from such cities as Houston and Dallas." Also, Senator Edwin C. Johnson, Chairman of the Senate Services Committee, was from Colorado and, of course, he favored his hometown getting it. 220

Not mentioned was the fact that President Eisenhower's favorite vacation spot was Colorado and he would have to sign the bill authorizing the Academy. Later Colorado Springs won and the first cadets arrived at

any location of the school at Lowry AFB, CO. Salina had to be content
base consisting of an Air Division and two Bomb Wings.
Salina really ever have a chance at getting the Academy? That question
speculation, but it probably had no more of a chance or no less of
than any other city with an Air Force base near it. In Salina's favor
which probably kept it in the running as long as it did was the fact
community relations were unusually good.

Morale

"Situations Wanted" in the July 31, 1955 edition of the Salina Journal
this ad: "Three officers want new station assignment--Have B-47, will
Who the officers were was not revealed nor whether they had any
But there was a humor displayed here which was symbolic of the kind
Smoky Hill had become by then. Morale was much improved in comparison
earlier World War II and post World War II years. Attention was given
needs of the personnel on base and the barracks/dormitories were modern.
most part, Salina contributed to morale on base. Smoky Hill was fortu-
in the quality of the leaders the Air Force assigned to the base at the
of this period. General Curtis LeMay, Commander of SAC, was responsible
his by striving to make SAC "more human." General Ganey instilled disci-
and General Wilson established an esprit de corps. In between, there
leaders at all levels who tried to make Smoky Hill a first-class operation
in the Air Force.

Before the base was closed in 1949, the duty hours had been changed for
personnel to where they worked a forty-four hour week; eight hours a day,

221Salina (KS) Journal, July 31, 1955. Undoubtedly this was inspired by
popular TV series "Have Gun, Will Travel" of this period. However, the
base is still common and this writer saw versions of this ad with the CT-39,
C-130, etc., substituted during his enlistment in the Air Force in the 1970s.
though Friday and four hours on Saturday. At the start of reactivation, was working the same hours, except for the civilians who worked only weeks and were usually off on the weekends. The training require-
some such that the base went on a seven-day work week for a while start-
February, 1955. The 310th Bomb Wing was preparing for a ninety-day TDY 40th Bomb Wing was reputedly in line for its own TDY assignment and is much to be done to get ready. 222

of the first acts taken by Col. James Wilson upon becoming Commander 802nd AD was to place all base personnel on a five-day work week, effec-
at day. Only a skeleton crew would man the base on Saturdays and Sundays. Mions concerning the wear of the uniform on base after work hours were d. 223

Dining Halls

there is an old adage in the world which states that the military travels is stomach. Food is important to morale and a wise Commander is one who his eye on what is being served in the dining (mess) halls under his com-

The first dining hall to be opened "for business" since reactivation began dinner on May 25, 1952. One of the innovations was that instead of long
bes and benches, this dining hall had small tables with four chairs and ve were salt, pepper, sugar, and napkin dispensers at each table. 224

At its k, Smoky Hill would have seven dining halls, one in each of the five barracks as, one for the fire fighters on the flight line, and one for the civilian

and military personnel who lived off base but who wanted a hot meal for base.

A year later, an airman working in a dining hall was injured when a big soup kettle exploded. The blast ripped a hole four inches deep in the concrete floor and crumpled a large $1,700 air out-take mechanism over ttle. It was estimated that the kettle exploded under 15,000 pounds of pressure. A defective safety valve was blamed for the accident. 225

February, 1954, the Salina Journal featured an article on the In-Flight located just inside the flight line in the base operations building, imately 150 box lunches were prepared daily. Since March, 1953, 20,283 had been served. Aircraft Commanders took the orders from their crews loaded them in to the kitchen two hours in advance and then picked them up the plane boarded. There were seven men working in the In-Flight Kitchen time under the supervision of an NCO. 226

The 802nd Food Service Squadron (FSS) was responsible for the seven dinings on base and the In-Flight Kitchen during this period. Most of the cooking baking was done on base, although Smoky Hill purchased the bread it used bakeries off base. 227

The Salina Journal reported on November 23, 1956 that the men assigned to base had eaten heartily on Thanksgiving Day. Over 3,000 airmen and their students had eaten dinner in the dining halls on base. They consumed: 2,617 lids of turkey, 800 pounds of ham, 500 pounds of shrimp, 380 gallons of milk, 1 gallons of coffee, fifty gallons of cranberry sauce, 3,600 salads, 180 cans

225 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, May 28, 1953.
60 pounds of cornbread dressing, ten gallons of whipped cream, 650
sweet potatoes, 1,000 pounds of Irish potatoes, 200 mincemeat pies,
260 pounds of fruit cake, 360 pounds of candy, 290 pounds of
cases of apples, 312 pounds of grapes, 120 pounds of dates, sixty
raisins, eighty gallons of fruit punch, eighty gallons of gravy, 345
celery, and 200 pounds of carrots. It should be noted here that
Wing was TDY in England and the 40th ARS was TDY at an undisclosed
But with fifteen per cent of the base permitted leave during a normal
this left approximately 2,000 men unaccounted for.

Library

Library provides a place for the curious to learn about the world about
read books, magazines, and newspapers that they would normally be
reading owing to the expense. It is a depository of technical manuals
Military installation which is one of the major reasons for its existence,
her being that of a great asset to morale.

Miss Barbara Bussard arrived at Smoky Hill on August 4, 1952 to serve as
base Librarian and opened the Library on September 17 with 2,000 books.
the rest of the history of the base, the Library would play a role in the
of the personnel assigned to the base. On July 23, 1953, it was announced
the Base Library had instituted a "Book Exchange" for pocket-sized paper-
ded books. These books were kept separate from other books and could be
for two weeks. Then instead of returning the original book, the borrower
would substitute it with another paper-backed book.

229 Impact, November 6, 1953.
230 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 23, 1953.
General Curtis LeMay, Commander of SAC, was concerned about the morale of men and saw the library as a place that helped keep up morale—especially near the end of a pay period. Once, while in a base, he discovered that the library was closed "for inventory." The General was ordered to open the library up "immediately" the inventorying either before the library opened or after it closed day. 231

It was true that one could tell when payday was approaching by visiting the library and seeing how many people were there. This was confirmed by an article that appeared in the Salina Journal on August 3, 1953. Miss Bussard, Base Librarian, claimed that there was a distinct correlation between the number of people borrowed and the days left to payday. When the men could not afford anything else, they headed for the library. By the time that this article appeared, the Library had 4,600 volumes and was receiving 150 volumes a week from the Air Force. 232

Miss Bussard left for Washington, D. C. in November, 1953 and was replaced as Bettie Sue Todd of Santa Anna, TX on January 11, 1954. The new Librarian found the Library stocked with 7,200 volumes and still growing. Airman Class (A2C) Victor Kalinoski had served as interim Librarian. 233

After this, the growth of the Library slowed down. By the middle of 1955, there were only 8,000 volumes, of which one-half were fiction. There were subscriptions to 109 magazines, ten newspapers, plus newspapers from other bases.

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231 Interview with Mike Scanlan, Col., USAF (ret), October 13, 1981.
Wives

Role of the wife in the military is often overlooked, yet some military are littered with broken marriages. In the Army, the power of the major's wife is legendary. She ruled the social life of an Army installation sometimes what she thought about a man's wife determined whether or not she was promoted. Still, the family life of a member of the military is often a matter of hardship; especially in the 1950s when the men were sent on TDYs, separated from their families of periods that varied from a few weeks to months. Then there were the reassignments. It usually fell to the wife and supervise the moving details and pull the children out of school and travel arrangements for the family. But there were some assignments in which the man went on an unaccompanied assignment that lasted from twelve to fifteen months and often these assignments were devoid of leaves, meaning the wife was left to her own devices and had to run the family on her own. General LeMay's Strategic Air Command was well aware of the role wives in the lives of their husbands. The contentment of the wife often determined how well her husband might enjoy his assignment. If she were not happy, the chances were that her husband would soon become disillusioned. To ensure that the wife was content, the Dependents Assistance Program was established to acquaint the wives with their role while their husbands were TDY the program also provided assistance to the wives in dealing with matters concerning their families.235

Smoky Hill went one step farther and held a "Dependent's Commander's Call"


wes on February 26, 1955 in the base theater. This was to prepare for the absence of their husbands during the first TDY of the 310th. Colonel de Russy's wife was planning to issue a newsletter during the TDY to keep the wives posted on the activities of their husbands, developments, and other things of interest to the wives. Sometime in March, the 380th Bomb Squadron of the 310th Wing and commanded by Lieutenant Kopfenspirger, held an Open House for the wives of the men assigned to the 380th. Over 100 wives attended this event and they got to see where their husbands worked and what they did. Refreshments were served.

for this, the novelty of the Dependent’s Assistance Program and Open House wore off. As to the former, in 1955, it was still new and the Air Force was not sure of how it would work. This permitted flexibility in the wives of the major Commanders were personally involved. But then the base bureaucracy took over and an officer was assigned to supervise the program.

There was an Officers' Wives Club and an NCO Wives Club on base. These were active in organizing "Welcome Home" parties for their husbands and in participating in the charity fund drives on base and the annual base Christmas party. In general, the wives accepted the base and Salina as "just another duty station" in their husbands' careers.

Spiritual Affairs

Spiritual affairs at the reactivated Smoky Hill Air Force Base received more attention in the local press at the start than they did in the first era. This may have been due to the fact that Whitley Austin, a devout

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man, was editor of the Salina Journal, but it could also have been due to the possibility that some exceptional Chaplains were assigned there. Capt. Kenneth L. Smith, a Protestant, arrived at Smoky Hill Air Force Base on June 20, 1952 and became the first Chaplain assigned to the base. He was "native to the South." By November 21, there were three Chaplains assigned to the base. Maj. George C. Van Fleet, 52, a Korean veteran, became the senior Chaplain on base when he arrived on the week of October 10, 1952. Then during the week of November 21, Lt. Christian G. Le Frois arrived and became the first Catholic Chaplain on base. By November 21, the base was reactivated to be permanently assigned to the base. Less than two months and was was then reassigned to Elmendorff AFB, AK. Richard Spellman replaced him on January 29, 1953.

The group was rounded out by the arrival of a fourth Chaplain who was assigned to Phillips Village Chapel during the week of January 23, 1953. 1st Lt. Bedingsfield, 33, a Baptist from Rentz, GA arrived from a tour of duty for which he had received the Air Force Commendation Medal. With the arrival of Lieutenants Bedingsfield and Spellman, the roster was complete at Smoky Hill. Chaplains would come and go during this period. The average time on station was about one year at first and then as long as two and half years for some of them.

On September 3, 1953, the Salina Advertiser-Sun printed an article on the new Choir. The choir had been a recent addition, with the view that it would only add to the effectiveness of the chapel services but give its members

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238 Salina (KS) Journal, June 20, 1952.
239 Impact, October 10, November 21, 1952, and January 9, 1953.
opportunity to "actually participate in the service." At this time, only rehearsals had been held and although things were encouraging, more voices were needed. It was under the direction of Chaplain Warren Bedingsfield and Capt Stansberg. Membership was open to all interested Protestant personnel.

On starting on October 4, 1953, the Chaplains made arrangements for Protestant children between the ages of 3 and 8 starting at 9:50 A.M. to leave their children in the base nursery while they attended either Protestant or Catholic services between 8:00 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. Sunday. Lieut. Bedingsfield started a Sunday School for Protestant children between the ages of 3 and 8 starting at 9:50 A.M. 242

It has already been noted that Phillips Village had a Chaplain assigned to it. The other Chaplains were assigned to each of the units on base, e.g., the 416th AD, 40th Wing, and 310th Wing. Although all of the Chaplains were available to all of the personnel, they had a special obligation to the unit they were assigned which included breaking the news of aircraft mishaps to the families of the men involved.

One of the probably more unpleasant duties the Chaplains probably performed, aside from accompanying the Wing Commander to the homes of the families, was to inform them that their husbands or fathers had died in an aircraft accident, conducting Memorial Services for the deceased. The first Memorial service during this period was held on May 17, 1955 for the nine men who were lost aboard an Air Force then assumed that the men were dead and that they had officially died on May 4. The Catholic Mass was held at 9:00 A.M. in the Base Chapel with Major Spellman presiding and the Protestant Service was held at 9:30 A.M. in the Base chapel.

241 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 3, 1953.
242 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, October 1, 1953.
at 10:00 A.M. by Captain Bedingsfield. 243

At the end of this period, it was decided to construct a new chapel of

forth the existing chapel probably before the end of 1957 at a cost

of $40. Smoky Hill was authorized two chapels and another one would even-

been built in the new housing area. As of February 10, 1957, services for

Lutherans, and Protestants were being held on base. 244

Christmas

this period, Christmas activities at the base received more attention

local press than did the other holidays. Probably helping in this atten-

the spirit of the holiday and of the times. With the exception of

be units at the base gave attention to the needy and it may have been

ight by the press that year.

be Salina Advertiser-Sun announced on December 11, 1952 that under the

ship of the Chaplains at Smoky Hill and Impact, the base newspaper, a

gn had been launched to raise funds for the purchase of food, clothing,

ys for Salina’s needy. Contributions were voluntary and would end on

er 20. 245

Then, the Chaplains announced that they were providing a Christmas Party

the children of base personnel on December 20 and that Santa Claus would

sent. There would be presents for everyone. The party was to be held

the Base Gym building and a movie would be shown. 246

By 1953, the mission of SAC was such that it was decreed by regulation

244Salina (KS) Journal, February 10 and 14, 1957.
245Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 11, 1952.
246Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 18, 1952.
15 percent of base personnel would be permitted Christmas leave and, only fifteen days with no extension unless a specific emergency existed. I had set a deadline of November 25 so as to permit leaves to be processed on a priority basis.²⁴⁷

The Chaplains' Christmas Party for 1953 was to be held Saturday morning, November 25, starting at ten o'clock in Hangar 8. A ten-act circus would start at 10 A.M., and would include an elephant, clowns, acrobats, and trained animals. Nearly 1,000 children of military personnel between the ages of one were expected to attend. There was no charge but in order for the children to receive a present from Santa, they had to have a ticket which was obtained from the parent's squadron orderly room. Funds to pay for the presents were to be donated by the Officer and NCO Wives Clubs.²⁴⁸

In 1954, "Operation Santa Claus" was launched which would discharge 152 airmen at the base. They were to be discharged by Christmas, and to give the men a chance to be planning to separate "under normal conditions" by January of 1955.²⁴⁹

Two groups were involved in helping the needy of Salina celebrate Christmas, 1954. The 802nd Supply Squadron held a Christmas Party for thirty needy airmen from Salina on December 15. The 310th ARS delivered food baskets to needy Salina families.²⁵⁰

Christmas, 1954 was also the year that eighteen units on base competed in a manger scene contest. The 310th FMS won the competition with a manger scene...

²⁴⁷Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, November 26, 1953.
²⁴⁸Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 17, 1953.
recorded Christmas music. Second place went to headquarters Squadron. In third place was the 25th Bomb Squadron, which placed Santa in a B-47 instead of a sleigh. Unfortu-

pictures were published, but the latter must have been interesting to such a peaceful use.

SAC had had a change of heart and announced that it was permitting either Christmas or New Year's leave but not both. The base itself to operate with skeleton crews during this holiday period enabling personnel to be with their families. This held true during the 1956 season as well.

150 children attended a Christmas Party for Protestant Sunday School held on base on December 16, 1956. Santa Claus was there to distribute and prizes.

802nd Supply Squadron announced that it was holding a Christmas Party for children in its barracks dayroom starting at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday, December 22. The Squadron had collected around $400 to finance the project. That same day, the 802nd Headquarters Squadron was holding a party for unfortunate children starting at 2:00 P.M. It was the units' normal Christmas Party but $150 had been collected for the "Special Guests." The 310th Bomb Wing was in England that year but the men sent a B-47 back to the base loaded with presents in the bomb bay for their families. Each

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a caretaker force on base and it fell to them to distribute the
the various families. 255

tion Santa Claus" in 1956 was different from its 1954 counterpart.
objective had been to discharge men early. This time, the 310th Bomb
ODY in England, so the wives, who had been left behind, exchanged
th their husbands showing them wrapping presents and singing Christmas

Social Clubs

al clubs on a military base are similar to social clubs in civilian
families. They provide an opportunity for people with similar interests to
ther and share those interests. At Smoky Hill Air Force Base, there
veral organizations during this period, including the service clubs,
tribution to the welfare of the personnel assigned to the base.
me of the first clubs organized at the reactivated Smoky Hill was an aero
ich made its debut on March 17, 1953. The meeting was held to discuss
ures for student fliers and membership dues. 257 Aero clubs are a stan-
ure of an air base, naturally. Each club has at least two planes; a
ngined and a two-engined plane. What Smoky Hill had in the way of
for this period was not mentioned.
The Smoky Hill Masonic Club completed organization by May 6, 1953 with
than 100 members." The regular meeting night was set for the first Wednes-
of each month and was open to all Masons in the area. 258

257 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, March 19, 1953.
258 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, March 19, 1953.
217

39,000 Airmen's Service Club opened on Friday night, July 10, 1953. It was located in a red-framed structure adjoining the airmen's swimming pool. The club included a large lounge, game room, cafeteria, reading room, and other facilities.

Mr. T. Gibson, 537th AF Band, furnished piano music while guests toured the new NCO Club on opening night. The entrance was on the west side of the building. Inside was a twenty-foot bar in the north part of the Club and there was a bar in the ballroom. The cafeteria was to provide members with sandwiches, hot meals, and soft drinks. There was also a package liquor store. The Gene Fullen Orchestra was on hand from 9:00 P.M. until 2:30 A.M. on opening night. A contest was being held to determine the name and the results would be announced at a later date.

The opening of the NCO Club went off without any problems. However, the contest resulted in fraud which was reported in the Salina Advertiser-Sun on July 16, 1953:

There's been something of a dither at the base and they applied some frost to nip a vote fraud in the bud. It seems that someone stuffed the ballot boxes, which called off the contest and started some sleuthing. .. Club Director Lillian Nunziato called it off when the ballot box-stuffing became as transparent as a China egg.

Airmen were asked to vote for one of five names: Star Club, Little Wheels Club, Silver Wings, the Ole Smoky, and Sunflower. Several wagghish airmen who know something of politics, have suggested the club be named the Pendergast or Tammany Hall. Staging of the referendum left voting wide open for the alleged fraud. There was no regular or numbering of ballots according to a base informant. Election engineering specialists took advantage of the situation and produced multiple balloting. The five names had been selected from a field of forty to fifty submitted earlier by airmen. The winning name would have brought 25 smackers, handshakes from some top brass, and two goes at the feedbag at a Salina eaterie. That would have been the take of the winner.

Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 16, 1953.
Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 9, 1953.
Ballots were distributed at five points about the base and under signs reading "Cast Your Vote." Well, somebody followed the sign with enthusiasm.261

Follow-up on this vote fraud was reported nor was the final name of ever revealed.

NCO Club succumbed to a fire during the night of January 3, 1954. It totally gutted and little was salvaged, but the base announced that the Club would remain open in another location. Damage had been reported at over $150,000.

It had been built and maintained by funds collected from members. Building had been erected in 1943 at a cost of $35,000 and was formally turned over to the NCOs on July 18, 1953. There were 919 Staff, Tech, and Master NCO members. Later that month, SAC approved $95,000 for a new NCO Club. It was expected to start around April 1 and be completed by August. A temporary Club was in operation and in another building.262

The expanded Airmen's Service Club was opened in October, 1955 and had every-thing for everyone. "The airmen want to belong to the community but do not want to wear their uniforms because they think Salina resents them."263 What interesting about this is that Salina was about to stage its third annual "Salute to the Uniform" Week in which the wearing of the uniform was encouraged.

This seemed to indicate that base/community relations were not quite working as well as intended or else the junior enlisted personnel were being treated, especially if they were single and lived on base. In any case, it was that there was a small morale problem.

A new Officers' Club was opened on December 17, 1955 and open to the public.

261Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, July 16, 1953.
More than 2,000 people attended this event and the base was "pleased turnout." It would not be until Col. James Wilson assumed command 22nd AD that Salinans became eligible for membership in the Officers' until then, civilians were welcome only at the invitation of officer

Smoky Hill had always had a chorus but during General LeMay's tenure as of SAC, when he had a program designed to make SAC more human, the came into its own. On November 22, 1956, it was revealed that Smoky male chorus was number one in SAC. There were twelve men in the organ- and the competition had been done by tape-recording selections which en sent to SAC Headquarters at Offutt AFB, NE for judging. Lt. Charles 802nd Operations Squadron, was the Director.

Difficulties

With the reactivation of the base and approximately 8,000 men assigned to would expect to learn that there were a lot of problems with the person- especially if one recalls the 1945 to 1949 period of Smoky Hill. However, this period, only nine incidents reached the pages of the local press ghly one and one-third cases a year with the first incident being reported January, 1953.

That first case involved a nineteen-year-old airman stationed at the base, returned to Wichita, KS on January 5, 1953 in the custody of officers from dwick County Sheriff's Office. He was wanted on a possible auto theft. One month later, a twenty-five year old airman stationed at the base,

266 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, January 8, 1953.
a fourteen years old, claimed that the airman up in downtown Salina on January 31, drove her "outside of town" her. The airman denied it. 267
te the above, Salinans were assured that it did not pay to get out of Smoky Hill. The base provided the Salina Advertiser-Sun a list of taken by special or summary courts martial at the base during November Charges ranged from absent without leave (AWOL) to disorderly conduct ers under the uniform code of military justice (UCMJ). Sentences meted reduction in grade, restriction to the base, and confinement at or. The fines taken in from these actions totaled $1,125. 268
ing Halloween night, October 31, 1954, two young airmen, members of the 8, were arrested for robbing a McPherson liquor store of $147 at gun-

t came after a chase on north US 81 but no gun was found when ere caught. They were then bound over for trial in January with bond $3,000 a piece. 269 The outcome of this matter did not appear in the available to this writer. On March 8, 1956, a supply sergeant at the was acquitted of charges of taking a revolver off base with the intent of ing it. He had been arrested by the FBI in February, 1956. The Sergeant's was that he forgot to put the gun away before leaving for home. 270

Just before the end of this period, four airmen were arrested in Salina policeman who noticed that the driver of a car at an intersection "seemed y when he pulled up beside him (the driver) and decided to check the car

267 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 5, 1953.
268 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 3, 1953.
The car were items stolen from an apartment building on South 5th and the BOQ on base as well as extra tires, rims, auto tools, and a bat. The airmen were promptly arrested. No mention was made as to the year the airmen were caught in but to have all of that loot in it, it had been a big car.

Though suicide is not in the same league as criminal activities, it does mean the loss of life. Three apparent suicides were reported during this Chapter. Two occurred in sentry booths on the base proper and another occurred in Salina. The latter involved a Tech Sergeant who died after being rushed to Smoky Hill Army Hospital in Denver, CO.

A Chapter Three of this paper, it appeared that a popular pastime was to break into the Guard House (or jail) on base. At the reactivated Smoky Hill, the attempt was successfully carried out which was reported in the local papers. On March 24, 1956, two airmen escaped at 9:00 P.M. and were seen in Atch 25 by Salina Police and returned to the base.

Civilians

Civilian employees had played a role in the operation of the base from 1949 to 1951. From April, 1950 to October, 1951, there were nineteen civilians working at the base as a part of the caretaker force and they outnumbered the statutory force of five men.

Although no aircraft had been assigned to the base at the start of this period, Elmo J. Mahoney, 42, a sub-contractor and Russell County (KS) wheat grower, was successfully carried out which was reported in the local papers.

271 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 14, 1957.
222

Commuted daily between his farm near Dorrance and the base in a Cessna

It was a thirty-five to forty minute trip and he used the base's

All service jobs were advertised in the Salina Journal as being plenti-

The wage scale ranged from $1.10 to $1.70 an hour. By March

there were 330 civil service employees on base and 194 of that number

pay raises of six to eight cents an hour.275

ese people were actively involved in bettering the way their jobs were

On April 29, 1956, Eugene D. Cooper, a Base Installation Engineer Mechani-

vived $25 for a suggestion to save wear and tear on dishwashers. Three

later, twenty civilian employees were rewarded for outstanding work and

At the close of this period, three incentive cash awards and two su-

performance awards were made to base civilian employees.276

Traffic

ith 8,000 personnel projected for work at the base when it reached full

gh and construction going full blast, problems arose due to a shortage

arking spaces. People began parking wherever they could find a space, which

ly became the shoulders of the road between the main gate and US 81. This

ated a definite traffic hazard. Members of the Saline County Commission.

ng with the encouragement of the base, designated the road as an area closed

arking. Sheriff Guy Lemon informed the Commissioners that their action

be "enforced immediately." By the end of June, 1953, the situation was-

274Salina (KS) Journal, May 18, 1952. Mr. Mahoney served one term in the

islature, 1949 - 1950 as a Democrat. Later, he ran for Congress against in-

ent Wint Smith and lost. He also tried for the US Senate but lost the primary.


Commissioners posting a $500 fine against anyone found parking along around the base. This seemed to end the problem because after thing more was reported.

to the base in the past had been gained from the east by the main from Camp Phillips via a county road south of the base. With the region of the base and a greater number of people assigned there, the base to open additional entrances in February, 1953 to ease the flow of traffic the north gate to Crawford Street was open from 7:00 A.M. to 8:15 A.M. on 4:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. Near Drive-In 81, the northeast gate was open en to eight-fifteen o'clock, mornings only. Commercial and government o, as well as temporary passes, were to be handled at the main gate. Before personnel could operate a government vehicle on base, they had to a government driver's license and that could only be acquired after they assed an aptitude test and a training course. This training course con- of a two-week drivers school on base and was held Monday through Friday 6:00 A.M. to 4:15 P.M. Topics covered included map reading, safety films, res by state and Air Police, and the testing of aptitudes, vision, and tions. Classes began every two weeks and were run throughout the year.

ow, it is doubtful that personnel at the base were any worse than the onal average when it came to driving. Still, there was probably a need to e the driving habits of the personnel. On August 20, 1954, the base announced that it was instituting "traffic spotters" who were to keep track of less drivers, both on base and off. This was authorized by a new base regu-

278 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 26, 1953.
279 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 10, 1953.
was to be enforced by the Base Provost Marshal. The "spotters"
802nd AD Commander and his staff, the Base Commander and his staff,
ers and their staffs, and the Squadron Commanders. 280
detail was offered but on February 20, 1956, a four-car accident oc-
base. A civilian worker was driving the lead car and the three cars
were each driven by an Airman Second Class (A2C), all members of
Wing. 281 No one was reported injured.
te the use of traffic spotters and the mildness of the accident on
20, five airmen had been killed in traffic accidents by April 21, 1956.
Colonel Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, announced a new intensive base
campaign of four points, effective immediately and consisting of the
1. More traffic signs were to be posted on base streets.
2. A publicity campaign was launched to boost safety measures.
3. Increased use of "spotters" to note traffic violations and
4. Increased Air Police patrols were to be inaugurated between
base and Salina. 282
pently this did not change the situation. The base announced in August
emewhere at the base "seven men are going about their daily jobs, uncon-
about the future." They probably did not know each other but by the end
year, they would be dead because they were the seven potential traffic
victims who would die before the year's end if the base accident rate
ued on its present course. Seven men had died during the first half of
283

283. Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 30, 1956.
Leadership Schools

Leadership Schools are considered important by the Air Force for its career Force. These schools are designed to teach the personnel who attend at their responsibilities to their superiors, subordinates, and the Air

ion.

was announced by the base on February 18, 1954 that seven Smoky Hill SERgeants had been selected to attend the first class of the 15th AF ACOmy at March AFB, CA starting on March 28, 1954. First Sergeants (the administrative NCO) were given priority for attendance. The Academy was

ly to NCOs serving in actual supervisory capacities. This 162-hour

of four weeks duration was to provide top-level leadership and manage-

ning. Instruction was provided in management, leadership, military

ill and command, security, principles of speech, and Air Force organi-

ater that year, M. Sgt. Thomas N. Smith, First Sergeant of the 310th ARS

thirteen-year veteran of the Air Force, was named a top graduate of the AF NCO Academy. He had been on Smoky Hill for two years. 285

While the NCOs were attending the NCO Academy first at March AFB, CA while the base was under the 15th AF and then Westover AFB, MA when the base was trans-

ed to the 8th AF, General Sutherland, Commander of the 802nd AD, created

02nd Leadership School primarily for Staff Sergeants. The first class of been graduated on October 2, 1955. General Sutherland addressed the group presented them with diplomas. The 537th AF Band, conducted by M. Sgt. Lee

284 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, February 18, 1954.

This was one project of General Sutherland's that received very much attention in the Air Force at the time.

March, 1956, M. Sgt. William F. Fortune, 802nd Operations Squadron, became the first NCO from the base to be named honor graduate of the 8th AF and the second man from the base to graduate from an NCO Academy. Nine months later, M. Sgt. John C. Krier, 802nd Headquarters, became the second man from the base to graduate from the 8th AF NCO with honors. 287

Sgt. William Epps, 310th Tactical Hospital, was named honor graduate of the fourteenth 802nd AD Leadership School. There were twenty-five members of this class which was three weeks in length. 288

Uniforms

Uniforms provide a part of the esprit de corps needed to retain morale in a military unit as well as provide a sense of identity. Jokes are heard about the need to "stand and polish" and the nit-picking at inspections on uniforms, but without uniforms a military would appear to be a sloppy, undisciplined organization.

In Chapter Three, it was learned that blue uniforms would be mandatory in Air Force in 1950. By 1954, there were more changes in Air Force uniforms. Men were permitted to wear short-sleeved shirts at Smoky Hill. Bermuda shorts were also under consideration. Short-sleeved shirts were an option, which meant that the airmen who opted to wear them were required to keep the sleeves turned up at the shoulders. 289

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286. Salina (KS) Journal, October 2, 1955. This writer was in the Air Force in 1976 when the Air Force came up with the same idea and called it Phase III Training, which prepared junior enlisted personnel for responsibilities as NCOs. It appears that General Sutherland was about twenty-two years ahead of his time.


number of long-sleeved shirts on hand ready for inspection. 289

In November, 1955, airmen were informed of a variety of uniforms that could be worn on base. They could wear short trousers (Bermuda shorts?) or long trousers with either short-sleeved shirt (without necktie) or long trousers, short-sleeved shirt (with necktie), and bush jacket. 290

Importantly, the press, which included the base newspaper, never ran an article on base wearing Bermuda shorts. It would have been very interesting to know how this uniform combination looked.

Recognition

A major means of preserving morale in the military is to recognize personnel for their contribution to the service and nation. This can be done through promotions, medals, or awards. Awards included such things as monetary recognition for suggestions and "Airman of the Month," "Crew of the Month," etc.

Although there were probably promotions of personnel before 1953, the first promotion reported was when Master Sergeant Virgil Bigson, on base since August, was recalled to duty as a First Lieutenant. He held a reserve commission dated back to 1944 and had been a pilot during World War II. A record for promotions in this period was set in October, 1954 when 488 enlisted personnel were promoted. During that month, Smoky Hill acquired seven new Master Sergeants, fifteen Tech Sergeants, seventy-five Staff Sergeants, 154 Airmen First Classes, and 227 Airmen Second Classes. The record month for Officer promotions was in January, 1955 when fifty-five First Lieutenants received temporary pro-

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Captain during the January to March period. Lt. Col. Richard D. was the first man to be promoted to full Colonel since the base was activated. His promotion was effective March 15, 1955. He was Commander of the 40th Wing. The last promotions of this period were to full Colonels (second and third such promotions) and went to Lieutenant Colonels Ivey, Commander of the 40th FMS, and Albert J. Wetzel, Commander of the 40th BS, 40th Wing. They were announced on January 9, 1957 with effective dates to be announced later.

Medal presentations were reported during this period. The first presentation reported was on February 5, 1953 when Colonel de Russy, Commander of the 90th Bomb Wing, presented A1C Royal Heemeir, 380th BS, the Soldier's Medal; Lt. Les Ustine, 381st BS, the DFC; and M. Sgt. George M. Dakis, 310th FMS, the Bronze Star. What these men did to receive the medals was not reported.

Sgt. William A. Marcoulier, Detachment 4, 1911th Airways and Air Communications Squadron, received the Air Force Commendation Medal (AFCM) on December 3, 1953 for his work as a control tower operator when a B-29 from Forbes AFB, CA crashed near the base in August, 1953. The plane crashed eight and a half miles northeast of the base while enroute to Forbes AFB, KS on a routine training flight.

An unusual reward occurred on March 9, 1955 when Capt. Dwayne E. Hall, a tracer with the 40th ARS, was awarded a bronze medal by the Royal Humane Society for rescuing a swimmer in July, 1954 who was being attacked by a shark.

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293 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 3, 1953.
First awards were presented to nine airmen by Colonel de Russy of the 310th Bomb Wing during the week of June 18, 1953. They were recognized for their outstanding performance during the preceding six months. All held the rank of Airman First Class or Airman Second Class.

Though there had probably been "Crew of the Month" awards previously, this one did not reach the attention of the local press until June 25, 1953. Later, Colonel de Russy, 310th Wing Commander, announced that a KC-97 gasoline crew was the 310th Wing's Crew of the Month for May, 1953.

In 1956, General Robert Sweeney, Commander of the 8th AF, presented members of the 310th Bomb Wing B-47 crews with engraved cigarette lighters. These were presented to the men for outstanding performance with their aircraft.

For outstanding work, thirteen airmen were honored with a trip to Puerto Rico. A 40th ARS crew needed the over-water celestial navigation time, so the trip was designed as "payment for jobs well done." Two 40th ARS officers were involved. One of the Aircraft Commanders was selected for the misadventure because he was leaving the base for a B-47 observer's school the next day.

The last form of recognition was for suggestions and inventions to make jobs at the base easier. T. Sgt. Lloyd Bright of the 802nd Motor Vehicle

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295 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 18, 1953.
296 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 25, 1953.
Construction Engineer Equipment Maintenance Section, constructed a rewinder for the Mobile Sweeper used to clean the runways and streets on Topeka, KS for rewinding which took about a week and left without a sweeper. The machine cost $40 to build and permitted two to rewind a broom on base in about four hours. 299 Although this machine saved the base and the Air Force money, one wonders why the Air Force equip the base with an extra set of broom cores. On March 16, 1956, Samuel R. Blanchard, 310th FMS, received a check for a suggestion on "0 Rings" in the B-47. For this, he received $25. 300 This was the first recognition for suggestions during this period.

Retention

Retained can often be gauged by re-enlistments in the military or retention. Smoky Hill was deactivated in 1949, one of the reasons the Air Force gave to close the base was that the base had a low re-enlistment rate. The base was reactivated, the United States was involved in the Korean and called up reserve units. This gave the Air Force extra manpower enabled it to reactivate Smoky Hill Air Force Base in 1951.

By August, 1953, the Korean Conflict was over and the Reservists were being discharged. Instead of expanding, budget cuts were the rule of the day. Smoky announced that it was discharging some airmen early owing to those budget cuts. The early-release program was open to those personnel who were planning to leave the service at the end of their enlistment with no intention of re-enlisting. At Smoky Hill, this came to approximately 600 men out of an Air Force-

299 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, August 6, 1953.
of 12,500 men. Personnel in non-critical jobs with less than one
year in their enlistments were being discharged at their request. This
was followed by an announcement one month later that 300 men on base would be
two years ahead of the expiration of their enlistments by December 31,
there was a bright side to all of this which occurred during the first
May when five airmen at the base re-enlisted for a total of thirty years
at a new re-enlistment rate at the base. These men saved the Air Force
in training expenses. The Base Recruiting Office first opened its
on November 13, 1952. 302
The first enlisted man to retire from Smoky Hill since the base was reacti-
was M. Sgt. Albert Ferney, 802nd Supply Squadron First Sergeant, who had
been on base since June, 1953. He retired after twenty-four years of service
was honored with a parade by the 802nd ABG. While on base, he helped or-
the annual Christmas party for orphans and underprivileged children from
303
Col. Carl Lust retired as Director of Materiel for the 40th Bomb Wing
of twenty-five years of service on August 26, 1955. He had been on base
May of 1954 and was the first full Colonel to retire from the base since
had been reactivated. 304
Starting with the September 23, 1955 issue of Impact, the base newspaper,
astics were presented to show how Smoky Hill was faring in its retention

301 Salina (KS) Journal, August 20, 21, and September 24, 1953.
In July, 1955, the Air Force had a 33.4% retention rate. Hill had 28.9% and Columbus AFB, MS had 100%. That figure jumped to 40.0% in August but dropped to 30.8% in September while Columbus maintained its 100% rate and Mountain Home AFB, ID found a new low in records by holding on to only 5.7% of its personnel eligible to re-enlist. In January, 1956, while SAC had a retention rate of 29.9%, the base only 26.5% of its eligible personnel. Things began improving in April. The base retained 32.8% of its eligible enlisted personnel. 305

One of Colonel Wilson's priorities when he assumed command of the 802nd AD was to find out why more men were not re-enlisting and then try to do something about it. It was announced on June 1, 1956 that his efforts were proving successful. An all-time high re-enlistment rate of 53.3% was set at the base. This was out of a total of 101 men and many of them re-enlisted for the first time. Smoky Hill had the third highest rate in the 8th AF and 47 of thirteen SAC bases to go past the 40% mark. 306

The last retention figures presented during this period appeared in Impact's September 7, 1956 edition. SAC had a rate of 30.3% and the base had 37.6%. Clinton-Sherman AFB, OK had 100%. From here on, the base would progress until it set AF and SAC records. 307

Visitors

There were forty-one reported visits by groups to Smoky Hill during this period and they ranged from President Dwight D. Eisenhower to school children, Boy Scouts. Two former Commanders also visited the base. Many visitors

305 Impact, September 23 and November 18, 1955, March 16 and May 25, 1956.
306 Salina (KS) Journal, June 1 and July 13, 1956.
of curiosity, but some came because they had relatives or friends in
they arranged an official visit to Smoky Hill.
The first recorded visit to the base in this period came on January 18,
Brig. Gen. D. W. Hutchinson landed at the base and toured the facili-
Gunnery Range. General Hutchinson commanded the 21st AD at Forbes
KS, KS and the men at the Range were under his overall command.308
As men who provided the first guards at the main gate of the reacti-
For this visit, there were several visits by Department of Defense and
officials who visited the base to observe construction and reactiva-
tivities. Usually these visits received a couple of paragraphs in the
press but that was about all.
September 26, 1953, 700 children toured the base as part of the Kiwanis
National Kids' Day Program. From this time on, such groups were welcome 
base. The first Boy Scout unit to visit the base was Troop 10 of Salina. 
Tour of the base was on February 7, 1954 as guests of Colonel Thacker, 
Commander. Such was the response that the base assigned an NCO to duties 
OIC of handling the visits of children to the base.309 
The junior Senator from Kansas, Frank Carlson, made his first visit to the 
reactivated base on November 8, 1953.310 In 1941-1942, as a Congressman, he 
one of the men responsible for getting the base for Salina.
President Eisenhower made his first visit to the reactivated base on October 
1953. A total of 2,160 “polished airmen, dressed right at the normal inter-

310 Impact, November 13, 1953.
along the street leading to the main gate for the President. The
liked what he saw of the base and called the area "an ideal location
Force base. This level, open country is certainly fine for an air
fer he returned to the White House, he sent a letter of appreciation
Caney, Commander of the 802nd AD, for his reception by personnel at
than a year later, Senator Frank Carlson visited the base. He was
catch a ride with President Eisenhower on the President's plane, the
II. President Eisenhower was returning to Washington from Colorado.
e plane was on the ground at the base, he remained on board, reputedly
he was asleep.312 (Until the Kennedy Administration, the President's
as designated by the name he chose for it. For some reason, President
id not name the Boeing 707 which went into service as his plane and
that, it became known as Air Force One, no matter what the plane was or
President was.)

little over two months later, the President returned to the base for the
of driving to Abilene, KS to dedicate the Eisenhower Foundation. Upon
ival on November 11, he was greeted by a twenty-man honor guard commanded
d Lt. John Mlade of the 802nd APS. Then General Sutherland, Commander of
2nd AD, escorted the President while he inspected flights of the 40th and
Wings. As an unintended treat, a KC-97 made an emergency landing at the
Accompanying the President was the First Lady and his grandchildren.313

On November 19, 1954, Mrs. Curtis LeMay, wife of the Commander of SAC,

313Salina (KS) Journal, October 27, November 2, 9, and 11, 1954.
A two-hour visit to the base to review the Dependent's Assistance Program, her pet project. According to the article written about her visit to she was instrumental in getting her husband to make SAC more human. 314 Artis LeMay followed his wife almost three months later with his first Smoky Hill since September, 1953. He arrived at 10:25 A.M. and departed 11:20 A.M. While on base, he had lunch at the Officers' Mess and visited most base in what General Sutherland, Commander of the 802nd AD, described Airwind" visit. 315

A different sort of visitor(s) were the famous Budweiser Clysdale horses. Nearly 1,000 people turned out at the base during the afternoon of October 10 to see this team of draft horses put on a show for the base after ar­my truck. Mr. Barney Schwan, District Manager for Budweiser, arranged for.

General Robert Sweeney, Commander of the 8th AF, visited Salina during the annual "Honor the Uniform" Week on November 7, 1955. While in the area, he attended a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce and praised Salina for coming up with the idea. He was pleased with the way it was turning out. 317

In September 13, 1956, Smoky Hill was host to fifteen officials from the Department who had wanted to see a combat-ready base. George V. Allen, Ambassador-designate to Greece, was the senior VIP in the delegation. 318

The first former Smoky Hill Commander to visit the base was General Caney,

316 Impact, October 14, 1955. Neither Salina paper mentioned this exclusive visit.
Commander of the 802nd AD, who arrived on February 13, 1955 for an
visit. But the former Commander who really caught Salina's attention
was Gen. William L. Lee, who had commanded the base in 1946 and 1947. He
had come from the Philippine Islands where he had commanded the 13th AF
TAC AFB, TX as Commander of that base. Before he left, he was given a
visit to his old command and liked what he saw. He was surprised at how the
city had grown. During his tenure as Commander, the warehouses had been the
boundary of the base; now they were in the center. He commented that
the new location was an ideal location and when the base was closed in 1949, he
was known that the Air Force was making a big mistake because the weather
was ideal for flying and access to the base was easy. Before General Lee left
he picked up his new car from McArthur Ford which was the eighth one
he had bought in ten years from that dealer. 

The last reported visitors of this period were the thirteen member 8th AF
Advisory Council and General Sweeney, Commander of the 8th AF. The Council
visited the 8th AF base every three months where it discussed problems that af-
airmen and NCOs, making recommendations to General Sweeney. The meeting
ended on October 31, 1956 after the General addressed the group and praised
them for their work.

Housing

Before the Air Force reactivated the base in 1951, it had secured assurances
that plenty of housing would be available. Salina, Inc. had been
asked to generate new housing but something seems to have happened because
no new housing materialized. Of course, some of it was that Salina expected

have no more than 5,000 men at the base (the size it had been in while the Air Force was thinking in terms of approximately 8,000 throughout this period, there would be a housing shortage in the area and old seem to be done to alleviate it. The attitude seemed to be that force had left once before and it could leave again. No one wanted to holding a group of empty houses.

Housing was of concern to the *Salina Journal*. On April 24, 1952, readers warned that the "Air Force was blunt but realistic" when it informed that 1,600 housing units were needed for the base. Many men were temporarily assigned to Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS but as soon as school was out, they were moving their families to the area and be ready for school when it in the fall, even though the 310th Wing was not due to arrive until that year.

In the middle of 1952, 600 new units were being constructed southwest of but this did not seem to be enough. Indeed, people who were there through period felt that at best affordable housing was difficult to find.

The Chamber of Commerce pleaded with Salinans to come up with more rental properties. There was already a steady stream of airmen arriving but was no place for their families to live.

Little seemed to change and with the arrival of more people, it got worse. On August 22, 1952, the *Salina Journal* dropped a small "bomb" on Salina editorial:

> The housing shortage in Salina is bad and getting worse as the airmen arrive. Yet, fifty-two public housing units are standing empty. They could be repaired and put in use for around $50,000 but aren't.

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Because the houses were built during World War II for the base provisions were made for the repair and upkeep of those units. If moved out, the buildings fell into disrepair and no agency to have any authority to get anything started with making those suitable for occupancy. . . . 323

While, two neighboring cities; Abilene and Marquette, informed Salina had plenty of housing available. Abilene, Dwight D. Eisenhower's had plenty of housing available but thus far had had few house hunters. The Marquette Lions Club drew up a list of houses available for rent in and forwarded it to the base. 324 Both towns were about thirty miles base.

Salina Journal editorial of August 22, 1952, finally drew a reaction. For 28, 1952, the FHA announced that it had jurisdiction over Coronado which was the name for the housing units referred to in the Salina's August 22, 1952, editorial, and that there were 100 units there which were reconditioned and reduced to sixty in number to make them roomier. Were some tenants living there but they would not be evicted due to the turnover of tenants. However, as soon as they moved out, only militarynel assigned to Smoky Hill would be permitted to move in. 325

Of course, every little bit helped, but was it enough? On December 19, the Salina Journal published another editorial on the situation:

The Air Force wants plenty of housing for the several thousand families coming in but the town is fearful that Salina will be over-built. There is always that fear that the base will be reduced or closed. It is encouraging that the Air Force has upped the base from a ten year base to a twenty-five year base and there are reports that more than 8,000 people may be assigned to the base.

Salina lost the base once because of inadequate housing. Now

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the need to maintain a strong defense force, the odds favor-
a. Reasonable caution is necessary, but overcaution might be-
rous.326
a seemed to be caught in a dilemma. Perhaps Franklin Roosevelt best
the situation when in his first inaugural address he said that "there

g to fear but fear itself." Salina feared that if it did not build
using, the Air Force would pull out, but if it built the housing and
force still pulled out, it would have over-built! The latter fear
came true in late 1964.
600 unit defense housing project "which grew out of a wheat field in
a year" was being finished in April, 1953. At that time, nearly
people from the base were living there." Rent for a two-bedroom house
from $75 to $84.50 a month.327 The area in Salina became known as
Village because the streets are named after famous Indians and Indian
ths still had not changed in 1954 and the Chamber of Commerce convened
urgency meeting to discuss the housing shortage. It seems that the base
villian populations had grown faster than planned. Worse were the complaints
at gouging that the leaders were frequently hearing.328 What the Chamber
merce decided was not announced. But there really seemed to be little
ould be done. It is hard to get people to do something they lack interest
ng.
The base felt that it needed at least 400 new housing units in Salina as

327Salina (KS) Journal, April 19, 1953. Rent does seem a little high here.
ly two years later, this writer knows that similar housing could be had for
proximately $60 just outside of Richards-Gebaur AFB, Grandview, MO.
1954. Lt. Col. Walter Hardzog, Deputy Base Commander, stated that base personnel were living in basements and this lack of housing was responsible for the poor re-enlistment rate. The reader is reminded that two years later, the base had one of the higher re-enlistment rates in the 8th AF.

It seemed to have quieted down after this, but despite the fact that base/housing relations were good, the Air Force was not satisfied. Personnel assigned to the base in the summer of 1956 were warned that "rent in Salina was more expensive and homes hard to find." July, 1956, approximately 2,500 Air Force families lived within fifty miles of Salina. All seemed quiet. Then on July 3, an Oklahoma City, OK firm, which purchased 140 units of Indian Village started evicting tenants after it had been found. The firm feared that there would be a temporary oversupply of housing in Salina in 1957 when the new base housing project was expected.

Colonel Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, announced on July 8 that he had written a letter to the firm protesting the "eviction-sale" policy of its 140 Indian Village units which was causing unnecessary hardship on the families. Ten families had already received eviction notices. As a result, he was reactivating five Phillips Village units and these were being offered to families evicted from Indian Village.

A happy ending occurred when the firm responded to Colonel Wilson's letter.

It reversed its "eviction-sale" policy and rescinded the ten evictions already mailed out. Thereafter, the units would be sold only after they moved out. 333

Phillips Village

With the reactivation of Smoky Hill, there was a need for housing and Phillips was reactivated as Phillips Village on October 17, 1951. There were thirty-three buildings there which were to be rehabilitated "with four or more apartments in each building" for a total of 228 apartments exclusively by military personnel assigned to Smoky Hill. The Commanding officer of Smoky Hill was to live there. 334 Which Commander was not made clear. Until the Base Commander lived there. When Col. James Wilson, Commander of 2nd AD, arrived on base in 1956, he displaced the Base Commander, but after the incumbent was transferred to a new assignment.

Phillips Village housing was not great but it did provide a roof over the heads of military personnel. By June 8, 1952, fifteen families were living there and 90 percent of the apartments had been rehabilitated. The families were living there because "it was impossible to find housing in Salina." For the time being, there was no mail service, telephones, paper, garbage pickup, or recreation facilities. Plans were underway to change all of this. A fire station was in operation which was probably needed considering the fact that the buildings were of temporary wooden construction and designed for five to ten years usage. Important the fire station was came out in October 23, 1955 when a fire broke out in an unoccupied building in the northwest section of the Village.

334 Salina (KS) Journal, October 17 and November 30, 1951.
...tion by that fire department saved the Village from destruction. The fireman at the Village was not glorious. It was twelve miles from Salina and any shopping conveniences. Yet, it was in the country, neighbors were by, and TV reception was better than in Salina. The best part was rent and utilities were paid by the Air Force. This writer challenges the article on several points. First, Phillips Village was no farther than miles from the heart of Salina. Next, there was a small grocery in Smolan, less than two miles away which was probably larger in those days. There was also a trailer park in Smolan which catered to the base. Rent and utilities were not free. Personnel living off base are usually paid quarters and rations, the former being forfeited if the individual sold government property. The Village was probably a bargain considering that the quarters allowance (BAQ) is rarely, if ever, realistically with prevailing rental rates in the area.

By May, 1956, the housing was apparently in bad shape at the Village. The Air Times listed Phillips Village as "substandard." This seemed moot as the force had already announced that it planned to abandon and raze the Village as soon as the on base housing was built. But less than two months later, there were eighty-five vacant units there which the Air Force threatened to preserve during a housing crisis in Salina.

In essence, Phillips Village was a small city which seemed to have a need for a local government. During the week of October 17, 1952, a Council was endowed with the blessings of the Commander of the 802nd AD and the Base Com-

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Throughout this period, this government provided a link between those living there and the base.

Bachelor Housing

In early 1951, General Curtis LeMay, by then Commander of SAC, was at a window from his office at Offutt AFB, NE which overlooked the barracks area at a place where a barracks had burned down. One of his pet sophies was that "anyone could be made an officer but not everyone could be an NCO." It so happened that at this time, SAC was plagued with an enlistment rate and something had to be done because SAC needed its needed NCOs. An idea suddenly came to him and that was to improve living areas for enlisted personnel. In place of the burned-down barracks which were one long open room, an apartment-type barracks with three men to a room was constructed. As soon as SAC got the money, all of its barracks would be improved. SAC was reactivated. and had barracks in obvious need of razing, it benefit from this decision.

The Air Force announced on June 29, 1952 that it had erred. Originally, it estimated that 80 percent of the men assigned to the base would be single. It now evident that fewer than 70 percent would be single, which meant that barracks would be needed and the Air Force recommended that $4 million it from barracks construction funding for the base. Barracks being constructed at Smoky Hill were classified as "temporary" and could be used as long as thirty years. Each housed three men to a room or

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338 Impact, October 17, 1952.
339 Newsweek, February 12, 1951.
a building which was almost seven times more men than the barracks

World War II held. There were twenty-one barracks or dormitories
to be completed by November 21, 1952. Each room was to be private
supplied with a shoe rack, wash basin, shaving mirror, and clothes
heat was to be supplied from the dining hall serving that par-

October 28, 1954, General Sutherland, Commander of the 802nd AD, an-
that two three-story masonry barracks were being constructed and would
for occupancy by March, 1956. These were the first permanent-type
being built on base and would make the base "one of the best in SAC."342

Airman's Dorm being built for the US Air Force by the US Army" was the
ich appeared in a Salina Journal photograph on October 13, 1955. The
as a concrete-block building and was to have its own dining hall. By
, 1956, the first $300,000 barracks had been completed and the 40th AES
red in. There were seventy-two rooms and the building was located just
to the Chaplain's Annex and the base processing center.343
here were several BOQs built during this period on base. One was being
in January, 1956 by Jarvis Construction Company for $163,000 at the
est corner of the base near the executive quarters directly behind the
al. It was a two-story building measuring thirty-six feet by 160 feet
full basement. There were twenty-four suites designed to accomodate
eight officers. Each suite consisted of two single rooms with a connec-

341 Impact, August 15 and September 12, 1952. All of these buildings are
standing and are empty with the exception of one group in the south cen-
part of the base which are used by the Kansas Army National Guard.


343 Salina (KS) Journal, October 13, 1955 and April 6, 1956. One of these
buildings is now painted brown and is an apartment building.
On-Base Housing

Before the base was deactivated in 1949, the housing at Camp Phillips was used as a stop-gap measure. When the Air Force returned in 1951, it was assured that there would be plenty of housing. However, there was a need for housing, and on June 7, 1954, the Air Force went to Congress and requested funds for 402 Capehart housing units at Smoky Hill. By July 16, the House had reduced this number down to 293 units at a cost of $4.2 million. One month later, the Senate cut thirteen more units from the total as part of a national economy drive. This version was approved and signed by the President.

It was announced that construction would start in the spring of 1955.345 However, the 281 units were less than the base felt that it realistically needed. On January 7, 1955, the base announced that it was being surveyed for 500 Wherry units. Smoky Hill Air Force Base did not feel that the Wherry units were suitable for the area but before the base could apply for more Capehart units, it had to be surveyed for the Wherry units.346

Delays occurred on the 281 units and construction was not expected to get underway before September. The houses were to cost an average of $15,000 each and were to be constructed on two sixty-five acre plots east of the base.347

What is strange about this is that plans had already been made to raze Phillips Village which the Air Force owned. Instead of building there, where sewage and streets existed, the Air Force, for some mystical reason, decided to

345 Salina (KS) Journal, June 7, July 16, August 12, and October 1, 1954.
246

east side of the base and build on land which it did not own and to purchase. There had to be a reason for this besides proximity but it has not surfaced in this writer's research.

June 30, 1955, a $3.3 million bill was signed by the President which base an additional 255 housing units for a total of 535 units. Of new units, 153 were to be for married enlisted personnel, seventy-one any grade officers, and thirty-one for field grade officers. The houses built in the same area as the 281 units approved in 1954 on approxi-
30 acres east of the main gate. Three homes would be for Generals and would be for Colonels. The rest would be duplexes. 348

Fehart housing was actually Title 8 under the Federal Housing Admini-
which permitted the military to negotiate for the construction of with private builders and then repay them with the quarters allowance military personnel forfeited to live there. It was named for Senator Capelart (R-IN) who drafted the bill. 349 On October 4, 1956, the base eased that the first ninety houses would be ready for occupancy within or four months. These homes were of pre-fabricated construction. 350

A Review

Smoky Hill Air Force Base had been reactivated on August 1, 1951 as a Stra-
A-C Air Command base with the intent of making it a home for the B-47 strato-
medium bomber. With this move, a ghost town came to life. The new era with it a flurry of construction and when it was over, only the runways warehouses remained in the same place, but the former were extended.

Hill and Salina were given a second chance and both sides took ad-
it. There were problems and they came out from time to time, such
as the expanded Serviceman's Club in 1955 when the junior en-
listed were given a second chance and both sides took ad-
it. There were problems and they came out from time to time, such
of the expanded Serviceman's Club in 1955 when the junior en-
plained about being treated differently down town when they were in
Despite this, a spirit had permeated the base and that spirit knew
for the base was becoming Number One in the Air Force. It was out-
hole" or "shafted" image of the 1940s and recognizing this
Air Force decided to change the base's name.
Salina did not get the Air Force Academy, it did get an Air Division
of the expanded Serviceman's Club in 1955 when the junior en-
plained about being treated differently down town when they were in
Most of the leaders at the base and wing level went on to bigger
In recognition of this, the Air Force decided to rename the base and
ight, March 14, 1957, Smoky Hill Air Force Base ceased to exist.
CHAPTER VI

SAME MISSION, NEW NAME

MARCH 15, 1957 TO JUNE 20, 1960

Smoky Hill Air Force Base had been built and opened in 1942, threatened in 1947, deactivated in 1949, reactivated in 1951, received modern facilities in mid-1952 and early 1953, and received the B-47 "long rifle" medium bomber in 1954. In its first era, the base probably justified the nicknames of "Smokey Hole" and "Shafted," the latter a word created out of initials "SHAFB."

Things were different this time, as has been shown, and they were for the better. While no trumpets heralded the change, it was there. For one thing, the city of Salina came up with innovative ways to make the airmen feel at home. There were various receptions which honored personnel of all ranks and through the "Honor the Uniform" Week. Then, there was the United States Air Force's commitment to endow Smoky Hill with longer than usual runways. Money was available to eradicate the base of old structures and replace them with modern ones.

The start of this period found Smoky Hill getting a new name and its close Air Division losing its Air Division, the 40th Bomb Wing, and gaining an Atlas missile squadron. Plans were afoot throughout this period to make the base into a cornerstone of the modern military defense of the United States. Salina was apprehensive about the future of the base, but there seemed to be a sign that the times were changing and that Schilling would be a part of the future. The personnel assigned to the units on base would enable it to win recognition undreamed of in the 1940s. Under Brigadier General Wilson and Colonel Ohlke, Commanders
And AD, an *esprit de corps* would exist that seemed to make the base

Still, it was a time of change for the base. Dwight D. Eisenhower

President of the United States, but that seemed to be all that was

The base received a new name and the mission would be the same with

the horizon. Salina would be assured that Schilling would be receiving

raft and weapons systems which would assure it of a place for some time

In the defense of the United States.

Name

In the base was reactivated on August 1, 1951, it was under the name of

All Air Force Base, the name it had gone by with modification since

1942. Forgotten were the plans announced in August, 1949 to try to

the base in honor of an Air Force hero. Throughout the period of reacti-

the base remained Smoky Hill Air Force Base, but starting in April of

a campaign had been launched, at the instigation of the Air Force, to

the base, which culminated in a ceremony at the start of this period.

The Salina Journal announced on April 6, 1956 that Salinans could help

Hill in its search for a new name. The Air Force had decided to change

name of the base and the name would be that of an Air Force hero. Senator

on (KS) informed the paper that the names of Glenn L. Martin AFB and

AFB, both commemorating the names of early day Salina residents had

rejected. However, Forrest AFB, in honor of Brigadier General Nathan

and Forrest, Grandson of the Confederate General, was a possibility.¹

¹Salina (KS) Journal, April 6, 1956. Salina's claim as the home of two

ners in the early days of airplane manufacturing and commercial airlines

unknown to this writer until he started researching this paper. It would

been interesting had the base been named for a Confederate General's des-

ant or a national airline. Just think of Braniff AFB, Salina, KS, being

ed in 1967 just fifteen years ahead of that airline's bankruptcy.
April 12, several names had been proposed, including Jensen AFB, for a
engineer during World War II, who was killed in action (KIA) in
and Menish AFB, for a Sergeant-Pilot for the Royal Canadian Air
was the first Salinan to be killed in World War II. But by far, the
air name proposed was Dwight D. Eisenhower AFB. However, the Air
forced Salina that he was still alive and although a licensed pilot,
it qualify to have a base named after him.  

he opinion of this writer, it appears that Salina may have reasoned
enhower AFB" named in honor of the popular General-President would
closed and Salina was constantly in search of a way of keeping their
open forever. After these names were rejected, a civilian advisory
ee, working with Col. James Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, came up with
berg AFB, in honor of General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, the first Air Force
Staff in 1947. He was not a Kansan, but the name was popular with
 Why it was a popular name is not known unless it had something to do
keeping the base open.

Colonel Wilson explained at that time why the Air Force wanted to change
name of Smoky Hill. Although the revitalized Smoky Hill could not be com­
to the Smoky Hill of the 1940s, there were airmen who had served there
that period and never forgave the Air Force for assigning them to "Smoky
be a new name would change all of that and be symbolic of the new era that
dawned at the base.  

The name of Vandenberg seemed to settle the matter and it was forwarded

2Salina (KS) Journal, April 12, 1956.
4Thid.
headquarters at Offutt AFB, NE where General LeMay, Commander of SAC, forwarded it on to Washington, D. C. for final action. Alas, USAF in Washington rejected the name and informed Salina that the name was saved for another base.5

The Air Force turned down Salina's bid for the name after soliciting bids may never be fully known. A possible explanation may rest in the arena. Senator Frank Carlson of Concordia was up for re-election in the dominant Republican Party in Kansas had gone through a rough primary winst Governor Fred Hall had been defeated. During this time, Senator's popularity had declined, according to some observers. It can not be put during the week preceding the 1956 general election, the Air Force

through Senator Carlson's office, and not through Congressman Smith's as was the norm, that the base was to be named for the late Colonel David Schilling, a native of Leavenworth, KS.6 Senator Carlson may have felt that he not need the votes of central Kansas since that area was normally Republican, but northeast Kansas was another matter and could decide the election. Was political expediency a factor?

On the other hand, it has been suggested to this writer by several enlisted commissioned personnel who were assigned to the base at this time that Colonel Wilson was behind the "surprise" change in names. The tone of the letters has received range from amusing to outrage at a bomber base being for a fighter pilot. Press accounts concerning the name change indicate Colonels Schilling and Wilson had been friends. Was the desire to honor a friend behind the name change? Was it coincidence or is there another factor that has not come to light?

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5Salina (KS) Journal, July 3 and August 9, 1956.
Carlson had announced the name on November 1, 1956. The base announced on December 14, 1956 that the name of Schilling had been approved by the Department of Defense after being recommended by the Commerce and Salina City Commission.  

David C. Schilling had been born on December 15, 1918 in Leavenworth, entered the Air Force in May of 1940. During World War II, he had been a pilot and emerged from that war as tenth in rank of aces with twenty-one-half enemy planes shot down. In addition, he had destroyed ten and planes on the ground. During the war, he earned two DSCs, four Silver Eleven DFCs, twenty Air Medals, and promotion to full Colonel. After he had been involved in several records involving jet planes. On 14, 1956, he died in an automobile accident three miles south of Mildenhall and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. 

In January, 1957, the base began preparing for the extravaganza naming the name change. Col. Andrew S. Low, Director of Operations for 2nd AD and a close friend of Colonel Schilling's, was placed in charge planning named, appropriately, "Project Rename." Project Rename's of-were housed on the first floor of a building just completed to serve as for the nurses and there were seventeen men assigned to this group. Other events planned to make this event spectacular were visits by various and civilian dignitaries, an aircraft fly-by, and the unveiling of a of Colonel Schilling. The latter was a gift from the people of Salina to

7Impact, December 14, 1956.  
had been done by Miss Jean Jehlin, a Kansas City sculptress.\textsuperscript{10}

Everyone agreed with the name change and it fell to Marion Ellet of the \textit{KS) Blade-Empire}, the daily newspaper in Senator Carlson's hometown, to state the attitude: "We may lose the war but we are on record as opposing the (name) change. There was nothing wrong with the name Smoky Hill, why had to be changed, why wasn't a local man honored?"\textsuperscript{11}

Hill Air Force Base ceased to exist forever save in history on March 10. A crowd of around 5,000 turned out for the festivities. The Air Force Base Band performed and there were displays of aircraft, including "Jane" a B-17 of World War II-fame paid for by the children of Salina by they had collected for the war effort. The renaming of the base was primarily for Salina and the turnout was symbolic of the relationship that existed between the base and community. Perhaps the highlight of this event came when a life-sized statue of Colonel Schilling was unveiled.\textsuperscript{12} Few air bases have sculptured a display of the person for whom they were named.

Organization

Throughout this period, Schilling Air Force Base would be the home of the Air Division (AD) with the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings, both equipped with the B-47 stratojet medium-range bomber. Within each wing would be a refueling squadron equipped with the KC-97, a tanker that could be used for freight andeger duty when the need arose. Schilling AFB would have between ninety 00 B-47s and forty to forty-five KC-97s, plus an assortment of support air-crew assigned to it during this period to perform any mission which being as-

\textsuperscript{10}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, March 10, 1957.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Concordia (KS) Blade-Empire}, February 19, 1957.

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun}, March 21, 1957.
the Strategic Air Command (SAC) called for. This period will close
transfer of the 40th Bomb Wing to Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS and the deac­
tion of the 802nd AD, but that will be covered later in this chapter.
wing AFB was under the control of the 8th AF headquartered at Westover
the start of this period. Effective January 1, 1959, Schilling was
back to the control of the 15th Air Force (AF) at March AFB, CA.
been a member of the 15th AF (SAC) from 1947 to July 1, 1955.\textsuperscript{13}
was given for the change.
base underwent two reorganizations with the first starting on January
when the flight line and FMS squadrons were consolidated and three air-
aircraft. No change in strength of the personnel assigned to the base was
this reorganization was completed on February 14, 1959 and the 310th
held the 428th BS while the 40th Wing gained the 660th BS. The 802nd
Support Squadron was added to the 802nd ABG and the 802nd Medical Group
ated to handle medical matters on base.\textsuperscript{14} What happened to the 428th
Bomb Squadrons is not known. According to letters received by this
in his research of the base, these were training squadrons and by 1963,
8th BS had ceased to exist. In any event, these squadrons never reached
ention of the local press and were not mentioned in the transfer of the
wing in 1960 or the deactivation of the 310th Wing in 1965.
February 12, 1960, all nine branches of the Schilling AFB Directorate
personnel office were located together in one building. This was part of

\textsuperscript{13}Salina (KS) Journal, January 1, 1959.
\textsuperscript{14}Salina (KS) Journal, January 15 and February 14, 1959.
wide reorganization effort to consolidate the offices. Born in CBPO (Consolidated Base Personnel Offices) which is usually the arriving personnel visit at their new assignment and the last place personnel stop at as they leave their Air Force assignment.

everything was up to date at Schilling by May 12, 1960. On that date at Schilling by May 12, 1960. On that day Schilling was linked to a new and fully automatic communications system and all Air Force bases in the world. What this meant was that the units could send messages to one another without having to use a telegraph service or the Post Office.

Hospital

the last chapter of this paper mention was made that the base had started to get a new hospital. Finally, the attempt was successful and on April 22, Col. Robert Corwin, Hospital Commander, announced that bids would soon be accepted for a $2.7 million hospital at the base. Specifications called for a two-story building with seventy-five beds constructed of brick on a 150-bed site. What this meant was that if necessary, by adding another story in the future, the size of the hospital could be doubled without weakening the structure. From this, it would appear that at this time, the Air Force was thinking of giving Schilling a greater mission.

This hospital was to be located just east of the existing hospital. It was announced on December 3, 1959 that Schilling expected the new hospital to be ready for occupancy by the end of May, 1960. At that time, the work was 68 percent complete. As soon as the work was completed, the old hospital buildings

old and removed. Then, landscapers would begin planting over 900
tubs on the hospital grounds to assist in abating the noise.18 The
usually close to the flight line and this writer is surprised that
ce located the hospital where it did.
kind of care was available is difficult to determine. On September
it was learned that Lieutenant Robert Brennenstull was transferred
to Asbury Hospital in Salina to be near an iron lung.
iously diagnosed as having polio but did not appear to be paralyzed. De-
re, two years later, the base hospital received full accreditation by
Commission for Accreditation of Hospitals for three years.19
r October 1, 1958, dependents of Schilling personnel had to use mili-
itals if they wished to have the government pay for medical services.
past, it was optional. If a Specialist were needed, the government would
the care only if the local military hospital had certified that the
specialty was unavailable in the immediate area. Civilian facilities
be used only if an acute emergency existed; the illness occurred on a
r care started before October 1, 1958.20 A base hospital record was broken
ember 30, 1959 when the 100th baby, a boy, was born to the wife of A2C
W. Hoydic, 802nd Medical Group, in one month. On December 3, three babies
born and it appeared that the record might be broken again however, since
article later appeared, it does not seem that the record was broken

Fire Department

Fighters assigned to Schilling spent a minimum of four hours a day in training or performing drills. As of September 28, 1958, there were eighty-six members in the base fire department, including two civilians. Carl L. Van Pelt, a civilian, was Fire Chief.22

Little over a year later, Schilling was in the middle of Fire Prevention Week. The base fire department was engaged in showing base personnel how to prevent fires. In 1958, the base had only nine fires. There were three fires in the month of September on base under assistant Fire Chiefs.23

OQ Gunnery Range

Compared with other periods in the history of the base, little happened at the OQ Gunnery Range during this period that was particularly newsworthy. In 1957, eighteen sections of grazing and hay land were opened for leasing in parcels to the amount of 11,700 acres. One year later, twenty-three parcels or 1,446 acres were opened for bidding. However, something happened that prevented the leases from bringing in the minimum bids. The government had not decided whether to readvertise the bids or renegotiate the bids.24

A fire broke out on the Range on April 3, 1958. For five hours, forty-one firefighters from the base spent around five hours fighting a grass fire. About two thirds of the land were burned off before the fire could be brought under control. That year, it was learned that the Air Force was planning an expansion of the Range which would serve all of SAC as plans were underway to close the Ranges.

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ark, FL and Shaurette, AZ. Plans called for the installation of B-52 and B-47 turrets, and possibly some for the B-58. Captain Jeff Elliott, Training Officer, Captain M. L. Cully was OIC of the Range, and Lloyd Miller was NCOIC. Whether any men were stationed on the Range mentioned.

The mystery behind the name of the OQ Gunnery Range came out on September in an article by John Schmiedeler. It was a semi-interview with S. Charles M. Cleek, a "gun plumber" or weapons mechanic at the Range. He knew why the Range was called OQ but that in munitions terminology, it was ordnance qualification, which did not fit the operations at the Range. Of 1959, plans were still being made for the Range. The B-52 turrets were installed in the near future. Additional plans called for facilities training of pilots to operate the B-58 and B-66 armament systems, the being expected to replace the B-47. At this time, Captain William E. was OIC of the Range which was manned by fifty-two maintenance men, and instructors. Around seventy-five men trained at the Range each and that number was expected to grow to 125 a month.

Operations

For the start of this period, Schilling AFB was revealed to be worth over $21,000. The planes were worth $225,934,000; the buildings were worth $8,000 and set on land worth $421,000; and other equipment was worth $4,000. This figure did not include the salaries paid out or the money

Various funds maintained by the units for the welfare of personnel as-
the base.

(Unidentified Flying Objects) are still being reported and those who
are such things. But during the 1950s, these sightings were taken
seriously and the Air Force even had a team investigating them under the
Project Blue Book." The sightings were not confined to civilians.
1957, the base encountered its first UFO sighting on its radar screens.
Paul Beaugardt discovered it at 10:30 P.M. Alas, it turned out to be
migrating birds. On take-off, a KC-97 tanker belonging to the 310th
had fifty of them. Over 200 birds were killed either by aircraft running
or by the birds crashing into the runways. Fortunately, no serious
was reported. In the last chapter of this paper it was mentioned that
had decided to dim runway lights during the migration period of birds
south. At that time, it had been observed that the accidents with the
only occurred on their south-bound migrations. This was an exception to
and if such an incident happened again, it was not reported.
over six months later, two officers reported sighting an unidenti-
object which resembled a double star over the base during the evening hours
ember 15, 1957. The next morning, two more officers sighted something
at 3:00 A.M. as they drove onto the base and reported it to the (Control)
. No planes had taken off or were in the vicinity at the time. Both of-
were described as being "stone sober" at this time. These were the
UFO sightings to reach the press from the base. (Maybe it was due to the

that there was nothing of universal interest going on in Salina.)

The only incident in which weather seriously affected the base was re­

sembling this period, some damage was done. During the night of May 29,

enty mile per hour winds ripped off a big accordian-type door from

The door was thirty-five feet high and no other buildings were damaged

storm but the base received 2.71 inches of rain during the night.31

Erwin Proudy averted a possible plane crash during the night of April

Lightning struck the control tower and knocked out all electrical

The Airman went to the Ground Control Approach unit and used the emer­

ower system there until normal power was restored.32

uring the first era of the base, Continental Airlines had tried to get

ion to use the base runways and operate permanently from that part of

In June, 1957, it succeeded in getting to operate out of the base on

orary basis. Salina Municipal Airport was to be closed so that its run­

ould be worked on and Continental was given permission to relocate to the

ile the work was under way. Approval was formally granted on July 5,

nd Continental was expecting to be on Schilling for no more than ninety

Continental Airlines announced on September 3, 1957 that it would return

unicipal Airport the next day. Schilling was commended for its hospi­

extended to the Airline. Lt. Col. George Matsko was the project officer

arge of making Continental feel at home while it operated out of the base.34

33Salina (KS) Journal, June 16 and July 7, 1957.
approaches to Schilling clear, the government moved to file condemnation on 198.59 acres of land southeast of the main runway. The current law have the right to use the property except where it might interfere clearance of aircraft.35

First rumors of a change in the future of Schilling reached the press on November 25, 1957. It was announced that by 1962, Schilling would be the home of jet bombers and Atlas Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) plus Nike unit to protect the base. The B-52s would be complemented with the jet version of the KC-97 tanker. By 1962, when this plan was formal, there would be 3,440 airmen and 590 officers, which was about three fewer men than were on the base at this time. In making this announcement, the Air Force asked Salina for more housing.36 This request seems unheard. On one hand, the Air Force announced that fewer men would be assigned to the base in the future but it wanted more housing, while it was lagging 500+ units in what would become known as Schilling Manor. This matter crop up again in 1959.

Schilling AFB was host to the crews of fifty-five planes from Shaw AFB, September 26, 1958. The planes had been ordered to bases inland to escape plane Helene. There were twenty-seven B-57s and twenty-eight F-101s instead and 150 men. Some of these men were housed in Salina hotels and all impressed with Salina's hospitality.37

The Air Force reaffirmed its plans for Schilling on April 1, 1959 when it announced that a new era was dawning for the base. First, there would be a

B-47 to B-52 aircraft. Second, from eight to ten Atlas ICBM sites established around the area with headquarters at the base. Third, two bases would be built to guard the base. The transformation of a B-52 base would be completed by 1962. This would require only to be stationed at the base by that time. The ICBM squadron would then for launch work, 100 for administrative work, and about 150 more for security. Some $45 million was to be spent to get the base ready within a few years. One B-47 Wing would be transferred. With these changes, AF B was assured of a long life. But the Air Force plans never materialized. The Atlas ICBM missiles and KC-135 tankers would arrive but would never see a B-52 except when one landed for a visit.

The Salina Journal commented on this news in an editorial on April 1, 1959. "We will get B-52s within the next four years. . . By 1962, there will be 1,470 housing units and now has 535. . . The Air Force wants to develop the area at Salina is getting hostile." The latter is hard to ascertain, but the former will be clarified in the section on housing presented later in this chapter. But this writer was unable to determine how Salina was getting hostile from the reading of articles in the local press and talking to residents of Salina during this period.

To a pilot, the sky is a highway. At the base, control of that highway was to the jurisdiction of the 2028th Airways and Air Communications Squadron of the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), a tenant unit on base. The air highways are located between 700 and 2,400 foot altitudes.

38Salina (KS) Journal, April 1, 1959.
39Ibid.
Once a plane received a reservation, it was assured that the plane would be within ten miles to the front or rear of it and a 1,000 foot clearance on top and bottom. After 29,000 feet, there was 300 foot clearance due to the lack of precise accuracy of the altimeter at high altitudes. Military pilots were governed by two types of flight rules; Visual Flight Rules (VFR) were used during fair weather and Instrument Flying Rules (IFR) were used during bad weather.40

Provide up-to-the-minute weather conditions in all parts of the world, military pilots needed accurate weather data to ensure the safety of their missions. The U.S. Weather Bureau, through its new nation-wide facsimile network on May 27, 1959, provided this service to military bases. The center of this network was Global Weather Control at Offutt AFB, NE.41

On June 5, 1959, the American Electric Company of Kansas, Salina, submitted a bid for construction of runway overruns and approach lighting at the base, Schilling. The contract called for 1,000 feet of additional paving at each end of the runways. Schilling announced on July 1, 1959 that over $4 million would be spent on the base to prepare it to receive B-52 bombers. The runways would be widened fifty feet on each side to make them 300 feet wide but construction would not start before the Spring of 1960.42 By March 11, 1960, the plans were firmly in place for Schilling. It would become a one Wing base by June, when the 40th Wing moved to Forbes AFB, KS. The 310th Wing would grow to include the 40th ARS and an ICBM unit. By 1963, the KC-97s would be replaced with KC-135 jet tankers. At the time of this article, the missiles were not

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42 Salina (KS) Journal, June 5, and July 1, 1959.
Mission

About this period, Schilling depended on the B-47 stratojet bomber to carry out its assigned mission. The Air Force announced in 1958 that the 1,400 B-47s in its inventory were being modified but modification would in no way hamper its ability to maintain one-third of its aircraft on alert.\(^{44}\) The first TDY reported in this period involved all of the 40th Bomb Wing which left in July of 1957 and returned on 10. The last plane to return to the base was a KC-97 of the 40th. Its destination is secret part of the regular training mission."\(^{45}\) Sometime in early 1958, the 40th ARS left Schilling for a three-month TDY, probably in Newfoundland. It was gone, one of its KC-97s found a downed commercial airliner in the of Canada and assisted in getting the plane rescued. No one was injured in the downed plane. The 40th ARS returned to Salina between January 9 and 11, for a late Christmas.\(^ {47}\)

The last reported mission during this period came when a 310th ARS KC-97

\(^{45}\)Salina (KS) Journal, June 24, October 3, and 10, 1957.
\(^{46}\)Salina (KS) Journal, April 11, 1958.
A Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX B-47 that was in trouble. The KC-97 was on a training flight from Kelly AFB, San Antonio, TX when the crew learned of the B-47 and flew to its assistance. Around 3,500 gallons of fuel (or gas) was transferred to the troubled B-47 which gave it enough to return to the air until a Dyess AFB KC-97 could arrive with more fuel. For their efforts, the 310th ARS crew was named "SAC Crew of the Month" on April 7, 1959.

Training continued to be important to the units assigned to the base. Training involved everything from TDYs overseas, which has already been mentioned, to competition with other units both on base and off, plus other activities designed to enhance the base's combat effectiveness. The first competition reported during this period was when it was announced that the 45th Bombardment Squadron of the 40th Wing was the first winner of the Major E. W. Sharp Trophy. This trophy was awarded to the 40th Wing Squadron which did the most to enhance the base's combat effectiveness. The trophy was named in honor of Capt. George Neer who had died in a 1957 aircraft crash near the base. Capt. George Neer was an instructor pilot (IP) with the 381st BS of the 310th Wing, became the first Schilling B-47 pilot to pass the 2,000 hour mark at the controls of the 40th Wing. The Captain had been assigned to Schilling since 1954.

Units participated in three Pacesetter missions between March 15, 1959 and January 1, 1959 when the base returned to the fold of the 15th AF. On July 23, 1957, the 310th Wing took first place in Pacesetter VII and the 40th took second place. The 40th Wing took first place in Pacesetter X and the 310th finished second on December 29, 1957. In the last Pacesetter competition...

he base participated in, the 310th finished first.49
were (and remain) a major means of testing a base's capability to
an emergency and measure the effectiveness of a unit's training pro-
means of testing a base's combat readiness had gradually started
attention in the local press in the last period and received more
verage in this period.
first alert started at 10:00 A.M. on Friday, July 10, 1957 and lasted
0 P.M. on July 12. In theory, a one-megaton bomb was dropped on the
1:19 P.M., July 10, 1957. It appeared to be a quiet day when suddenly,
ond on base. Men sprang out of the barracks and offices on base
ed for vehicles to get to their emergency duty posts. The enemy had
and it was time for Schilling to respond. Casualties were light
of the speedy evacuation of the base. The Salina Journal responded
practice with a quip: "Dear Sal: The only question now is whether
inary bomb dropped on Schilling was a "clean" or a "dirty" one. Yours,
ring this period, there were nine such alerts reported in the local
For the men involved, it was never known until they were in the middle
alert whether or not it was the real thing.
September 26, 1957, the base was blanketed by a "make-believe nuclear
cloud." It was designed to test the ability of aircraft crews to op-
while under a nuclear attack. According to the Salina Journal, the base
ended appropriately.51

49 Salina (KS) Journal, April 25, May 17 and 23, December 29, 1957, and
ber 21, 1958.
50 Salina (KS) Journal, July 12, 1957.
Chivingham AFB was a part of SAC's Alert Force. The plan called for one plane to be airborne within fifteen minutes after the alert was sounded. They were parked on the runway and crews kept nearby twenty-four hours a day. The number of planes and crews on alert was classified. Alert crews were restricted to certain areas of the base and had to respond to klaxons on poles throughout the area and Salina. The 40th Bomb Wing won an "alert" rating for its work in a December, 1958 nation-wide alert. In 1959, the 310th Bomb Wing won an award from the 15th AF for its work in May. These articles did not go into specifics.

An article appeared in the Salina Journal concerning alerts on May 20, 1958. No matter what the men at Chivingham were doing, when the signal came, they were to be in their aircraft and gone in minutes. Those men had to live for twenty-four hours a day for an entire week. If one went somewhere, the others had to go along and were to never be out of ear-shot of a klaxon. During a daily free meal hour, wives and families were permitted to visit the Officers' Club. During the summer, a picnic area provided by the base, allowed the family to visit them there. The ultimate goal was to be one-third of the bomber crews on runway alert after October 1, 1957. Plans were underway to build an alert crew building which would make control of the crews tighter and after that building was opened, the crews would remain at area, a "stone's throw" from their planes. While the crews waited for alert or attack, maintenance crews constantly went over the planes looking for trouble.

This period, the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings participated in the bombing and navigation competitions on an annual basis three times. In the competition, two crews from each Schilling Wing participated, but Schilling returned to the top ten. But in the 1958 competition, Schilling doubled its placing by sending four crews from each wing to the competition. Aircraft Company, which apparently sponsored the competition, presented B-47 crew commanded by Maj. Norman F. Mueller, which won "nearly the marbles" in this event.

In the 1959 competition, four crews from each Schilling Wing were again placed. This was the eleventh such competition in the Air Force. By October, 40th Wing was in twenty-seventh place and the 310th Wing was in thirty-place at the half-way point. But the 40th ARS won third place in the bombing competition. It was not revealed how the 40th and 310th Wings placed as only the first five places were announced.

The 802nd AD received the Air Force Flying Safety Award on October 24, after flying more than nine million miles or 25,752 hours safely from September 1 to June 30, 1957. General Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, accepted the award from General Sweeney, 8th AF Commander, and praised the role that the Officers of the 802nd AD, 310th, and 40th Bomb Wings had played in making the award possible.

Between June 6, 1958 and April 27, 1960, the 310th Bomb Wing won four awards. On June 6, 1958, the Wing was named "the most effective B-47 Wing in

55 Salina (KS) Journal, October 7 and November 5, 1957.
ategic Air Command" for the first quarter of 1958. The Wing had above average for the previous three years and took the honors from other B-47 Wings in SAC. In addition, the 379th BS scored 300 take-off a single abort and its maintenance crews had a 79 percent re-enume. The Wing was still going strong when General Thomas Powers, of SAC, called the 310th Bomb Wing the best in SAC on December 19, eight consecutive months, the 310th Wing had maintained an "outstanding" But in what areas was not mentioned. This was enough for the Wing ed the most efficient Wing in SAC for all of 1958. It won over thirty- or bomb and refueling Wings in SAC by being tops in all four quarters This was the first time that it had been done and the 310th did it y one AWOL (absent without leave) reported! At the same time, the 40th in fifth place.61

m, the 310th Bomb Wing capped it off by winning the Air Force's Out-

al Unit Award for the January 1, 1956 to January 1, 1959 period. "The operation record during the three years is unique in the records of SAC Air Force. To be awarded, approval is required of all higher commands which the Wing served during this period." The award was won for excep-
y meritorious achievement and service of great international significance the period. "Dear Sal: The Air Force is saying what Salina knew all the

he 310th is the finest there is anywhere. Yours, Ina."62

ut the 40th Wing was not far behind its sister. A 40th Wing B-47 commanded

H. Maxey was recognized by SAC for having never had a late mission abort, or failed to complete a mission. It placed in the top Facesetter missions and had been named Combat Crew of the Month in four times. Then by July 26, 1959, the 40th ARS set a SAC record executive takeoffs without an abort and the record was still growing. In September and October of 1958, the 310th ARS won the Golden Boom Award. An 8th AF award and the 310th ARS won it the first time it was availa-

The unit won the award each time for outstanding operational ef-

In the last four months of 1958, the 310th ARS flew 325 sorties and 70,000 gallons of fuel safely. During this period, Lieutenant Colonel Anten, junior, was Commander. By March 15, 1959, the 310th Wing was called "many awards." Other Air Force units had taken notice and ten bases representatives to Schilling to see how the 310th had done it. It to have the men take pride in their work and know that the community had them. The last sentence appears to be the reflection of the writer article, although the fact remains that on the surface the base was good. Later that month, it was announced that the altitude chamber, located near capital, was to be discontinued. Under a reorganization plan initiated by all Schilling crews were to go to Lincoln AFB, NE to take their training. Each crew member had to go through the Chamber once every three years. In the last chapter of this paper, it was revealed that the Chamber could simulate personnel up several thousand feet without their ever having to
conditioning them to what they would encounter in actual

In the first quarter of 1959, the 310th Wing was rated the top organi-
SAC with a 98 percent rating followed by the 40th Wing which had a
at rating. This was believed to be a record in SAC. 67

Accidents

On April 25, 1957 and January 15, 1960, fourteen accidents occurred
Schilling planes. Five of these accidents took ten lives and totaled
jets. Three of the accidents involved the KC-97, but no planes were
only one man was reported injured. The 310th Wing lost four men and
a. The 40th Wing lost six men and three B-47s.

The first accident was reported on April 26, 1957 when a 310th ARS KC-97
for a routine refueling mission but during a routine check of the re-
boom, the crew could not get it to return to the tail of the plane.
ly a control cable had broken and could not be fixed in flight so the
was cancelled and the plane returned to the base. A layer of foam was
down the center of the runway and the Aircraft Commander guided the
so that the boom stayed on the foam, thereby reducing friction which
ave ignited the load of fuel on the plane. Little damage was reported. 68
310th Bomb Wing B-47 crashed near Brookville, KS on October 30, 1957
illed two men. Capt. Bobby Hughes, Aircraft Commander, parachuted to
and suffered only bruises and back injuries. Witnesses to the crash
ved that the plane had been too close to the ground for the others to
from the plane. This was the first accident reported in this period which

four months later, a 40th Wing B-47 crashed near El Paso, TX
of one life. Lt. Samuel Harding, 27, Observer, went down with
died. The other three crew members parachuted to safety. This
Commander Captain Gerald Weimer's second crash since he had been
Schilling. He had been involved in an October 4, 1955 crash near
No other details concerning the crash were released.
been noted that the sky is the highway for airplanes. On ground
there are near-misses in which cars barely miss hitting each other.
plies in the air where a wrong move can take more lives and cost
of dollars in damage. A United Airlines pilot charged that a Schilling
buzed his plane near Salina on May 29, 1958. Both the Air Force and
vestigated and concluded that there was no basis for the complaint.
had been on a strategical evaluation flight and was commanded by Maj.
this, a veteran of 5,500 hours in the air with a record of no acci-
80th BS B-47 crashed near Goose Bay, Canada on February 11, 1959 killing
icers and injuring two others. Lt. Gerle L. Buckner, Aircraft Commander,
Leigh A. Hochreich, Observer, escaped with minor injuries. This was
first fatal accident for the 310th Wing since October, 1957. It was also
first fatal accident for the 310th Bomb Wing reported in this period.
unusual accident was reported on February 24, 1959. An eight-man main-

71 Salina (KS) Journal, June 1, 1958.
had been sent to Minnesota to repair a 40th ARS KC-97. Something
a one-ton propellor fell on A1C Kenneth Boehnen, 21, a member of
6. He was single and was reported to be in good condition in a Min­
tal. 73 What is interesting about this accident is the weight of
or and that someone could survive after one fell on him.

than a year later, a 44th BS, 40th Wing, B-47 crashed northwest of
3 in southwest Kansas and killed three men. Second Lieutenant Gordon
25, Navigator, and a native of Amarillo, TX survived. Before the
plane had been in the midst of an air refueling operation at 14,000
ere was no collision but the plane seemed to have lost power, stalled,
of course, crashed. 74

last accident of this period occurred a little over a week later when
B-47 belonging to the 44th BS crashed. This time, the accident occurred
Arbans, AK. Two men died and two survived. The plane had been in the	y twelve minutes after taking off from Eilesen AFB, AK on its return to
ng AFB when a warning light flashed on in the cockpit indicating a mal-
in the landing gear. The plane attempted to return to Eileson but
rced to make a crash landing. The two survivors were able to leap out
plane, but rescue of the others failed because of exploding shells. 75

Missiles

Salinans were informed on August 4, 1958 that a survey was underway to
ine if Schilling had what it took to be a missile base. If the answer
affirmative, the base could become one of three in Kansas and one of twelve

The mission of the base would not be changed and one year would
elapse before anything was done. McConnell AFB, Wichita, and Hutchinson
Station were also under consideration. At the same time, the Army
was considering the feasibility of locating two Nike anti-aircraft missile
sites in the area to protect the base and its missile system.76

August 12, Maj. Gen. Derrill M. Daniel informed Salina that it would
get one Nike site which would add 100 military personnel and $25,000
to Salina’s economy. The site had been located and Salina had been
selected by the Army because it warranted defense against enemy attack. When
sal, no test firing would be done.77

Rumors continued about Air Force plans. Salina was to get Nikes
named to indicate that Air Force plans for Schilling warranted them.

On March 13, 1959, the Air Force informed Salina that it would get
10 Atlas missiles. Approximately $4 million would be spent in Fiscal
Y) 1960 and $30 million in FY 1961.78

A few days later, it was learned that bidding would open in about sixty
days, Kansas would get more Atlas missiles than any other state. The Atlas
missile had a range of 6,325 miles. Missiles installed in Salina would not
be fired after they were installed. Schilling would get between 600 and
62 people to operate the missiles. The construction of Interstate Highway
2 in Salina was expected to ease transportation difficulties.79 It seems strange to

writer that the Salina Journal would boast that it was getting more Atlas

76Salina (KS) Journal, August 4 and 8, 1958.
which would make the state a more attractive first-strike target to
of course, missile construction activities meant a larger payroll
purchases on the local economy which did mean that the state and Salina
very prosperous days ahead of them. Of course, the Salina Journal's
may have been philosophical. Whether Kansas liked it or not, the
was going ahead with its plans to install a large number of missiles
site, so the populace might as well learn to live with it.

As announced on May 13, 1959 that Schilling was to be the center of
miles pads which would be within a fifty-three mile radius of Salina
be worth $135 million when completed. An Atlas missile was eighty-
one-half feet long with a diameter of ten feet. Most of its 262,000
weight was fuel. The Air Force revealed on October 12, 1959 that the
F sites would be located in six counties. One was to be located in
County forty-two miles north northwest of Schilling; two would be lo-
in Dickinson County, thirty-four miles northeast of the base and the
nineteen miles east southeast; one would be located in McPherson County
miles south of the base; another would be located thirty-four miles
west of the base in Rice County; two would be located in Ellsworth County,
twenty-one miles west southwest and the other forty-two miles west north-
of the base; Lincoln County would get a missile site twenty-seven miles
west of the base; and one would be located in Cloud County forty-two miles
of the base. Each site was to take some twenty acres of land.80

Two Nike bases also were to be built in the area; one south of Bennington
the other north of Falun. The Army had been ordered to utilize government-
ed land where possible and the Bennington site was on land owned by the

The two sites would cost $2.1 million to be operational by July of 1960. The Army was preparing to return to Salina, the Air Force was preparing to get work started on its Atlas sites. Bids were to be taken in January, released in February. The Air Force expected it to take another twenty weeks to construct and equip the sites. To begin with, 650 workers would be needed; Convair would assign 350 of its own personnel to Salina but would be 300 workers from the local labor supply.

Lieutenant Colonel Edward Little arrived in October, 1959 to supervise the Atlas missile project in Salina. His title was Air Force Ballistic Division Field Office Supervisor and he was assigned to work out of the Salina area for their full term of enlistment. To man the Nike sites near Bennington and Falun, the Army announced it needed at least thirty-five Salina men to enlist. Men who enlisted were guaranteed assignment in the Salina area for their full term of enlistment.

On February 21, 1960, Colonel Little revealed more about the Atlas missile. The missile was to rest in a concrete-lined pit 174-feet deep with a fifty-foot diameter. The purpose of this hole was to protect the missile, its crew, machinery from possible damage from enemy bombs. There would be six floors of machinery in each silo. Concrete doors three feet-thick would cover the top of the missile pit. When each site was completed, only a few air vents and a small storage shed would be visible on the surface along with the parking

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82Salina (KS) Journal, October 8, 28, and December 13, 1959.
would help guard the site. By July 15, nine holes were expected to have been dug and lined with concrete. As was going on, the Air Force announced that it was possible that Atlas sites might be added to the area at an additional cost of $5 million. It was confirmed on April 15, 1960 that three more sites added to Schilling's Atlas missile network, bringing the number to One site would be located near Tescott, nineteen miles north of the other near Minneapolis (KS), twenty-six miles north of the base; and a third near Abilene, twenty-four miles west of the base. Schilling's Atlas missiles were to be the first to be placed in underground holes. They had not been installed when it was announced that the 6,000 mile-missile might be replaced by a 9,000 mile-range missile. If that happens, modifications would be necessary to the Salina sites.

Commanders
Throughout this period, there were four major units of command above the command level on Schilling Air Force Base; the 802nd AD, 802nd ABG, the 310th Bomb Wings. At the end of this period, there would only be two major units on base; the 310th Wing and the newly formed 310th Combat Support Group, the latter taking over the role of the 802nd ABG. At the start of this period, Brig. Gen. James Wilson commanded the 802nd AD, Lt. Col. Gordon Heinemann the 802nd ABG, Col. Bryson Bailey commanded the 310th Bomb Wing, and Berton Burns commanded the 40th Bomb Wing.

Gen. James Wilson had commanded the 802nd AD as its fifth Commander July 24, 1956 when he arrived from MacDill AFB, FL where he had com-
manded the 305th Bomb Wing. On December 1, 1956, he had been promoted to Brigadier General. It was announced on March 6, 1958 that General Wilson was to be transferred to Plattsburg AFB, NY to assume command of the 820th AD later that month. Wilson had been hand-picked for the job owing to his successes at Plattsburg where he had imbued an esprit de corps in its units because the 820th AD had undergone a similar transformation. Under General Wilson, Schilling's re-entrenchment had climbed to where it was one of the best in the Air Force.

In June 1958, Schilling had been named the "Golden Anniversary Base" in honor of 50 years of military aviation in the United States.

Colonel Harold W. Ohlke, 43, Commander of the 90th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW) at Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS, was named to succeed General Wilson. He was a native of Kansas City, MO and a graduate of the University of Missouri, Columbia. Commissioned in 1937, he had over 4,500 hours in the air and on December 24, 1958, he assumed command of the 802nd AD as its sixth Commander.

In his command, units assigned to Schilling continued to win award after award. In June 1959, it was learned that Colonel Ohlke was to leave for Tinker AFB, OK "almost immediately" where he would command a "triple-threat" formation of three Wings which were composed of B-52s, missiles, and KC-135 tankers. His successor was to be Col. George Y. Jumper, Commander of the 40th Strategic Wing on base. No one knew it at the time, but Colonel Jumper was to be the last Commander of the 802nd Air Division. At the same time, he was destined for command of a "triple-threat" formation of three Wings which were composed of B-52s, missiles, and KC-135 tankers.

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89 Salina (KS) Journal, March 6, 7, 24, and 25, 1958.
90 Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 20, 1959.
Colonel Nolan's record. In the 1951 to 1957 period, Colonel Nolan had both the 310th and 40th Wings on base. Colonel Jumper would serve as Commander of both Wings and the 802nd Air Division as well.

Colonel Jumper had been Commander of the 40th Wing since July 4, 1958. In 1959, he assumed command of the 802nd AD. A native of Sacramento, he was 41 years old and a graduate of the United States Military Academy, Class of 1939, with more than 4,000 hours in the air. Less than a year later, he announced that he would assume command of the 310th Bomb Wing on June 8th when the 802nd AD was deactivated as a result of the 40th Bomb Wing being transferred to Forbes AFB, KS.91

802nd Air Base Group

At the start of this period, Lt. Col. Gordon E. Hein was Base Commander, a position that he had held since March, 1956. Despite the opening of Schilling AFB, Colonel Hein lived in Salina at 756 Sheridan. Colonel Hein continued to serve as Base Commander until July 7, 1959 when he left to attend the Air University at Maxwell AFB, AL.92 The forty months he served as Base Commander saw not only the opening of Schilling AFB, but the rest of the units on base as well. Before Colonel Hein left Schilling, he was honored with a dinner reception by the Salina Chamber of Commerce presented him with a plaque in recognition of his "outstanding work in developing and maintaining excellent relations between the base and Salina." Some 205 people attended the reception which also included Maj. Gen. Archie J. Old, Jr., Commander of the 15th AF.93

Colonel Hein was replaced by Lt. Col. Carl W. Hauth who was the Deputy Base Commander, beginning in July 1959.94

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93 *Salina (KS) Journal*, May 9, 1959.
This was a temporary arrangement until Col. William P. Mullins assumed permanent command of the base. Colonel Mullins, 43, took command of the base and the 802nd ABG on July 22, 1959. He had spent 22 years in the Air Force and had logged 5,000 hours in the air. Prior to his arrival at Schilling, he had served as air attaché in Bangkok, Thailand. Mullins had been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel at the age of twenty-eight and to Colonel in 1951.

A little more happened and on November 10, 1959, Colonel Jumper, 802nd Director of Operations, announced that Colonel Mullins was trading assignments with Col. W. Summers, Jr., 802nd AD Director of Materiel. This was part of a plan to compensate for forthcoming changes and to stabilize forces. The changes referred to were the addition of missiles to the base, the transfer of the 19th Bomb Wing, and the deactivation of the 802nd Air Division.

Little was revealed about the last Base Commander of this period. On May 1, 1960, a group of "about forty" Kansas Mayors held a meeting on base to discuss the transition. In his address to them, he called himself the "last" Base Commander. His city had a permanent population of 6,000 men and women which were valued at three-quarters of a billion dollars. Apparently the city's Mayor had not received the word that the population of his city was going to lose about 2,000 people within two months. However, Colonel Summers would remain as Base Commander and Commander of the 310th Combat Support Group (CSG) which would replace the 802nd Air Base Group (ABG).

310th Bomb Wing

Bryson Bailey had been Commander of the 310th Wing since September, 1957, but on January 8, 1958 it was announced that he would leave Schilling on January 12, 1958 for Thule, Greenland where he would assume command of the Strategic Tanker Wing, a unit plagued with supply scandals. SAC was by all accounts a unit and it was up to Colonel Bailey to do the cleaning.97

January 12, Col. Jean B. Miller arrived to assume command of the 310th Wing. Col. Miller arrived from Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE where he had worked in the Inspector General section. Whether Colonel Bailey remained to help Colonel Miller was not revealed, nor for that matter was very little revealed about Colonel Miller. However, during the fifteen months he was Commander of the 310th, he saw the Wing become the most outstanding unit in SAC for 1958 and the 310th ARS twice named the top refueling squadron in the 8th AF.98

Col. Walter Y. Lucas succeeded Colonel Miller as Commander of the 310th Wing on April 8, 1959. Colonel Miller had received orders to report to Malmstrom AFB, Tucson, AZ where he was to assume command of the 43rd Bomb Group.

When Walter Lucas arrived at Smoky Hill Air Force Base in May of 1956, he was a Lieutenant Colonel who had left Headquarters, 8th AF, Westover AFB, where he had been Chief of Supply. Initially, he was Director of Materiel for the 310th Wing. By May 1, 1957, he was a full Colonel and Deputy Commander of the 310th Wing. He had been in the Air Force since March 24, 1940 and was

of four children. 100 Apparently, Colonel Lucas did a good job as
doing what was expected of him. On October 23, 1959, he received a letter of com­
pliment from General Thomas Powers, Commander of SAC, for the Wing's perfor­
mance in a recent Operations Readiness Inspection (ORI) which kept the Wing at the top in SAC ORI ratings for the 1960 Fiscal Year. 101

On June 3, 1960, it was announced that in the command shifts effective July 1960, Colonel Lucas was to attend the B-52 bomber school at Castle Air Force Base and then report to Walker AFB, NM where he would assume duties as Commander for Operations with the 6th Bomb Wing. However, on June 10, 1960 it was announced that his assignment had been changed and he would assume command of the 547 Wing stationed at Mountain Home AFB, ID. 102

Colonel Jumper was to assume command of the 310th Bomb Wing on June 20, 1960, and the 802nd Air Division was deactivated, as has already been mentioned. What is noteworthy is that he was to command a Wing that was at the top in SAC and probably in the whole Air Force.

40th Bomb Wing

The Dean of Schilling's Commanders at the start of this period was Col. A. Burns, Commander of the 40th Bomb Wing. He was to relinquish command of the Wing in June, 1957 so that he could attend the Air War College at Maxwell AFB, AL. 103 A noteworthy feature of this officer was that he served a full thirty-six months as Commander of a Schilling Wing and it would not be

Low, who had been the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of "Project
was the 802nd AD Director of Operations, was named to succeed
as. He was a native of Westerly, RI and a graduate of the United
ary Academy, Class of 1942. He had arrived at Schilling on November
serve as Deputy Commander of the 40th Wing. Later, he was trans-
the Director of Operations position. Still later, it was learned
been a POW at Stalag 3 in Germany from July 31, 1944 to the end of
II in Europe. On September 8, 1957, it was announced that he had
ated to attend the Air War College (the second 40th Bomb Wing Comman-
row) at Maxwell AFB, AL during the 1958-1959 session. He was expected
at the base in command of the Wing until school started.

George Y. Jumper, 41, arrived at Schilling on June 27, 1958 and as-
mand of the 40th Wing on July 2, 1958. He was a graduate of the United
ilitary Academy, Class of 1939, and arrived at Schilling from Johnson
an, where he had commanded the 3rd Wing. Then Colonel Jumper suc-
Colonel Ohlke as Commander of the 802nd AD on July 8, 1959. To succeed
lonel Woodward B. Carpenter, who had been on base since May of 1958,
en to succeed him and assumed command of the 40th Wing on July 8, 1959.
Wing was transferred to Forbes on June 20, 1960, he was supposed to
Titan Missile Training at Ellsworth AFB, SD and then take command of
ile Wing there. Somehow, his assignment was changed and on June 17, it
ounced that he would become Deputy Chief for Officer Assignments at

Nothing else is known about this period, Col. George Y. Jumper, Commander of the 310th, the senior Commander on base by virtue of the fact that his was the last left in tact. But even without this, he had been a Commander at least since July 2, 1958 when he assumed command of the 40th Wing.

Of the major units on base was stable during this period. The periods of command occurred in the 802nd ABG immediately after Colonel Johnson relinquished command of the base after forty months in that job. Colonel Burns set a temporary Commander and served two weeks. He was followed by Colonels who served three months and three weeks.

Command records were set during this period. General Wilson set a record as 802nd Air Division Commander by serving twenty-four months three years. Colonel Hein served an even forty months as Base Commander and as Commander of the 802nd ABG. Colonel Burns set a record as Wing Commander by commanding the 40th Wing thirty-six months. These records were permanent in the record book of the base and would never be broken. General Wilson and Colonel Hein would go on to acquire higher rank, but the others would not make it to the rank of permanent Colonel.

**Construction**

Construction of the Atlas and Nike missile complexes occupied the attention of the local press and were the big expenditures made at the base in the way of construction projects during this period. But the missiles were not the only...

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107 *Salina (KS) Journal*, June 3 and 17, 1960. Assignment to a missile unit during this period was not relished by officers who had piloted planes. One officer who had received an assignment to an Atlas unit in this period told this writer that when he received his orders, he went home early sick. He welcomed assignment to Viet Nam later to get out of missiles.
New roads were built, along with a chapel, hospital, business building, and other projects.

Sometimes the Department of Defense even "sprang" surprises on the base by unasked for appropriations for construction projects. The first instance came on May 1, 1957 when the Department of Defense asked Congress for $2 million for construction projects at the base. "No one at the base knew about what the money would be used for." However, no one would object to an intelligence building, a headquarters building for the 802nd Theater, and a second story addition to the 310th Wing Headquarters.

One year later, it happened again. This time the amount requested was $2 million. Again, no one at the base knew what the money was for, although Schilling still wanted a new theater and a chapel.\(^\text{108}\)

Congress approved the construction of a $2.5 million hospital for the base on May 9, 1957. It was to be a two story building with a full basement, of brick or native stone facing, and rated at seventy beds. However, it was not until April 30, 1958 that Olson Construction Company of Omaha, NE, was awarded the contract at $2,290,351.20. Construction was expected to start immediately and take 900 days.\(^\text{109}\) Two additional contracts were released for improvements on base and these went to two local companies: on May 13, 1957, Gage Plumbing and Heating Company was given a $1,655 contract to install ice machines at five locations on base. (It is assumed these were installed in the dining halls.) Socha and Bologoman received a $1395 contract to re-roof a base warehouse.\(^\text{110}\)

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The 22, 1957, a $55,000 road improvement program was underway on the road in the base proper were being repaved with a three-layer asphaltic concrete with expected completion by July 17. Work on an access road to connect the base with Crawford Street to the north to be ready by early 1959. On September 26, 1959, Brown and Brown Construction Company submitted the low bid for the access road at $175,084,607 for a bridge over Dry Creek. Construction moved faster than expected because by December 22, 1958, it was ready for traffic. Schilling announced that the north/south route was to be named "Centennial Road" in honor of his 100th birthday and was "to be a tribute to Salina's pioneers." It survived the base closing and continues to be a major route into the city.

It is doubtful that few know why the road was named that way, considering it is out of place in that area and with the names of other Salina streets. Schilling was the "Golden Anniversary Base" and the title seemed appropriate in ways than one as the base was located in a part of Kansas where 100°F temperatures are common. Thus, it probably made sense that as part of maintenance contracts released between April 20 and May 15, eight office buildings were to be air conditioned.

Lt. Col. Arnold L. Pach, Installation Engineer, accepted a new and modern hangar, complete with its own fire fighting system, and assigned it to the 38th Wing. It was the first hangar built on the base since 1945 and could accommodate four B-47s but six could be squeezed in if necessary. The $2.6 million hangar had 109,000 square feet of floor space and measured 372 feet by 370 feet.

112 Salina (KS) Journal, April 11, September 26, and December 22, 1958.
prior, there were three stories of offices. 114

As a result of these improvements, on April 2, 1959, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which supervised all construction projects on military bases, announced that Schilling was about as permanent as it could be. Projects planned were 44,000 square yards of primary runway paving, a 240-foot control tower, expanded lighting for runway approaches, and an education center, added to the new chapel, but these projects were not related to the missile base.

Construction Industries, Inc., of Salina, submitted a low bid of $538,000 for the construction of a seventy-man readiness crew building. Crews were then housed in temporary buildings which only provided sleeping quarters. They had to eat meals in nearby dining halls and sometimes were farther away from runways than the base planned for them to be. 116

The last structure considered during this period was when Swanson and McLaughlin Construction Company of Minneapolis, MN submitted the low bid of $520,000 for the construction of an Atlas missile assembly building on the base. The government estimate had been $786,320. Work was expected to start in two weeks and was to be completed by November 30, 1960. 117

Community Relations

There were between 6,000 and 8,000 men assigned to Schilling during this period, an indication of what may have been the heyday of base/community relations. Perhaps the national attitude of intense patriotism was responsible for this. Dwight

serving his second and final term as President. George Docking, serving the first of two terms as Governor of Kansas. Everyone, there was a feeling that it was great to be an American and military military draft, while viewed as a nuisance, was tolerated because later, just about every male of military age had to serve two years in the military forces. Patriotism was undoubtedly a factor in Salina’s view of in base/community relations. Another factor was that with as many were were at Schilling, a feud might jeopardize Salina’s economic base then built upon the prevention of war industry.

Honor the Uniform” Week was traditional, the Air Force Jubilee underwent change and came out Schilling Appreciation Day, but continued to be as annual as “Honor the Uniform” Week, and various groups visited the base outings. Salina, in the center of Kansas, still conducts activities to make the men who served at Schilling feel at home.edly, the fact that the base payroll contributed $1.3 million a month to the local economy and the fact that many Salinans had relatives serving in military had something to do with this, but there was probably a certain of community pride. Tradition had been established and it was snowballing an institution.

The pride that Salina felt for the base on its southern doorstep was expressed in a May 12, 1957 editorial in the Salina Journal:

Those who will recall the sad array of tar-paper shacks that was the base in 1950 will be gratified by recent SAC competition between nine bases. The base was rated best in leadership, morale, dining halls, dayrooms, transient officer, and airmen’s quarters. You don’t buy those awards. You work at it and General Wilson and his men are to be commended. They are first rate.

Living with a base that had two Bomb Wings next door brought the danger

attack from enemy bombers. The Salina Journal confessed that they did not know what to do if enemy bombers visited the area. "They may be among the fifty-six million Americans to perish." The Civil Defense plans in Salina had devised evacuation routes to get the 35,000 Salinans out of the fifty-mile danger area because "Schilling is probably a target."\(^{119}\) This population figure included the families of military personnel on the base.

Despite the possibility of annihilation as a consequence of being next to a major base, relations were good and the feeling of goodwill solid throughout the community. An example of this goodwill occurred on June 26, 1958, when it was announced that the base Athletic Director, Lt. Jim Bowman, was working with city officials to provide summer recreation for children both on base and in town.\(^{120}\)

The city rallied around a base request made on October 22, 1958 for better air service from Salina. Schilling wanted three daily flights to Kansas City, two to Denver, one to Omaha, and one to Wichita.\(^{121}\) The base probably needed the flights to assist personnel in their leave plans and in training at other bases while the city saw it as a key for industry appeal. Thus, goodwill on both sides was one of mutual cooperative interests.

Topeka's Daily Capitol heard about Salina and Schilling AFB from an officer who had visited the base. The officer told the editor of the Daily Capitol that no one at Forbes would go downtown Topeka until they

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\(^{120}\) Salina Journal, June 26, 1958.

\(^{121}\) Salina Journal, October 22, 1958.
If their uniform except in an emergency. In Salina, it seemed to reverse. It may be recalled that a goal of Salina had been to attain "another Junction City" when the base opened in 1942 and it was attention in that effort.

Colonel Ohlke left Schilling for his new command at Fairchild AFB, commented on base/community relations in a meeting of his Commanders at

In my entire career in the military service, I have never had support and willing cooperation as the Salina Community has on Schilling. The base has never gone wanting for support which civilian neighbors could provide. In the short time I have been I have come to have many close friends in Salina. My family I shall always remember them for their warm hospitality in ac­

ting us into their community. Ohlke appears to have enjoyed his tour of duty at Schilling, probably as Salina enjoyed having the airmen in the area. Salina clearly saw as an asset to the community and a key role to the defense of the States. On September 23, 1959, the following editorial appeared in the

Salina Journal:

Kruschev (the Premier of Russia) says he wants peace. One of the reasons he wants peace may be found in the hard-working men at Schilling Air Force Base.

Salina should be proud of its contributions to national defense through its support of the base. Frankly, we sometimes forget the real importance of these SAC units to our concern for the cash register. One of the better ways we can support the defense is to make the airmen and their families a part of our healthy community.

Ahead for Schilling is a period of transition from medium to big bombers and to missiles. The habits of friendship, if practiced, are enduring. And the valuable reputation for friendship endures.

Lt. Col. George Matsko was leaving for a new assignment in Japan in

Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 20, 1959.
of 1959. He had been at Schilling three and one-half years as Deputy Operations for the 802nd AD. Schilling had been his fourth Kansas since 1941 and was the best one as far as he was concerned. "I've found people as cooperative as in Salina. My duty at Schilling has been easier because of the city's interest in Schilling and in the welfare of The spirit of Salina is the finest I've seen. If I ever get a chance back to Schilling, I'll be happy to return." Colonel Matsko was person who found Salina different in its relation to the base. "The of friendship, if practiced, are enduring. And the valuable reputation Goodwill

The first acts of goodwill reported during this period were not for Salina other communities. After a storm wiped out power in Natoma, Osborne Kansas in early April, 1957, the base loaned an eleven-ton field gene to that town to restore power. Later that month, in honor of Colonel Schilling, the base began contributing English coinage to restore the Air Force chapel in London, England, which had been destroyed during World Colonel Schilling's last tour of duty had been in England. Men from Schilling continued to be available to address civic groups in area and seven such addresses made it to the pages of the local press. First address was one made by Maj. H. O. Hilton, Munitions Officer at the who addressed a meeting of Salina firemen and explained what could happen loaded bomber crashed in the area. He doubted that anything devastating happen. Nuclear bombs were almost never armed while flying over the con-

126 Salina (KS) Journal, April 4 and 18, 1957.
It was a relief to the area to know that the odds were that if they ever saw a cloud on the horizon, it was not the result of an accident on the base. The base Information Services Office announced on November 8, 1957 that the Bureau had been organized to provide speakers to clubs, schools, and groups who wanted to hear about the Air Force. The base had thirty speakers with a wide Air Force background ready to talk.

Colonel Ohlke, 802nd AD Commander, addressed the Chamber of Commerce breakfast on June 9, 1959 at the Lamer Hotel and in that address assured the Chamber that manned bombers would be around a long time because the "gadgetry" in existence was not that reliable. He forecast that Schilling would get 52 bombers and KC-135 tankers within two years. The last address during this period was presented to the Rotarians on March 1, 1960 in the Lamer Hotel by Lt. Col. John W. Graybill. He spoke about the behind-the-scenes operation of the base and its weapons systems. At this same meeting, Col. James V. Farley was introduced as an "Honorary" Rotarian, representing the base to the group.

Another form of goodwill was the base's contribution to charity drives in the local community. Under General Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, and Maj. Jumper, things seem to have flourished but under Colonel Ohlke, it to have occupied a minor role. It was announced on November 24, 1957 the base planned to give Salina's Community Chest $15,000 instead of an

ally planned $11,000. The base also planned to give $15,000 to the Air Aid Society. Both amounts came from a united fund drive at the base netted $34,234.22. In 1958, the base collected $32,755.30 and gave the city Chest $11,000. In 1959, it was announced that the base had met a of $22,000 for the Community Chest Drive. Before interest was lost by the press in the matter, the base had contributed over $5,000 of its goal and 9th BS of the 310th Wing was the first unit on base to reach 100 percent participation in the drive. This goodwill was reciprocated on June 10, when Bill Chaffee, owner of Chaffee Buick in Salina, presented the Schilling Club with a color TV "for the pleasure of the airmen." Although it be a few years before most programs were in color, the Schilling airmen ready.

Air Force Jubilee
Schilling Appreciation Day

In the last Chapter, Salina and the base had launched "Air Force Jubilee" raise money for various improvements on base. The highlight came in a contest when "Miss Stratojet" was chosen. By 1957, this was a regular on the level of "Honor the Uniform" Week. On June 21, 1957, it was an that plans were being made for the Air Force Jubilee on August 2 and 3 the base. There was to be a bathing suit contest. Lt. Col. William Crawford, City Base Commander, was the project officer. The beauty contest would be to all girls over the age of 18. There would also be several ball games, ter ballet, and a sports car road-e-o. Salinans were reminded that the

133Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, June 11, 1959.
of the Jubilee was to raise money to improve squadron dayrooms and the dining halls. By July 26, 1957, forty women had entered the "Miss Stratojet 57" contest. Admission would cost one dollar a ticket. It was announced the Air Force Jubilee had been a success and the base estimated that about 100 people had attended the festivities. Miss Sharon Youngquist, 18, was "Miss Stratojet, 1957." In another section, the dining hall improvements would be brought up where waitresses were hired. Whether some of the expenses born by money collected from the Air Force Jubilee has not been determined.

Chilling was lucky in the plans for the 1958 Jubilee. It had arranged for the Air Force Thunderbirds, the Air Force's public relations aerobatic team using the F-100C Super Sabre jets, to appear on August 23. The base planned to raise $36,000. A seventeen-year-old girl won the "Miss Stratojet, 1957" beauty contest which was held in the gym because the festivities had outstripped the service club. Thirty-four girls entered the contest. Although it was open to girls over the age of eighteen but this time a girl of nineteen won it.

Although there probably was an Air Force Jubilee which had been renamed Calling Appreciation Day in 1959, it was not reported in the local press. In 1960, the day had been moved to May 14 and usually followed the annual "Open House." The Norman Lee orchestra was to perform for a dance held in the "big" gym. The Thunderbirds (frequently called the "T-Birds") had been invited to perform.

another appearance but were unable to make it. Things were to be done differently this time. Two hundred two-man teams composed of military civilians formed to sell tickets and reported that the "money is rolling an added attraction, models of spaceships would be on display at the well as a model of the Atlas missile being assigned to the area. The of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee was touring the local communities inviting people to see the base. Emphasis was placed on those communities about to get a missile base. 136

between 15,000 and 17,000 people visited the base for Schilling Appreciation Day and the base regarded it as a success. Around 10,000 people had the base in 1959 and the figure compiled by the base made this event most popular ever. One of the most popular spots on base was the B-52 had been opened for tours. 137 Who won the beauty contest was not men- ed. There had been plenty to do and see during the 1960 Schilling Appreciation Day. The theme that year was "Aerospace Power for Peace." At 11:00 A.M. had been an Armed Forces Parade through downtown Salina. Throughout the there were aircraft demonstrations, including helicopter performances. Addition, Schilling's sentry dogs put on demonstrations throughout the day. 138

The Salina Journal commented on the 1960 Schilling Appreciation Day in an editorial on May 16, 1960:

The Salina military and civilian people who planned the base Appreciation Days show now may count the gross and subtract the cost and determine one measure of success of the venture.

The money's the least significant of the objectives of the pro-

Much more valuable is the closeness it promoted between the

tary and civilian segments of the area.

In so many ways, the two are tied together. It remains for the

cation Days and similar programs to bring them together closer

person-to-person basis. When you see a muscular Sergeant holding

child up high for a peek into a jet bomber, or listen to a

Captain explaining to a tanned farmer the workings of its engines,

can say: "Mission Accomplished."\textsuperscript{139}

tradition had been established in Salina and it appeared to be just as

ul as "Honor the Uniform" Week and another mission of bettering relations

the base and the city had been accomplished.

"Honor the Uniform" Week

fifth "Honor the Uniform" Week was held from November 10 to 16, 1957

objective of making the airmen feel at home. The Salina Transit Com-

vided free rides to men in uniform. Over 2,000 people attended the

ingo party held in Memorial Hall as a part of "Honor the Uniform" Week.

vent, special recognition was given to Capt. Edith Spohn as the only

ce woman present.\textsuperscript{140}

by 1958, over 125 towns had expressed an interest in the uniquely Salina

the Uniform" Week which was held that year from November 9 to 15. Thir-

Salina restaurants gave away free coffee to men in uniform. A new

was the "Airman of Honor the Uniform Week" and the 1,111th re-enlistee

honored on November 11. S. Sgt. Kenneth Gordon, 27, an engine mechanic

the 310th FMS, was that individual and he got the use of a Cadillac for

rest of November, 1958. In addition, there was the free Bingo Party and

irmen were guests of the Kiwanis and Lions Clubs in Salina.\textsuperscript{141}

\textsuperscript{139} \textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, May 16, 1960, editorial.

\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, October 15, November 8 and 14, 1957.

\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, October 8, November 6, 7, 11, and 12, 1958.
seventh "Honor the Uniform" Week was held between November 7 and 13, it was the last held in this period. This time, the 711th airman to re-
A2C John E. Shively of the 40th Wing, was honored. There was also the Ward free Bingo Party and "Airman of Honor the Uniform Week." Over prizes were given away, but to receive them the individuals had to wear uniform. Much can be said about "Honor the Uniform" Week, but it was a way of giving Schilling personnel something to look forward to. For one week, the men and their families were special people. It was a little act that meant a lot to people who saw themselves as strangers in the area.

Open Houses/Receptions

Open Houses and Receptions seem to have been a nearly reciprocal arrangement during this period. "Honor the Uniform" Week and Air Force Juibilee were of the base/community relations aspect, but they were commercial in nature. Open Houses and Receptions were different. The Open Houses gave the Air Force an opportunity to show off the base and create a feeling of goodwill. Likewise, Receptions gave Salinans a chance to show a different side of themselves.

Salina went all out in this period for the children and it may have been for enlistment quotas in later years in that many of them undoubtedly revered the hospitality of Schilling when it came time to think about military service.

The first Open House of this period was held on May 18, 1957 to celebrate the fifty-fifth anniversary of military aviation in the United States as well as to commemorate Armed Forces Day. The base was open to the public for four hours. Kids' Day, 1957, the first such event of this period, was held on a

September 28 and was open to boys and girls from elementary grades through nine. Around 1,200 children were expected on base for this event sponsored by the Kiwanis Club. On November 30 and December 1, 1957, even Boy Scouts spent the weekend on base in an encampment. 144

Whether the Salina Journal or Salina Advertiser-Sun devoted much attention to early events. In the early days of this period, the Salina Advertiser-Sun sold to two men from Topeka and the weekly paper concentrated more on events in Salina proper. It is possible that they did not understand the impact the base was having on Salina. As for the Salina Journal, it concentrated on aspects of the base, such as rumors about the future of the base as shown in another section in this Chapter.

A party was held sometime in April, 1958 to welcome the new 802nd Air Division Commander, Col. Harold W. Ohlke and his wife to Salina. Approximately 145 people attended this event which was held at the Salina Country Club. It was the first reception reported which honored base personnel in this period. It is assumed that as popular as General James Wilson, former 802nd AD commander was, that some sort of farewell reception was held in his honor.

Col. Ohlke returned the favor by hosting a reception for about seventy people the night of July 12, 1958. Whitley Austin, editor of the Salina Journal, attended two awards recognizing his role in base/community relations. 146

Schilling hosted a Civil Air Patrol (CAP) encampment between August 16 and 19, 1958. During this encampment, eighty-seven boys and thirty-one girls learned about the Air Force along with their auxiliary role in Air Force opera-

144 Salina (KS) Journal, September 17 and 27, December 1, 1957.
A similar encampment was held from August 16 to 27 in 1959 under similar circumstances. Maj. Gerald Anderson was the project officer both times.\textsuperscript{147} It has been mentioned in other chapters, the Civil Air Patrol was the official auxiliary arm of the Air Force. Adult personnel were officers and furnished the equipment, such as planes. The children held enlisted positions. Equipment such as radios, etc., were furnished from surplus Air Force stocks. Its chief role was helping in rescue missions for downed aircraft in the continental United States as well as assisting in disaster cleanups and searching for lost people.

Kids' Day, 1958 was held on September 28 and there were about 1,500 children in attendance. Boy Scouts from thirty-two Kansas Counties were expected to arrive at the base for a meeting on November 9, 1958.\textsuperscript{148} Plans for Kids' Day, 1959 included inspections of planes assigned to the base and the selection of an Air Base Commander. However, this part was cancelled when the klaxons signalled the start of an alert. A harassed Major summed up Kids' Day by saying: "If there were any doubts about our ability to put bombers on the air quickly, today's alert should have dispelled them. 2,000 youngsters in operations building and rain pouring down outside ought to test the facilities of any base." It was not known if the alert was nation-wide but Kids' Day was a national event.\textsuperscript{149}

The Salina Journal ran an article on October 13, 1959 on how the base aided Boy Scouts passing through Salina. Meals were offered to the first 1,000 that passed through the area on any given day. Capt. Ralph H. McKay, pro-

\textsuperscript{147}Salina (KS) Journal, August 8 and 24, 1958, August 14, 16, and 18, 1959.
\textsuperscript{148}Salina (KS) Journal, September 28 and October 24, 1958.
\textsuperscript{149}Salina (KS) Journal, September 21 and 27, 1959.
later, advertised Salina by including a map of the city and folders
area to inquiries he received about the facilities.\textsuperscript{150}

During this period, the base hosted several groups, such as the Blue Cross/
Red Cross, fire fighters, Mayors, law enforcement groups, etc.

When missiles came to the area, there was an interest in the problems
communities would encounter with missiles at their door steps. On February
6, the North Central Kansas Peace Officers Association held a meeting on
"Discuss the effect the missiles would have on the area. Lt. Col. Robert
Hey, Deputy Commander for Security and Law Enforcement, hosted the affair
and 200 in attendance. He addressed the group on the security problem
fact that with missile sites in the area, they might be visited by
"with an unnatural interest in the missiles and how they should react.\textsuperscript{151}

February 19, 1960, the Military Affairs Committee of the Salina Chamber
manned out plans for five events to fete Schilling AFB personnel in
The first was to be a formal dinner party on February 29 at the Salina
Club honoring the Schilling NCO Council, First Sergeants, and their

In April, there was to be a cocktail party for the Junior Officer Coun-
their wives; a Command Personnel Reception would be held in September;
"Honor the Uniform" Week would be held in November. Plans were
finalized for Schilling Appreciation Day in May.\textsuperscript{152} Note the absence of
plans for a stag dinner for junior enlisted personnel such as the two that
held in 1955 and 1956. It would be interesting to find out why this event
was discontinued.

\textsuperscript{150}Salina (KS) Journal, October 13, 1959.
\textsuperscript{151}Salina (KS) Journal, February 12 and 16, 1960.
\textsuperscript{152}Salina (KS) Journal, February 19, 1960.
the monthly Chamber of Commerce breakfast held on March 22, 1960 in the
central area, members of the 310th ARS crew which won SAC's Crew of the Month
for February were honored. More than 100 members of the Chamber of Commerce
were in attendance at this event. O. L. Daniels was Master of Ceremonies and
described the recognition extended to the crew as a part of the friendly
relationship that prevailed between the base and the community.¹⁵³

The last affair held during this period was an Open House held on May 14.
Approximately 10,000 people visited the base. A featured attraction at this event
was a tour of a C-124 Globemaster transport plane, then the largest such plane
in the Air Force inventory.¹⁵⁴ The C-130 and C-141 were not in existance at
that time but would come along in the 1960s. The former was a turbo-prop and
the latter was a jet. At this time, jets were being used more for war planes
but a only jet that could be converted to use as a cargo plane was the KC-135,
primarily a refueling transport.

Morale

Morale, always a factor in how well a military unit will perform its assigned
mission, was very high at Schilling and can probably be considered excel-
Hall in Salina (leaving the officers to run the base) which was the only place where all of the enlisted force could be assembled en masse for an orientation on the Air Force mission. Approximately 3,200 enlisted personnel attended this briefing. Colonel Low, Commander of the 40th Wing, addressed the group and stated his belief that World War III would be fought with the forces in existence because no buildup or mobilization would be possible. At least the men received an honest appraisal of where they stood in that was then envisioned as possible. However, note that only 3,200 personnel were reported as having been in attendance. This left at least 800 personnel unaccounted for. Apparently, not all of the enlisted personnel were required to attend or else many suddenly decided to go on leave.

After nearly nine years at Schilling, M. Sgt. Arnold Guilford was being sent to Iceland for a tour of duty there. Sergeant Guilford had been serving the longest of anyone, having arrived in Salina during August, 1949. While the base was closed between 1949 and 1951, he was Sergeant Major of the caretaker force on base.156

Not everyone anticipated an assignment to Schilling with glee. An English-born wife of an Air Force Sergeant threatened to divorce him if he received orders to Kansas. He received orders to Schilling and the unidentified Sergeant written the Secretary of the Air Force a ten page letter in an attempt to have his orders changed, the results of which were not revealed. There was a club of English-born wives in Salina who had formed a club and they expressed their thought that Salina was a nice assignment.157

In this period, Schilling had its own near celebrity in the person of Colonel Bruce Rogers whose brother, Buddy Rogers, was married to In March, 1958 and again in February, 1960, Buddy Rogers, who were radio stations in Kansas, and his famous wife, visited Colonel Rogers base while in Kansas on radio business. Colonel Rogers was Deputy Base for Materiel. 158

President Eisenhower signed a pay raise bill in 1958 which was projected $89,475 a month to the payroll. In Chapter Five of this paper, this showed how easy it was to determine how many people were assigned to the The Salina Journal made this even easier by revealing how much money made. The minimum raise was six percent and the paper even provided the old rate of pay had been. All rates were computed at the two year

An Airman Basic was $98.80 to $105 with the pay raise; A3C $101.40/$108; A1C $140.40/$150; S. Sgt. $163.80/$180; T. Sgt. $187.20/$200; A3A $222.30/$236; Warrant Officer 1 (W. O. 1) $251.20/$266; W. O. 2 $281/W. O. 3 $323.70/$343; W. O. 4 $354.90/$376; 2nd Lt. $237.12/$251; 1st Lt. $291; Capt. $351/$372; Maj. $429/$455; Lt. Col. $507/$540; Col. $631.80/and Brig. Gen. $850.20/$860. 159

Life in the barracks was also a factor that had to be considered in morale. In last Chapter, it was revealed that Colonel Thacker, Base Commander, had his squadron Commanders to live in the barracks for a week. This may have helped in permitting men leeway in making their rooms livable. By 1959, men had purchased plush chairs and divans for their "moderately sized"

158 Salina (KS) Journal, March 27, 1958 and February 12, 1960. The Rogers' natives of eastern Kansas and graduates of the University of Kansas. Buddy Pickford were former movie stars.

Some men had even installed wall-to-wall carpeting. As of November 22, 1959, Schilling had the only "hotel" in SAC and transient and newly arrived personnel were not allowed to stay there. It had carpeted floors and semi-bathrooms as well as piped-in music, maid service, and a snack bar.

Schilling had the only "hotel" in SAC and it had carpeted floors and semi-bathrooms as well as piped-in music, maid service, and a snack bar. Unique and innovative by the base with one of the highest re-enlistment rates in SAC as a means of keeping transient airmen happy and retaining them. This made it clear that the building was not a "lavish" facility designed to provide "every traveler what they deserve--a decent place to until a permanent home is found." This facility was operated by the Base Office. Today, every base has similar quarters which are often furnished than the barracks and one suspects to encourage the airmen to remain on the base for TDYs.

A storm arose in late 1959 when it was learned that Forbes AFB, Topeka, implemented a "buddy system" to keep track of its enlisted personnel and keep them out of trouble. The furor was that what the enlisted personnel thought was off duty was no one else's business and that it smacked of tactics used by and Russia's KGB. This article revealed that Schilling also used the "buddy system" and it worked. NCOs kept a lookout for their personnel but not those personnel were off duty unless the individual was one who constantly got into trouble. "Dear Sal: Said the World War II vintage top-kick to the third: 'I'm not your buddy: I'm your sergeant!' Yours, Ina." Whether was a SAC innovation or not is unknown. This writer did not encounter

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like it while he was in the Air Force and did not hear of anything from his Air Force friends.

usual were plans for a 310th Bomb Wing reunion during the close of this General Wilson, former Commander of the 802nd AD, arrived in Salina 1, 1960 to make plans for the reunion. The initial plans were for an 'rs' gathering, but there would also be a get together with the enlisted base. 163

Work Hours

Working conditions also affected morale; specifically, the time one worked. announced on April 26, 1957 that the base was going on "summer working effective April 29, 1957. The 310th Wing and 802nd ABG would start work 30 A.M. and leave at 4:00 P.M. while the 40th Wing kept the 7:30 A.M. to P.M. hours. At the same time, optional wear of the khaki uniforms began April 26 and mandatory wear started on May 11. 164

As a result of the 310th Wing placing first in a recent Pacesetter competi-
tion and the 40th Wing also placing high, General Wilson, 802nd AD Commander, most of the base a four-day holiday for the 1957 Memorial Day period as a reward for their successful efforts. 165

Unrelated in a way to this section but offering a view of morale, was an article that appeared on December 15, 1957 which announced that the base had placed a five-foot tall Christmas tree atop the rotating beacon on the base tower, making it 128 feet high. It was placed there by personnel in the

was followed by an announcement that flying had ended on December 22, 1957 but essential work had been eased until January 6, 1958. SAC regaled actual leave for more than 15 percent of base personnel at one time. This was a Christmas present from General Wilson to Schilling for helping make it one of the best bases in SAC. By 1976, the regiment had been written that one had to be within phone-call range which was noted by many to be anywhere in the United States and this was frequently advantageous.

1958 and 1959, the Salina Journal reported that the men of Schilling were giving the nation a Christmas present by remaining on alert. None of them received a Christmas bonus and most of the base had to be available to return to the base within a few minutes. There would be a minimum number on the base at all times in order to get one-third of the planes in the air while the others were waiting to take their positions. There were decorations and a special dinner to be served in the base dining halls. In addition, the 310th ARS was planning a Christmas party for thirty-four children from the Wichita Orphan's Home and the base chapel was planning to conduct special Christmas services.

Dining Halls

Throughout this period, the dining halls on base fed the personnel at the rate of 3,000 meals a day during the holidays served traditional meals. But in November, 1957, something new was tried and reached the attention of the press on April 7, 1959.

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Armed airmen at Schilling found it hard to believe that such a system, having waitresses wait on them, existed in the Air Force or for that anywhere in the military. This plan had been devised in 1957 by CWO E. Lewis, Food Service Commander, and M. Sgt. Cleveland Kilpatrick, or. The reasoning behind this system was that more time could be spent job by the airmen who would normally have to spend time on KP as well ting morale and providing a more comfortable atmosphere in the dining. It worked and was believed to help the re-enlistment rate as a result increased prestige of having someone wait on them in the dining halls.

The time that this article appeared, there were twenty-seven waitresses in the three base dining halls who worked two shifts; from 6:00 A.M. to M. and from 10:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. The waitresses were paid through a charge which averaged three cents per meal and was charged to airmen who took their meals in the dining halls. A fourth dining hall, long on the flight line and used primarily by fire department personnel on a four hour alert, was also open to those persons who did not wish to pay service charge. But personnel who ate there had to take their turn on KP. Sergeant Kilpatrick reported that the business was all but nil there for fire department personnel. 169

Commanders were described as enthusiastic about the program and they thought program had been instrumental in Schilling's accomplishing its mission and to be proof that "satisfied people can do a better job." In the pre- year, Schilling had won such titles as the "Golden Anniversary Base," Effective B-47 Wing in SAC," "Tops in Reenlistments with 1464," "Second Wing in SAC's Navigation Competition," and "The First Golden Boom Air Re- 169Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, April 7, 1959.
Dependents

40th Wing dependents got together for a party on August 12, 1957 in Oak Dale Park. The 40th Wing was TDY and movies were taken to be sent by the Base Information Office to show the men what their families were doing. Over 200 dependents turned out for this affair.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, August 12, 1957.}

In September 18, 1958, the 310th Field Maintenance Squadron (FMS) had an open house for the wives and children of its personnel so that they could see what the men did. There were three sections in this Squadron; power plant, \textit{and} aero repair. The Squadron was charged with much of the maintenace which kept the B-47s and KC-97s in the air.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, September 18, 1958.}

The wives of airmen and officers were invited to attend the Family Services Day being held on October 22 and 23, 1959. It was to be held in the Officers' Club theater and such topics as services, aid, and information services that were available to Air Force families would be discussed. The manager of the Salina Chamber of Commerce would also meet with the group and outline Salina's Chamber of Commerce's services to the residents. Colonel Mullins, Base Commander, would present certificates of accomplishment to those who attended.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, October 21, 1959.}

By February 14, 1960, the \textit{Salina Journal} published an article about the Family Services office on base. There were more than 140 wives in Family Services who donated their time. In 1959, more than 3,000 people were helped by

\footnote{Ibid.}
Spiritual Affairs

Spiritual guidance continued to contribute to morale during this period. On November 9, 1957, ground was broken for a new chapel on base which could seat 350 people. Its location was east of the commissary. Construction of the new edifice was completed by June 3, 1958 and was dedicated on July 13. The building was 112 feet long and sixty-three feet wide. By this time, services were being held for Jews and Christian Scientists on base.175

In a 1959 article on military marriages on base, the Chaplains revealed that about three-fourths of the marriages performed in the base chapel found room in civilian clothes. Chaplains Earl Allison, Methodist, and Ray F., Lutheran, performed most of the marriages.176 Capt. Christian G. Ks, Roman Catholic, returned to Schilling in 1959. In early 1952, he had three months at the reactivated base in his first military assignment being transferred to Nome, Alaska. He was a native of Rochester, NY. His second assignment to the base was his sixth military assignment.177

It figures out to about one year to an assignment which means that he was transferred frequently. Charles E. Smith had been a Captain when he was assigned to the base as a Protestant Chaplain in 1952. He served until 1958 when a reduction-in-force (RIF) caused him to be dismissed from active duty because he held a reserve commission. He promptly enlisted as a Tech Sergeant and was named Historian of the 310th Wing. At the same time, he was appointed pastor.

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First Baptist Church in Canton, KS. On February 19, 1960, the fifty-old Historian and Minister died in an automobile accident five miles Salina, KS on US 81.  

Clubs

At the start of this period, it was revealed that the Aero Club at the four planes. A1C Max Pfauntsch was President, Capt. Charles P. was Vice President, and Maj. John Creel, a B-47 Aircraft Commander, Instructor for the Club.  

In the previous chapter of this paper, it was revealed that the NCO Club of a package liquor store. Something must have happened, because in 1957, Congressman Wint Smith was protesting a proposed liquor store base because he felt that the consumption of liquor should be discouraged in the military. The Air Force endorsed the idea of a liquor store on base because the nearest such store was six miles away. But the Congressman announced on September 17 that the base would not get the store.  

Both the Officers and NCO Clubs were remodeled during this period. On September 18, 1959, the remodeled Officers Club opened. Around $270,000 was spent on the remodeling project. The Norman Lee Orchestra provided the music for the opening night. The remodeled NCO Club opened on May 1, 1960. Woods Construction Company of Salina received the $50,000 remodeling contract and outbid twenty-two other firms for the job. During the remodeling period,

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180 Salina (KS) Journal, August 16 and September 17, 1957.
Club was closed.\textsuperscript{182}

Difficulties

A total of fourteen articles appeared in the local press regarding deaths involving personnel assigned to the base. Four of the deaths were total and occurred in three accidents, one of which was the crash of a C-124 with two Schilling men on it who had hitched a ride to return to base from a military school at Altus AFB, OK.\textsuperscript{183} The first incident reported was on May 2, 1957 when an NCO living in Phillips Village was charged with arson and held in the Saline County jail pending the setting of a $1,000 bond. He was charged with setting fire to his car two miles south of Smolan on the Burma Road.\textsuperscript{184} The outcome of this matter was learned through the local press. A twenty-year old Airman, who was a member of the 310th FMS, was found shot to death in north Salina on August 11, 1957. TheIDENT of the area was charged with the shooting. He claimed that the airman had been prowling in the neighborhood and he had merely meant to hold him until the Police arrived. The resident was later charged with involuntary manslaughter and acquitted.\textsuperscript{185} On September 27, 1957, a twenty-six year old NCO who had been arrested for trial in Wichita, KS with eight others caught in a June 7 marijuana raid. He was charged with the possession of marijuana.\textsuperscript{186} This was the last such incident reported in this period.

A little over a year later, a twenty-nine year old Supply Sergeant for the

\textsuperscript{182}Salina (KS) \textit{Journal}, December 2, 1959 and May 1, 1960.
\textsuperscript{184}Salina (KS) \textit{Advertiser-Sun}, May 2, 1957.
\textsuperscript{185}Salina (KS) \textit{Journal}, August 11, 12, and 25, 1957.
\textsuperscript{186}Salina (KS) \textit{Journal}, September 22, 1957.
40th Wing, was charged by the FBI with theft, embezzlement, and con-
to his own use of federal government property. A ton-and-a-half truck
stolen property was found at his trailer home in Smolan, south of the
The Sergeant had been in the Air Force thirteen years and at Schilling
April, 1955. Like many of the incidents reported in this era, the
of this case was not revealed in sources available to this writer. Then,
-ty-four year old enlisted member of the 310th ARS, who had been on the
three years, with the second degree murder of his three-year old stepson.
irteen-year old wife was a waitress and at work when the murder took place.
the murder, the airman had told his supervisor that there was something
the boy that he resented and immediately after the murder, he called his
on Commander and told him that he had "done something wrong." He was then
in the Saline County jail. The outcome of this matter was not reported.
The only suicide reported during this period was reported on May 17, 1959.
irteen-year old airman was found dead on base with a suicide note. A native
onton, GA, he had been at Schilling six months. The Office of Special In-
gations (OSI), the Air Force's detective agency, was investigating the

A twenty-four year old First Lieutenant who was a member of the 347th BS,
charged of fourth degree manslaughter and was freed on $2,000 bond. He
Police that he accidentally shot his twenty-five year old wife while he
leaning his .22 pistol at 9:30 P.M. on October 22 while she was lying on
floor watching TV. There were no signs of a scuffle. The Lieutenant

187 Salina (KS) Journal, October 25, 1958. He may have been inspired by the
popular TV series "Sergeant Bilko."
not guilty.\textsuperscript{190} The verdict of this case was not discovered. During the night of November 11, 1959, a twenty-year old airman who was from the 40th OMS, robbed a Concordia, KS service station and kidnapped a local attorney, his wife, and daughter, and held them hostage for an extended period before releasing them. He was later apprehended five miles northeast of Concordia on a farm by a force of twenty-five men and taken to the Cloud County Jail in Concordia. On November 15, he was charged with three counts of second degree robbery and first degree kidnapping. When sentence was passed on him to an indefinite term in the Kansas Industrial Reformatory at Junction City, the charges had been reduced to second degree on both counts.\textsuperscript{191}

The last incident reported during this period was on May 3, 1960. Two men were arrested by the FBI and charged with the theft of government property. They stole brass and salvaged batteries between September, 1959 and January, 1960.

There were fourteen incidents reported during this period and of that number, two were in 1959. Both murders and the only suicide occurred in that year. The kidnapping was followed through by the local press for some reason, so the outcome of these incidents is unknown. (Perhaps the interest in the kidnapping case was heightened by the murder of the Clutter family in Holcomb, KS at the same time had something to do with this.)

\textsuperscript{190}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, October 23, 26, and 28, 1959. Fourth degree manslaughter was defined by statute as the involuntary killing of another by a blow. The punishment was confinement for a term not exceeding two years or imprisonment in the County jail for not less than six months.

\textsuperscript{191}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, November 12, 15, 1959 and January 15, 1960. First degree kidnapping was punishable by a maximum penalty of death or life imprisonment and a minimum penalty of not less than twenty years imprisonment.

Civilians

At the start of this period, there were 376 civilians employed at Schilling. In early 1957, there were 376 civilians employed at Schilling. 193

had lost thirty-five civilian employees through a reduction-in-force early 1957. On August 7, 1957, rumors were circulating that another in the offing but the base had received no official word about the 193

The Salina Advertiser-Sun revealed on September 26, 1957 that fifty-

Civilian employees had been informed that as of October 15 they would be off as a result of the Department of Defense's economy program. This leave 321 civilians on base and the base believed that this would be the 193

If for awhile. 194

Civilian personnel at the base were probably recognized throughout this

for their performance but the only time it reached the press was on 193

13, 1959. On that date, ten civilian employees of the 802nd Medical

were presented Sustained Superior Performance cash awards. Col. Robert

802nd Medical Group and Hospital Commander, made these presentations. 195

increases of one to twenty cents an hour for 145 civilian employees was

anced on October 22, 1959 and were effective on October 25. The raises

for construction workers and laborers employed under the Wage Board pro-

ms of the Civil Service. Laborers were to have their hourly wage increased

$1.48 to $1.57. On December 24, 1959, several Civil Service job openings

be base were announced for men and women. Men were needed in the fields

adio repair, electrician, air conditioning, and refrigeration. The starting

was between $2.19 and $2.75 an hour. There were positions for women as

194Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, September 26, 1957.
assistants and grocery checkers with an average wage of $300 a month.  

Leadership Schools

As attention was paid to the enlisted leadership schools during this than in the first period of this era. Twelve Master Sergeants graduated the 8th AF NCO Academy in May of 1957. But one year later, M. Sgt. Robert Back, 25th BS, 40th Wing, won three of the six awards distributed to es of the 8th AF NCO Academy. He won the Commandant's award, Student Mer, and Master-at-Drill awards. M. Sgt. Robert L. Bierma, 802nd Head-
rs Squadron, won the Honor Graduate Award. Schilling was the first base four out of six awards and Sergeant Bizzack was the first man to win of the awards offered.

It was announced on September 4, 1958 that A2C John E. Woods, 310th AES, become the first Schilling man chosen to attend the Air Force Academy Prep al. He was to report to Fort Belvoir, VA no later than September 15, 1958. was where the school was located in 1958.

By January 9, 1959, the 802nd Leadership School had changed its name to CO Prepatory School. Class 58-J graduated at services held in the Service Auditorium. Twenty-three A1Cs, one S. Sgt., and three A1Cs from the Air Academy received diplomas. No mention was made whether the curriculum been changed or remained the same when the name of the school was changed.

Recognition

There were probably more promotions and recognition for a good job made

196 Salina (KS) Journal, October 22 and December 24, 1959.
this period but little of it reached the local press. Between June 7, and September 4, 1959, there were seven groups of promotions reported for a total of 350 promotions. Included in this group were seven "spot" promotions announced on June 27, 1958 by Col. Jean Miller, Commander of the 310th Air Refueling Wing. This was an incentive device created by General Curtis LeMay when he was commander of SAC to recognize personnel for outstanding performance but where no rank vacancy existed. It was a temporary-type promotion which lasted only until the next promotion rosters were announced.

There were five reports of recognition for Airmen and Crews of the Month in August 3, 1958 and January 29, 1960. On August 3, 1958, it was announced that the Lamer Hotel was inviting Airmen of the Month to "live it up" for a weekend with everything being on the house. "This three day life of Riley is the Lamers' way of showing appreciation to the outstanding airmen at Schilling," said hotel owner H. R. Lamer. The last award was to a 310th ARS KC-97 crew as SAC's Crew of the Month (and later honored at a Salina Chamber of Commerce breakfast) for overcoming an in-flight emergency and completing its mission in September, 1959.

Between September 11, 1958 and May 13, 1960 nine men received medals. CWO H. Swanson received the Legion of Merit for service between July 11, 1954 and July 15, 1957 for developing automotive maintenance techniques which were adopted by the Air Force. T. Sgt. Amos N. Prisock, 310th OMS, received the Air Force Medal on May 13, 1960 for saving a woman and five children from a fire.


apartment building in Salina on August 2, 1959.202

The staff of the Manhattan (KS) Mercury visited Schilling in May of 1959 and was impressed with what they had seen. "Seldom have we seen an example of the type evident at Schilling, ably commanded by Colonel Harold Be." There was also praise for the high re-enlistment rate and what it meant to the taxpayers and national defense.203

During this period, no articles concerning the suggestion program appeared in the local press. It almost appears that Schilling was being taken for granted. Morale of the base had worn off and in late 1959, the announcement that 40th Air Base was coming and the 40th Wing leaving was probably more newsworthy than the cyclical promotions and suggestions. Another thing which may have affected the newsworthiness of the base to the local press was that Mr. Knox had transferred the Salina Advertiser-Sun to two Topeka men and Salina Journal's John Kellor had been transferred to other duties. The former provided incentive for the latter and the latter's reporter kept things going until he left.

Retention

Undoubtedly morale was high at Schilling during this period. The Manhattan Mercury was impressed with what it saw. This writer believes that the base/community relations played a very significant role in this. While there is no such thing as a Utopia, Salina tried to make the men of Schilling think that Salina was as close as they were going to get. The Salina Journal was constantly trying its readers that Schilling was the best base in the Air Force. The men in the base had to be affected by this because this paper was the major daily paper in the area and this, in turn, may have shown up in Schilling's reten-

The major motive was to avoid trouble but also to keep the base open and that had happened in 1949.

The first statistics of this period presented concerning retention appeared in Impact's (the base newspaper) June 7, 1957 edition. Smoky Hill retained 54.8% of its enlisted personnel eligible for retention. A little over a month later, Impact announced that 805 men had re-enlisted in June setting an Air Force record and saving the Air Force $1.9 million in funds that it might have used to train replacements. Major reasons given for remaining in the service by Schilling's re-enlistees were: "Top-notch recreational and living conditions, NCO Councils, and base/community relations." 204

One week later, Impact announced that the base had assigned a vehicle with a driver to pick up those individuals who were re-enlisting but who did not have transportation, drive them to the re-enlistment office and around the base for their physical, other stops in the "paper work schedule," and finally to the finance office for their re-enlistment bonus. Hot and cold drinks were available in the re-enlistment office for the airmen while they waited for paperwork to be processed. 205

Schilling continued to climb upward in its efforts to keep as many men as possible in the Air Force. In July, 1957, 78.7 percent or 140 out of 178 eligible men re-enlisted. Schilling set an 8th AF record in August when 75 percent or ninety-three men re-enlisted. An improvement had been made in the re-enlistment office by air conditioning it. There was even a bowl with two goldfish in it to amuse the re-enlistees. 206

204 Impact, June 7 and July 12, 1957.
205 Impact, July 19, 1957.
206 Impact, August 9 and September 6, 1957.
a editorial in the Salina Journal which appeared on September 16, 1957
example of Salina's interest in the base. Although the military would
be a pay raise in 1958, the military was still having a problem of keeping
men in the service once their initial period of service was over. The
Journal recognized this but announced that Schilling continued to lead
in AF in re-enlistments. "...Unlike in other places, Schilling people
they are the best and know that it is important to keep at their best.
years a lot." 207

Three months later, it was announced that over 1,000 airmen and NCOs had
listed at the base in 1957, which was 50 percent of those eligible. Of
number, 168 were first-term airmen which seemed to indicate high morale
base. In 1957, according to the Salina Journal, it cost $14,870 to train
equip a first-term airman. 208 Incredible as it may seem, this writer and
colleagues who went through basic training in 1975 were told that it only
cost $10,000 to train them.
The above article appeared on a Sunday. By December 19, 1957, the 200th
first-term airman had re-enlisted. A1C Gary Fetsch, a member of the 40th Wing,
that person and received the congratulations of General Sweeney, Commander
the 6th AF, and Colonel Low, 40th Wing Commander. Another light went on in
a "Tree of Peace" in which a light on a Christmas tree was turned on for
100th enlistment with each SAC base assigned a different color. 209
The next day, Schilling announced that it had probably won $2,500 in prizes
SAC in its re-enlistment contest. First, $1,500 was to be given to the

With the most first-term re-enlistments from November 1 to December 20. $1.000 was to go to the base with the most re-enlistments during the period. Since November 20, the base had re-enlisted 178. The 802nd ABG tripled its rate with seventy-seven, while the 310th and 40th Bomb Wings doubled their with fifty-four and forty-seven, respectively. The 8th AF led SAC with re-enlistments. (Schilling was an 8th AF base.) It was formally announced on January 30, 1958 that the base had won the re-enlistment rate in SAC. Schilling received an additional honor by receiving the "Golden Anniversary Base" title. On February 3, 1958, General Thomas Powers, Commander of the 8AF, presented a check for $2,500 to General James Wilson, Commander of the SAC, who announced that the money would be used for base facility improvements.

Re-enlistments at Schilling continued to be high in 1958 despite the change in Commanders in the 802nd AD. A2C Gerhardt Hallman, 40th ARS, was the first man to re-enlist as of September 14, 1958. Thus far, Schilling was running ahead of its 1957 rate. It appears that Colonel Ohlke was able to maintain the momentum started by his predecessor, General Wilson.

At 1:00 P.M. on Friday, February 6, 1959, the 1,464 men who had re-enlisted the base in 1958, a record for SAC and probably the Air Force, met on the flight line and, in formation, spelled out SAC's motto: "Peace Is Our Profession." Part of the re-enlistment credit was due to the base's harmonious relationship with Salina and was remarkable considering "the low pay and arduous duty." The Air Force was having a problem retaining trained personnel and

\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, December 20, 1957.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, January 30 and February 3, 1958.}\]
\[\text{Salina (KS) Journal, September 14, 1958.}\]
2,464 men re-enlisted during this period, which was about one-third of the force assigned to Schilling at the time. Unfortunately, seldom percentages reported. When one considers that the Air Force had four and one enlistment terms in effect at this time, the fact that this many men re-enlist at a base in the middle of Kansas can only be attributed to the morale at the base and competent leadership. Schilling's personnel were frequently reminded by the Salina Journal that they were the best. The fact that at least 2,464 men re-enlisted during this period seems to indicate that they believed it. The figures for 1959 were not reported so it is difficult to determine how many actually re-enlisted during this period, but since it was reported, one can assume that the rate was lower and not the best in the force, SAC, or the 15th AF, to which Schilling returned in 1959.

Visitors

After the bally-hoo of the renaming festivities of March 15, 1957 died at the start of this period, there were only twenty-three high-ranking visitors reported. It seems probable that given the mission of the base in the period, that this was a fairly accurate figure although it seems strange that the two Senators from Kansas and the six Kansas Congressmen did not pay a visit. The first visit reported was that of eleven NATO officers who visited the base one day on April 28, 1957. On September 27, 1959 a group of twenty-NATO officers, representing eleven NATO countries, visited the base to observe how it performed its mission. Both reported tours were part of a nation-tour.

General Sweeney, Commander of the 8th AF, was the first Commander to visit in this period on May 29, 1957. He made two other visits before the took over jurisdiction of the base on January 1, 1959. During each he always insisted that he looked forward to visiting Schilling. But this May 20, 1958 visit where he got to observe how well the base per- its mission. Just before he left that day, an alert was called and the watched the men scramble into action and commented that Schilling had the "How-to-do-it" base and that other SAC units were sending men to see to see how they could do their jobs as well as Schilling. Other iders who visited the base included General Powers, who had served on the in 1943, Maj. Gen. Charles B. Dougher, 8th AF Deputy Commander, General ommander of the 15th AF, Maj. Gen. W. T. Hudnell, Commander of the Main- ce Division at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, and Col. George Wilson, Chief ain of SAC. An 8th AF inspection team was on base in July, 1957 and rated base outstanding and number one amongst the ten 8th AF bases. Schilling d 882 out of 1,000 points and was the only base rated outstanding by the This meant that the visit was pleasant and agreeable to both Two former Commanders visited the base during this period and one of them ited it four times. Brig. Gen. William L. Lee, Commander of Amarillo AFB, made two reported visits to the base to visit friends in Salina. His first it was in January, 1958 and he expressed amazement at the many improvements had been made and were being made at the base. After a second visit, ter that year, nothing more is heard about him. Brig. Gen. James W. Wilson

visits to Salina during this period, the first of which was on July 15, 1957. Yet each time General Lee visited Salina, he was given of fanfare.

Adm. Howard Yeager and Com. Halsey Hines, both naval officers and of the area, visited Schilling AF B and the area on June 20, 1958. They at the ramp by Colonel Ohlke, 802nd AD Commander, and Lt. Col. Hein, mander. The significance of this visit was not that the officers at Schilling in a Navy plane but that the article appeared in the Salina lina Journal.

President Eisenhower, who had been reared in Abilene, KS, made his last to the base while he was President during this period. The first visit, forth since he had been elected President, was on October 19, 1958. He honored by a guard of airmen standing at attention from the flight line to in gate. His reason for the visit was to visit Abilene and he left the day with less ceremony. His last visit was on October 13, 1959 and covered in greater detail. He was met at the foot of the unloading ramp rity Sergeants, all graduates of an Air Force NCO Academy, as an honor. At the end of this line stood the four Schilling Commanders of the major on base and their wives and they exchanged greetings with the President.

Hilling, the President got on a helicopter which took him to Abilene at 6 AM. He was only on the base for fifteen minutes. When he left the next return to Washington (he had spent the night in Abilene), he was presented scroll with birthday greetings from the men of Schilling by a delegation major Schilling Commanders. "The President read the two by four foot and thanked the group, smiling broadly." The scroll had been made by Francis J. Williams. 220

The rest of the visitors during this period received sparse coverage or was deemed unimportant to the mission of the base. All of these visitors greeted by at least the Base Commander or his deputy and often were greeted 802nd Air Division or a Wing Commander. In the articles covering President Eisenhower's visits, the Salina Journal always referred to the base as a Base."

Housing

With the base building housing on its east side, housing should not have a problem during this period, but it appears that the situation had not. There seems to have been a reluctance by the real estate developers to something about the situation and by the end of this period, it appears have been critical. At the start of this period, there were two bomb wings or an air division, but by the close of this period, it was evident that 40th Wing was leaving for Topeka, the Army and many construction ers were coming into the area to build and operate the missile sites.

On April 19, 1957, with 535 Capehart units nearing completion at Schilling, base revealed that it had asked the Air Force for 555 more Capehart units. approved, NCOs would get 320 of the new units and officers would be allotted

Base units would cost $9 million to build and help ease the housing shortage in Salina. Of course, the realtors in Salina objected to the request and stated that there was no housing shortage in Salina. 221

W. E. Miller wrote a letter to the editor of the Salina Journal on April 19, 1957, reminding Salina that Salina had promised the Air Force adequate housing before it returned in 1951. "At the time of the base reactivation, Salina promised almost everything under the sun to get the base. Now that the base is here, the needs of the base are ignored." 222 Yes, Salina had promised to even form Salina, Inc., which was never heard from after it was formed. Coincidental, of course, that the Salina Journal ran an editorial on the very same page that Mrs. Miller's letter appeared, supporting her quest for more housing for Schilling personnel.

"...No plan has been proposed for the group that needs housing the most—the families of the Airmen Basic through SSgt. An A3C receives $101.40 a month for quarters and $77.10 for rations. It is not much better for an A1C. ...A government-sponsored program is needed for these people. ...Salina should support a program which would improve and encourage re-enlistment." 223

The last sentence of that editorial is interesting. First, the normal stories about the base during this period were on how great morale was and how well the men at Schilling were doing. The units at Schilling were winning their share of awards. Lastly, 1957 and 1958 were to be the peak years for enlistment in the history of the base. If morale needed improving, the Air Force would have failed to retain so many men. It can only be assumed that the Salina Journal was supporting an Air Force bandwagon and hopeful that the Air Force would continue to support Salina.

222 Salina (KS) Journal, April 24, 1957, letter to the editor.
223 Ibid., editorial.
would not get any ideas about closing the base.

By September 18, 1958, the base had reduced its request to 538 more Cape-
mits. Already, 535 units had been completed. But, the article revealed, 1,283 of the 3,166 married personnel assigned to the base lived in adequate
and 541 of that number lived in Schilling Manor on base. There were
thirty families living in Phillips Village, which, as it may be re-
from Chapter Five of this paper, the Air Force Times had revealed to be
standard and that the Air Force had plans to raze as soon as the base
project was finished. On October 1, 1958, a special Salina Chamber of
force committee endorsed more housing for the base provided that one-third
was for the lower-enlisted grades. "An acute need exists for adequate
rs for junior airmen with families."225

The Salina Journal placed the blame on the government and urged it to pro-
more housing and to provide adequate housing for junior airmen with fami-
in its October 2, 1958 editorial.

...Pay and allowances are not enough for many of them (junior
airmen) to rent or buy decent homes at present prices. ...If this
nation wants to keep good men in the Air Force of all grades, it
must provide for their families. ...It is most desirable the Air
Force families remain a part of this community--and not isolated as
if they had the plague. Good community relations have been one of
the reasons for Schilling's top rank. ...We are short of housing
for all purposes now.226

There is little more that can be added, as junior enlisted personnel have always
at the short end of the pay scale. They are, like their civilian counter-
ts, merely apprentices at the start of their service in the military. The

le and allowances increase significantly once they re-enlist and some
that as an enticement to re-enlist because from then on, the pay and al-
es are safely above the minimum subsistance levels.
However, Congressman Wint Smith, who represented the District that included
in Congress, was not satisfied with the Air Force's justification for
housing for the base. By March 12, 1959, the number of additional units
the base had been reduced to 275 and he blocked it in Congress without
any reason save that the base did not need the housing.227
It was known by May of 1959 that missiles were coming to Salina. This
that the Department of Defense would be spending over $135 million to
ove facilities of the base to accommodate the missiles and construct the
e. In an editorial on May 14, 1959, the Salina Journal once again turned
attention to the housing situation: "...While this (construction) is
on, we will be hosts to a large group of scientists, technicians, and
trialists. If we want industry, here is our chance to sell our goods.
first problem is housing. ...The job is up to us. This is the turning
it—one way or another. ..."228
As will be brought out in the following section, Schilling got 200 more
ites for Schilling Manor. This did not seem to alleviate the matter but may
only made it worse. It was learned on April 13, 1960 that the Army, which
operate the Nike missile sites in the area, was offering a year lease to
the Nike personnel housed in Salina. The Army needed at least seventy-five
es which were in short supply in the area. There was hope that some houses

placed on the market as the 40th Wing left the area.  

As than a month later, the construction of missile sites in the area was as a boom to the local economy but was also proving to be a headache in housing was getting harder to find. The Army, by then, was prepared to a five-year lease and above average rent to house its personnel but was a difficult time finding even seventy-five homes. Bennington, KS, which have a Nike site was also in trouble in that there were few houses avail- here. It was estimated that about thirty men would be required to man Atlas base and about seventy-five men would work at each site while it der construction.  

Schilling Manor  

While the housing shortage was being looked at in Salina, plans were under- to build a school in the base housing area. Since the base housing project about ninety days behind schedule, the Salina school system did not feel it would have any problems until 1958 when the housing area was scheduled opening, but it was having trouble determining how many children would be inding school there. By July 21, 1957, the work at Schilling Manor, as been dedicated on July 4, was half-way completed. Some of the personnel were to live there had been taken on a tour of the area and were impressed what they had seen. The first tenants of Schilling Manor were to be those sonnel who were key personnel, such as First Sergeants and Squadron Commanders. re would be room for over 2,000 people including children. When completed, re would be 128 two-bedroom duplex units for airmen, 192 three-bedroom duplex  

airmen, thirty two-bedroom duplex units for officers, 120 three-bed­
room for officers, fifty three-bedroom duplex units for officers, eleven
room single units for officers, three four-bedroom General's quarters,
six four-bedroom Commander's quarters.

September 24, 1957, bids were accepted for the construction of a ten­
mentary school at the base to accommodate 350 children. J. S. Frank
action Company submitted a low bid of $304,300 for the school and started
ction on April 9, 1958. Salina had been trying to get the Air Force to
leve rooms, and as construction started, the Air Force decided that
was right and began trying to get the money for the addition.233 Origi­
the occupancy date of Schilling Manor was to have been on October 15,
but delays in construction forced postponement of that date. It was esti­
that the occupancy date would be after Christmas. The dampest fall in
had caused the delay. Finally, the date was set for January 15, 1958
the Non-Commissioned Officers' section being opened first.234

It was announced on December 29, 1957 that M. Sgt. Ernest L. McNeill, a
year veteran and a Master Sergeant since August 10, 1942, had won the
se housing sweepstakes by virtue of having been a Master Sergeant longer
anyone else on base and would be the first to move into Schilling Manor.
other families would also move into Schilling Manor by January 15. There
180 units on the north side of the access road called Schilling Drive.
officers quarters were not ready for occupancy at that time. It had been
ed that four families a day would move into the housing area during the

and then after that it would be increased to seven families a day
all units were all occupied. 235

problem crept up on January 24, 1958 and that was who paid the taxes for
Schilling Manor; McCann Construction Company which had built the housing
or the Air Force which would own the housing area. Saline County asked
Attorney General of Kansas, John Anderson, for an opinion. This issue
evolved into another one and that was whether the residents of Schilling
were voting residents of Saline County. The federal government had ac-
title to the property on which the housing area was located and persons
ived on such lands had no elective franchise as inhabitants of Kansas.
The housing had been built by a private firm. Attorney General Anderson,
re-election that year and who would be elected Governor of Kansas in
ruled on August 4, 1958, that residents of Schilling Manor were eligible
te in the August 5, 1958 primary and in other elections affecting their
The Air Force was also held accountable for property taxes levied on
area. 236

While the issue of who was to pay property taxes on Schilling Manor and
the residents of that area were eligible to vote in Kansas elections
going on, the population of Schilling Manor increased by one boy. The
child to be born to a resident of Schilling Manor occurred on February 7,
when a boy was born to M. Sgt. Edward R. Shiver one day after he took up
idence there. 237

On June 26, 1959, the government approved the construction of a five-room

0 addition to Schilling School. When completed, the school would be accommodate 580 students. J. S. Frank Construction Company, the same
which had built the school, bid $109,990 to do the expansion work on the
and started work on August 19, 1959.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, June 26, July 17, and August 19, 1959.}

President Eisenhower signed the authorization for 200 more Capehart units
dilling on August 12, 1959. Of the then-existing 535 units, 320 were for
personnel and 215 for officers. When the 200 new units were completed
would be 484 for enlisted personnel and 251 for officers. Emerson Com-
of Topeka submitted the low bid for the 200 Capehart units on May 19,
and was expected to start work late in the fall of 1960. Two other bids
submitted for the project.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, August 13, 1959, May 12 and 19, 1960.}

To keep the area clean, a clean-up of the Manor was organized and conducted
ril 13, 1960. More than 500 male residents of the area pitched in to
 rake, and collect trash. Men of each major organization on base set up
and posts for the portions of the Manor to which they were assigned and
supervised by the Commanders of the 310th and 40th Bomb Wings, and the
Medical Group.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, April 14, 1960.}

The Salina Board of Education decided that Schilling School was still too
on May 20, 1960 and expected 220 new students when the Schilling Manor
ation was completed. They asked the Air Force to enlarge the school as
was only one vacant room in the school and it was expected to be filled
fall.\footnote{Salina (KS) Journal, May 22, 1960.}
Phillips Village

has been stated earlier, by September 18, 1958 there were still thirty
residing at Phillips Village. But by February 3, 1959, the Air Force
ed that seventy-three buildings were to be sold. However, personnel
housing there would not be affected. When the last families moved
not known, but a Texas firm bought 90 percent of the barracks-type one-
built on February 26, 1959 for $120,000. Then on August 27, 1959,
more buildings and 204 acres of land were put up for sale. A Salina
had already leased the buildings for grain storage for five and one-half
Mineral rights were reserved by the government. This action ended
history of Camp Phillips/Phillips Village which had begun life in 1942 as
post before being converted to a VA hospital, and finally to an Air
housing area. Its history was first as a stop-gap measure and then as a
up the Air Force's sleeve. Nothing remains today of the area that would
ate that it had served a role in the military history of Schilling Air
Base and Saline County. In the next chapter, it will be revealed that
Air Force started building a golf course in the area just before word was
ved that the base was to be closed.

Rumors

The air base at Salina was fifteen years old on April 7, 1957 and the re-
vived base was six years old on August 1, 1957. Schilling Air Force Base,
it had come to be known, was Salina's major industry and its largest employer.
1958, the base had been an integral part of Salina for sixteen years. Be-
se of this, it was time for rumors to start circulating as to the future of

owing to the defense needs changing with the times. Until the early
the B-29 and B-36 bombers were the major means of retaliation against
attack. These two planes gave way to the B-47 and B-52 bombers. New
systems were in the offing and it had been known in 1954 that the B-47
stop-gap plane until the B-52 could fully take over. Thus, there probably
legitimize concern about the future of Schilling. Would it change with
times or would it be abandoned?
Salina was assured on January 17, 1958 that the base was to continue as a
base in SAC in spite of current United States dispersal plans. Congress
was rushing a plan to make American military installations less attractive to
enemy but there was no such plan in effect for Schilling.\textsuperscript{244} A little over
later, the Salina Journal commented on the successful efforts by Com-
mans Wint Smith to block a 240-unit housing development for the base.
ous concern was present in Salina's attitude. "But there is still a chance.
ns must write and let Congress know that we care."\textsuperscript{245}
Later that month in an editorial titled "Need Room Not Rumors," the Salina
nal looked at the rumors concerning the future of the base:

\begin{itemize}
\item Rumors grow naturally where secrecy is enforced. But here
\item are some facts: 1. The B-47 and KC-97 will soon go the way of the
\item B-17. 2. They will be replaced by missiles and faster than sound
\item aircraft. 3. The number of people needed will be fewer but better
\item trained. 4. The time-table for these changes will be stretched out
\item over a number of years. 5. Schilling is one of the best bases in
\item the nation. 6. Some $45 million will be spent to install Atlas
\item ICBM missiles in Salina.
\end{itemize}

It is clear that the long-range existence of Schilling as a
number one base depends upon three factors: 1. The future of the
global mission. 2. Invention of weapons not yet conceived. 3.的能力 of both Salina and the Air Force, jointly and cooperatively,
to provide the climate of morale necessary for a first-rate force.

\textsuperscript{244}Salina (KS) Journal, January 17, 1958.
\textsuperscript{245}Salina (KS) Journal, March 13, 1959, editorial.
The following day, on September 27, 1959, the Salina Journal looked at a "new crop of rumors" which had sprung up concerning the base. It appeared the Salina Journal was trying to get the Air Force to reveal its future concerning the base. Within three years, it (the base) would achieve a new Strategic Air Command look." Schilling would get ICBMs and Nikes to get them. B-52 and KC-135 jet aircraft would arrive to replace the B-47s KC-97s. There would be fewer men drawing higher pay. Plans were already made to beef up two runways for the "heavier, wider" aircraft. The changes Schilling were to begin within the next year.248 It was nice to know that Schilling was to get the-then super aircraft in SAC's inventory (which remain mainstay of America's continental defense to the present) but what reasoning there for this speculation?

Senator Frank Carlson, junior United States Senator from Kansas, visited Salina on December 3, 1959 and gave what was described as a somber talk in which he reviewed a multitude of problems: domestic and international. Despite this, he dropped one note described as cheerful for the area. In response to a question about Schilling after the meeting, he stated that in his opinion the base was "in no danger of any curtailment in personnel or activity. In fact, Schilling will be more important than ever. It will be the center of missile activity in this area."249

Col. Julius Summers, Base Commander, met with the Salina Real Estate Board May 11, 1960 and informed them that what Salina got in the way of additional military facilities in the future depended upon Salina. The Department of Defense would probably consider what an area provided in the way of housing in

249Salina (KS) Advertiser-Sun, December 5, 1959.
Schilling was the second largest base in SAC. Although approximately 650 families would leave with the 40th Wing when it moved to a new location, new plans for the base would bring in new families and probably exceed the loss of the Wing. He was not sure of just when the new aircraft would be delivered to Schilling but the switch would probably mean only fewer aircraft, not at the base. 250

The last article concerning the future of Schilling in this period appeared on May 3, 1960 in an editorial in the Salina Journal, which seems to have taken on the role of a watchdog over the base. By this time, it was known that the 40th Wing would leave that month for Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS and that the silos were under construction in the area.

How can Salina do an honest, conscientious tax-saving job for national defense and at the same time preserve for the area the economic benefits of Schilling Air Force Base? That's a good question today. Some of our friends in the 40th Bomb Wing are migrating to Topeka, many of our old Air Force friends are back in town for a 310th Wing reunion, the missile boys are digging a dozen silo holes faster than any prairie dog, and the Nike outfits are up in the air without benefit of propulsion.

Fortunately, there's a good answer. It meets squarely both halves of my question. That it should be a good answer is of concern not only to us but also to the government and certainly to the Schilling leaders and alumni who have put this base and its wings to the top in SAC performance.

First, digging Atlas sites is on schedule. Construction crews will reach 1300 to 1500 by March, 1961. They will be gone by late spring 1962. As the construction crews move out, the missile crews will move in. Even with the 40th Wing gone, the aircraft at the base will remain at 100 or more, about half of them bombers, half of them tankers. They will soon be replaced by more modern aircraft. To accommodate the larger aircraft, the runways are being beefed up. It is hoped the widening of the runways can be approved for a start between July 1961 and June 1962 and it will take about ten months.

Here is the uncertain time. During runway construction period, the Air Force will have three choices. It could try to sandwich flying time operations with runway building; it could move the troops out, leaving the base temporarily on a caretaker status which would be costly to the Air Force and Salina; or it could transfer flying

operations to some other base but leave dependents and many of the
command and support units here. This seems a wise compromise, pre-
serving the important values to the Air Force that the base and Salina
entente have developed.

Then by 1963, after a period of change, the base is expected to
have a new look. It will be the headquarters of 9000 mile missiles.
It will muster better bombers, better tankers, better runways and
combat-ready troops. It should be a key base for national defense.

But in 1963, Schilling will also have something more to offer.
The various facilities required for the new aircraft and the missiles
also can accommodate an extra load if it is of the proper kind. The
base will be ready to take on an extra unit, perhaps a strategic sup-
port group or squadron, perhaps a transport unit of the C-130 or C-
133 variety. We will have the concrete, the ramps, the housing, the
support facilities and a central location with the best flying weather
in the nation. Above all, we can offer the know-how of backing the
Air Force. It is logical and economical to put the extra unit here.
If Schilling's friends and Salinans do not go after such an additional
unit, if they do not start working now, they will be letting the Air
Force, the taxpayers and Salina down.251

Earlier, the Salina Advertiser-Sun had written that the base would be
used for a year for runway repairs. Colonel Jumper, 802nd AD Commander, had
outly denied" this possibility. Now, eight months later, the Salina Journal
dishes the idea of temporarily closing the base as if it were a brand-new
ibility. This editorial came out of the clear-blue sky. But of equal
rest was the attention the Salina Journal focused on the need for another
sion for the base. Would a Military Airlift Command (MAC) or Air Training
mand unit have altered the fate of the base in 1964? Salina had brought
ational attention to itself in this era. Its units were probably the best in
Air Force and certainly in SAC. The 802nd AD had a very good flying safety
ord while the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings were usually close to each other in
petition contests. By winning re-enlistment contests in the Air Force, it
amed the "Golden Anniversary Base."

The One-Two Punch

Before the Air Force could start work on changing Schilling over to a B-52 supported with Atlas missiles, room had to be made to accommodate the new B-52 bombers and KC-135 tankers would be carrying. The additional use of the runways would permit Schilling to carry out its mission without reducing its effectiveness. There had to be plenty of room for the maintenance crews working on the missile silos and runways, the arriving personnel to man the missiles once they were operational, and for the 310th Wing to continue its flying activities supported by the 40th and 310th ARS.

To make room, the 40th Bomb Wing, stationed at the base since early 1953, would be moved to Forbes AFB, KS by June, 1960. However, the 40th ARS would remain at the base with the 310th Bomb Wing. This was a part of a dispersal plan in which the attractive targets and forces that would have resulted from Having more than one B-52 and B-47 Wing with refueling aircraft on a single base were dispersed. SAC's plan was to have fewer planes on a base meant that they could be launched faster. Operation of the Atlas missile bases was expected to take 1,000 men.

Eventually, the B-47s assigned to the 310th Bomb Wing would be replaced by B-52s but only after extensive work had been completed, primarily widening and lengthening the base's runways.

The departure of the 40th Bomb Wing was not expected to be a blow to Salina's economy as the "B-52 components will be moving in almost immediately." 1,000 people would be involved in the move and half of them lived on base. Then there would be the Atlas missile personnel. SAC's plan was to have more than one B-52 and B-47 Wing with refueling aircraft on a single base. The plan scattered the attractive targets and forced any aggressor to disperse its own force. Also, fewer planes on a base meant that they could be launched faster. Operation of the Atlas missile bases was expected to take 1,000 men. The Salina Journal summed up Salina's loss in the following way: "Dear Sal: It's hard to say 'Goodbye' to the 40th. But at least Forbes and Topeka will..."
The Wing had been organized in 1942 as the 310th Bombardment Group and activated on September 12, 1945. It was reactivated in March, 1952 and then to Schilling in September, 1952. The 40th Wing was one year older and been activated as the 40th Bombardment Group in New York on April 1, 1941. d been transferred to Schilling in March of 1953 after having been reacti- at Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ on May 28, 1952. 253

The first major organizational change concerning the transfer of the 40th was announced on March 27, 1960. The 802nd Combat Support Group (formerly 802nd Air Base Group) was to become the 310th Combat Support Group on June 1960. Then the 310th Bomb Wing would be placed under the 819th Air Division quartered at Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX. Salina was assured that Schilling d be getting the B-52 and KC-135 in the near future. 254

It seemed that the Air Force was doing everything it could to make the transfer of the 40th Wing as easy as possible for both Salina and the personnel the 40th Wing. On April 24, 1960, approximately 350 40th Wing men and their was attended a briefing held in the base theater to receive a briefing on they would find at Forbes and in Topeka when they arrived there. The briefing lasted from 8:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. The transfer of the 40th Wing ran on May 23, 1960 with around 390 men leaving in the initial moving opera- on which was expected to take at least a month and a half. However, around

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would be declared surplus from the 40th and transferred to other units.

was to make the move as gradual as possible and easy any economic
the transfer of the unit would have on both Salina and Topeka. "Dear
Wonder if Topeka appreciates what its getting in the 40th Bomb Wing?
"Ina."255

Although the transfer of the 40th Wing had started on May 23 and the 802nd
Division would not be deactivated until June 20, signalling the formal and
end of Schilling as a two-Wing base, a ceremony was held on June 1, 1960
ich the 40th Wing standard was transferred from Schilling to Forbes at a
on held in the Schilling Officers' Club with representatives from Schilling,
, and the Chambers of Commerce from Salina and Topeka. After the stan-
was presented to the Topeka Chamber of Commerce by the Salina Chamber of
, Col. Woodward Carpenter, Commander of the 40th Wing, presented a
as to Salina's Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the men of the 40th Wing
way of saying "thank you" to Salina for its support of and interest in the
's activities while it was stationed at the base. "Dear Sal: Hope the men
the 40th return for a visit now and then. Yours, Ina."256

The 802nd Air Division and 802nd Combat Support Group were formally deac-
ted on June 20, 1960. In their places, the 310th Wing took over responsi-
ity for the base and became the host unit while the 310th Combat Support
up took over housekeeping chores at the base. Colonel Jumper became Commander
the 310th Wing but Colonel Summers remained Base Commander by assuming command
the 310th CSG. The 40th ARS joined the 310th Wing and a new unit, a consoli-
don of the 40th and 310th OMS (Organizational Maintenance Squadron), the

256Salina (KS) Journal, June 1, 1960.
Whether Salina or Schilling liked it or not, now the future rested with the 40th Bomb Wing and whatever the Air Force decided to do with it. Why the Air Force chose to move the 40th instead of the 310th was never explained. It might be that the Commanders of the 40th Wing went farther in the Air Force hierarchy than the 310th, but the 310th Wing won more honors. The 40th Wing was older than the 310th, but both units ranked high in terms of honors conferred upon them. It was just that the 40th Wing usually came in second to the 310th.

On June 20, 1960, a change occurred at Schilling. Unknown at the time was the extent to which the change was to snowball and before five years had passed, both the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings would no longer exist. Salina would hear plenty about the KC-135 and millions of dollars would be spent on Schilling and the base. But in this period, Schilling Air Force Base distinguished itself in a manner that has probably never been rivaled since. Schilling had been the "Golden Anniversary Base" during this period and ironically, it would later be recognized that this was Schilling's golden period.

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257 Salina (KS) Journal, June 17 and June 20, 1960.
CHAPTER VII

THE ONE-TWO PUNCH

JUNE 20, 1960 TO NOVEMBER 17, 1964

With the deactivation of the 802nd Air Division and the transfer of the 509th Bomb Wing to Forbes AFB, KS, Schilling was still being developed to deliver a one-two punch and was supposed to achieve that objective by 1962. The one-two punch meant that the 310th Bomb Wing could respond to any enemy attack with its B-47s and then send in its nuclear-armed B-47s to finish up. The latter would be supported by KC-97 tankers belonging to the 40th and 310th Air Refueling Wings (ARS). By 1962, the B-47s and KC-97s were supposed to be replaced by more modern B-52 and KG-135 jets.

The future of Schilling, the 310th Wing, and Salina looked very bright. It was told that Schilling would soon be equipped with the new longer-ranged B-52. At the start of this period, construction on the missile silos was going up to full blast while the base proper was prepared to receive modern jets. For a while, no one noticed the already-publicized fact that there would be fewer personnel assigned to the base owing to the increased construction activity.

Schilling and the 310th Wing continued to win awards during this period. Never again did it seem to have the lustre that it had had when the 802nd and 40th Wing shared the base with the 310th Wing. When General Jim Wilson and Col. Hal Ohlke left, they seemed to have taken a part of the base with them. For a while in 1962 and 1963, the 22nd Strategic Air Division (SAD) would have headquarters on base, but that unit would only have a handful of personnel
d to it at Schilling and failed to replace the lustre that the 802nd AD
in the base. Salina did not lose interest in the base and morale con-
to be high. But everyone seemed to be waiting for the new aircraft to
which would once and for all make Schilling invaluable to the defense
United States and assure Salina of the air base for a long time to come.
ll be shown, at first all seemed to be going well to that end but by the
this period, there seemed to be some sort of handwriting on the wall
no one seemed able to decipher.

Organization

At twelve noon on June 20, 1960, the 802nd AD was officially deactivated
the 40th Bomb Wing formally transferred to Forbes AFB, KS. From then on
the end of this period, the 310th Wing would be the primary unit as-
to Schilling. At the same time on June 20, the 310th Combat Support
(CSG) was activated to handle the housekeeping chores formerly handled
the 802nd CSG, as has already been covered in Chapter VI of this paper.
the 802nd AD was deactivated, the 819th AD at Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX as-
responsibility for the base under the 15th AF at March AFB, CA. The 310th
would remain under the 15th AF until it (the 310th) was deactivated.

Effective March 1, 1962, the 310th Bomb Wing received a new name. Owing
ts expanding role as a combined missile, bomber, and tanker wing, the desig-
"Bomb Wing" seemed out of place and obsolete. Plans were underway to
ip Schilling's flying units with B-52s and KC-135s, so the 310th was renamed
310th Strategic Aerospace Wing (SAW) to commemorate its expanding defense
le. 1

Congressman Bob Dole announced in early 1962 that effective July 1, 1962,

d AD at Malmstrom AFB, MT would be deactivated and transferred to Schilling; it would be reactivated as the 22nd Strategic Air Division (SAD). This would involve few changes in personnel. However, the 310th SAW Commander, Colonel Jack W. Hayes, junior, would assume command of the 22nd SAD command of the 310th SAW would evolve upon another officer. The 22nd SAD be composed of the 310th SAW at Schilling and the 4128th SAW at Amarillo M.2

When the 22nd SAD was activated at Schilling, it had a wing of B-52s under the 4128th SAW already had been so equipped. On January 3, 1963, it announced that the 4128th would also get KC-135 tankers. Thus, the 4128th acquiring the modern look that Schilling was supposed to have had in 1962. Addition, the 22nd SAD only had twenty people stationed at Schilling to handle paper and staff work.3

Less than a year after the 22nd SAD arrived, it was announced that on July 63 that it would be transferred to Walker AFB, Roswell, NM. The whole SAD staff at Schilling which was composed of ten officers and eight airmen, including Colonel Hayes, Commander, would be transferred with the Division to War. At the same time, the 22nd SAD would gain jurisdiction over the 6th at Walker.4 The 310th SAW would remain under the 22nd SAD until it was deactivated in 1965.

One of the oldest units on base, the 40th ARS, was ordered deactivated effective March 21, 1963 and its phase-out began on September 18, 1962. At its peak, the 40th had a complement of twenty KC-97s and over 300 men assigned.

2Salina (KS) Globe-Sun, May 17, 1962. This paper was the former Salina Advertiser-Sun under new management.


the men were absorbed into the 310th ARS. This deactivation was undertaken to make room for the KC-135 jet tankers slated for assignment to Schilling in the near future. Lt. Col. Elbert L. Moore was the last commander of the 40th ARS. 5

Missiles

It was called a realignment of Nike Missile defenses in the United States. 6 The fact was that Salina would not get the two Nike Missile sites originally announced by the Army. This caused some real estate and personnel problems, the former which will be covered in a later section in this chapter. Someone who had enlisted in the Army to serve in Salina would be given options of further service in the Army at other locations, transfer to National Guard reserve units, or discharge. 6

While the future of the Nike system was being determined, Atlas missile erection was escalating in the Salina area. Col. Arthur W. Cruikshank arrived in the area to assume duties as Task Force Commander of the Atlas missile in the area. His job was to supervise construction and preparation of twelve sites for operation. 7 To acquaint Salinans with the Atlas F missile, used for public relations purposes was shipped to Salina from Lincoln AFB. It arrived on September 12, 1960 and was to be on display for one week starting September 17. There would be no charge for viewing the seventy-five foot long weapon. 8

A radio communication system was being installed to enable Schilling to

ate with the twelve missile sites. However, a fall-back system was
and finalized on September 15, 1960 when the Air Force was granted a
five foot temporary right of way and a sixteen and one-half foot perma-
light of way easement through 250 miles of land in Saline, Cloud, Ottawa,
on, Lincoln, Ellsworth, Rice, and Dickinson Counties in Kansas.⁹

Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Wells, a native of New Mexico and a veteran
nty-one years military service, arrived on base on October 11, 1960 to
command of the Air Material Command detachment on base. This unit was
ed with the mission of handling logistics and engineering functions con-
d with the building of the Atlas missile sites around Schilling.¹⁰

hen the announcement was made in 1959 that the missiles were to be in-
ed around Schilling, mention was made of the ground transportation arteries
area. But no mention was made as to how the missiles would get to the
. This matter was rectified on November 11, 1960 when it was revealed
the missiles and machinery would arrive on base by planes belonging to
ilitary Air Transport System (MATS).¹¹

Colonel Edward B. Jennings, Schilling area Engineer-in-Charge of Missile
struction, hosted a two-day seminar on February 15 and 16, 1961 to discuss
struction procedures and problems. Schilling had the distinction of being
first with underground silos in the United States.¹² The first phase of
mile construction was finished in March of 1961. In formal ceremonies on
ch 20, the Atlas site near Beverly was turned over to the Air Force. This

The completion of the "brick and mortar" construction phase meaning Air Force had the shell of the complex which was ready for the installe-
machinery.13

The Atlas missile squadron on base had been without a name ever since the personnel had started arriving in 1960. That matter was rectified on J 1961 at 8:15 A.M. when over 200 members of the squadron already on were expected to appear in formation in the base hangar area to be formally to Schilling by Col. James C. Robinson, Vice Commander of the 310th Col. Charles K. Agan would then assume formal command of the 550th ic Missile Squadron (SMS) and M. Sgt. Robert L. Adams would assume as First Sergeant of the squadron. After the formation, many of the re expected to depart for a year's training at Sheppard AFB, Wichita TX and Vandenberg AFB, CA. Then they would return to Schilling to man olve Atlas F missile sites assigned to the base.14

On July 24, 1961, the first Atlas missile arrived at Schilling aboard a cargo transport plane from San Diego, CA. After testing, the missile to be taken by truck to the Beverly site for installation.15 But appar-
this did not mean that the site would be operational with the installation that missile. Something happened and the Air Force announced on November 10, that work on the area missile bases was not being completed as far ahead schedule as officials had hoped. Some modifications of an unspecified nature being planned before the sites were activated.16

congressman Dole announced on May 10, 1962 that the Air Force had informed it would begin surveys in the near future to determine the feasibility from a geological and operational standpoint of installing Minuteman missiles in the Salina area. This was only for advanced planning purposes and did not represent a commitment to use Schilling as a Minuteman base.¹⁷

Before the sites could be activated, technicians were needed to operate the machinery. Five such personnel were graduated from SAC's phase-two operability missile training course at Vandenberg AFB, CA during the week of July 6, 1962. The new missilemen were: Maj. James F. Dissault, Missile Crew Commander; Lt. George M. Bezek, Deputy Crew Commander; M. Sgt. A. Crone, M. Sgt. Bruce Flaghe, and S. Sgt. Charles W. Wilson.¹⁸

The first Atlas site activated was the Carneiro site west of the base on November 13, 1962. Around 150 people turned out for the opening ceremonies. The site would be operated by two officers and three airmen working in shifts of twenty-four hours on duty and forty-eight hours off. This would be a temporary arrangement. When more trained crews were available, the time-off would be slightly longer.¹⁹

In the last chapter, the Army had started work on the construction of two missile sites in the Salina area. Men from the area had been recruited on the sites and the Army had been trying to get housing for them at better-than-average rental rates. On January 8, 1963, the Army formally announced the Nikes were obsolete and that all installation work had stopped. Everything was to be sold (minus the missiles which had never arrived in the area)

Somehow, it seems doubtful that the Army would cut seventy-five men in Salina over two years after halting work on the project. It is assumed that this was an error on the part of either the press or the Army.

Project Update" was the Atlas missile modification program begun in 1963 to increase the security systems and increase the range of the missiles assigned to the base. This work was declared complete on October 1, 1964, two months ahead of schedule. At its peak, a total of 420 men had been working on the project in the Salina area. There were seven men still on base taking care of final paperwork and cleaning up the work area.  

310th Combat Defense Squadron

With the advent of missiles to the area, the security of the base received more attention from the local press. On November 19, 1961, the Salina Journal featured a full page article on the 310th Combat Defense Squadron (CDS) which handled military security in the area. The base had a double-security system: Base Police, called Air Police (APs), were the "smartly groomed, white-uniformed airmen who greet visitors at the base entrance gates," and Central Security Police who patrolled the flight line guarding aircraft and using rifles and dogs. Both groups were under the supervision of the base's Deputy Commander for law enforcement. There were over 400 men in the unit and twenty APs. As a result of the missiles and construction work on base, visitors were no longer permitted to enter the base through the north gate (Centennial Road) but had to enter the base through the main gate on Schilling Road. This gave

\[20\text{Salina (KS) Journal, January 8, 1963.}\]
\[21\text{Salina (KS) Journal, October 1, 1964.}\]
better control over security as it pertained to Schilling.\textsuperscript{22}

In a "aging veteran of eight years service" at the base was relieved from

and shipped to Walter Reed Memorial Hospital in Washington, D. C. With

the June 24, 1962 newspaper article went on, Tiny, a German Shepherd
dog with a painful arthritic hip, an ailment common to that breed of dog,

and a career in the Air Force that had begun in 1955, by taking a plane
to Walter Reed where he would be put to sleep.\textsuperscript{23}

the\textit{Salina Journal}'s November 18, 1962 Sunday edition featured an article

on "Air Force Infantry" who protected the B-47s on base. There were over

assigned to the 310th CDS by that time and they were commanded by Maj.

and J. Hines. In an interview about his job, he commented that there was
to the job of guarding an installation like Schilling than having the men

a post:

\begin{quote}
... The men have to be firm in their action. We don't train them to be blood-thirsty, but we expect them to take the necessary action when needed. Our job is 90\% security and 10\% police work. We are developing a capability for close combat to counter any threat to Schilling by espionage, sabotage, or any overt action by small, hostile groups. In other words, we are building a greater capability than just strictly guarding. We're mobile. We can move fast and hit hard, if necessary.\textsuperscript{24}
\end{quote}

Schilling still had a police force of around 400 men when the\textit{Salina Jour-

did another article on the 310th CDS in early 1964. There were six sec-

tions in the Base Police Unit; investigation, administration, confinement,

son, pass and registration, and traffic control. Liaison was by then what
to be known as "Town Patrol" and that unit was composed of six men who


\textsuperscript{24}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, November 18, 1962.
Schilling had a new seventy-five bed hospital built for a possible expansion on a 150-bed chassis. This structure had replaced a barracks-type structure built in 1942 for an expected life of five years. Col. Robert Corwin rem- ed with a Salina Journal reporter about his experiences as Hospital Com- at Schilling. He was first assigned to the base as Hospital Commander 48 as a Lieutenant Colonel and closed the hospital in December, 1949 when base was deactivated. He returned in 1952 to reactivate the hospital. At time, his tour of duty was supposed to last just one year. In reactivating hospital, he and his staff had to chase raccons out of the attic. Now, he been on the base longer than any other officer and directed a staff of 235 le and thirteen medical officers. After over eighteen years of service the Air Force, Colonel Corwin retired on April 29, 1961. A native of Ohio, was retiring to Beaumont, CA near March AFB. He was succeeded as Commander the 802nd Medical Group and the Hospital by Lt. Col. William Marriott in ge of command ceremonies at the Hospital.

Lieutenant Colonel Marriott, the new Commander of the 802nd Medical Group the Base Hospital, had been at Schilling since August 1, 1960. He had been in Canada on August 4, 1918 and entered the Air Force in 1926. He took command of a unit that had fourteen medical officers, twenty-four registered es, ten dentists, a veterinarian, a registered pharmacist, and over 150 en- sted personnel. Under normal Air Force procedure, Colonel Marriott could

to serve as Commander of the Schilling Hospital for about three years.\(^{28}\) On June 24, 1962, the Base Hospital got its first Physical Therapy Director it was reactivated in 1952. She was Maj. Dorothy G. Woods, a veteran seventeen years military service and a native of Charlotte, NC. Her husband was a retired Air Force administrative officer.\(^{29}\) Later that year, the Hospital announced that it was prepared for 100 percent participation by military personnel and their dependents in the Sabin oral polio vaccine program on base. The nation was free to them. Active duty military personnel were to be given a slip to fill out for their medical records.\(^{30}\)

Colonel Marriott's expectations of remaining at Schilling for three years did not materialize when he received a special assignment to Viet Nam. His successor was Lt. Col. William C. Rountree who assumed command of the 802nd Medical Group on April 13, 1963. Colonel Rountree had been Chief of Aerospace Medicine at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, AL before receiving the Schilling assignment.\(^{31}\)

**OQ Gunnery Range**

The OQ Gunnery Range, located seventeen miles southwest of Salina, continued to play a role in the affairs of the base training program during this period. Its importance may not have been appreciated until 1966, but there was activity here throughout this period which is presented here since the Range was an integral part of the base. There were 30,000 acres in the Gunnery Range complex, making it one of the world's largest bomb ranges. B-47 and B-52 gun turrets...

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\(^{29}\) *Salina (KS) Journal*, June 24, 1962.


installed on the ground there which enabled gunners to practice firing at which were in reality flying targets. These drones were launched from a concrete track and once in the air were capable of reaching speeds of 400 mph. They cost the Air Force $2,600 a piece and had an average life of 100 flights or one hour. In 1960, a force of ninety men operated this range and saw over 1,000 men per year practice gunnery skills. Maj. Gerald A. Gro was Commander and M. Sgt. Lyle Pound was the Non-Commisioned-Officer- in-charge (NCOIC). 32

By November 4, 1960, the OQ Range had its own distinctive main gate. T. Andres Pacheo and S. Sgt. Charles Artson, both assigned to the Range, had turned two salvaged target drones and a pile of scrap metal into a new entrance way for the Range. The drones were mounted on each end of the arch which bore the words "WELCOME SAC OQ RANGE" in bold metallic letters. The Range was the 310th Operations Squadron. 33

Between January and November of 1961, the Air Force released $1.3 million for work on the Range. Work planned was an extension of the water system from base to the Range, construction of a sewage disposal facility, additions to buildings, new buildings, sidewalks, and roads. At this time, the OQ Range was the only one in the Air Force to use drones for target practice. 34 Not all the land was used for bombing and gunnery practice. But it was kept under government control to ensure that no improvements were made which might interfere with bombing and gunnery practice. In November of 1962, it was announced that sealed bids were being accepted for the private leasing of approximately

33Impact, November 4, 1960.
acres of Range land in thirteen tracts for grazing or restricted agricultural purposes by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which oversaw using of the land for the Air Force. These leases were for five years starting January 1, 1963 and ending December 31, 1967. No bid would be accepted if it was accompanied by a deposit of not less than ten percent of the rent offered.  

The Air Force announced on October 24, 1963 that starting on November 1, the Range would be used extensively by the Tactical Air Command (TAC), Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve units for an indefinite period of time. It would be used seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. Farmers and civilians were warned not to pick up any shells or fragments and were to report anything found to the base immediately. Hunting and fishing would be permitted after 5:00 P.M. and before 8:00 A.M. weekdays and all day on weekends and holidays.  

On July 1, 1964, the OQ Gunnery Range, along with fifteen men, were transferred from SAC to the Tactical Air Command (TAC). The men would be attached as a tenant unit for administrative purposes. Maj. Charles R. Halsey, junior, was named Commander of Detachment 1, 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW), as the Range would be formally known. By February of 1965, there were posed to be thirty-seven military personnel assigned to the Range.  

Operations  
Throughout this period, the mission of the base would be the deterrent of It would do this with B-47 stratojet bombers and Atlas F missiles which

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opertional in 1962. The B-47s were supported by the 40th and 310th Air
Squadrons until 1963 when the 40th ARS was deactivated. The KC-97
plane used for refueling until November, 1963 when the last one left
be never to return. In March, 1964, the base received the KC-135 jet
and always expected to receive the B-52 bomber, which was originally ex-

St. Col. Karl H. Brauer, Deputy Commander for Civil Engineering at Schil-
compared his job to that of a city manager. His city had its own fire
ments, water plant, and sewage disposal plant. There were seven rail-
purrs which unloaded "thousands of pounds of freight" each week. There
ew three-million-dollar hospital and a million-dollar multi-denominational
h. Colonel Brauer had to keep up thirty-three miles of roads and runways.
so had 735 homes in "the suburbs." There were two giant vacuum cleaners
p the runways and ramps clean of debris, a regular street sweeper and ten
ows. There were sixty-three boilers which provided heat and power to the
The electric bill was $26,000 a month and the gas bill was $17,500 a
h. To keep his city operating, Colonel Brauer had a staff of 304 military
20 civilians responsible to him. 38
On September 20, 1960, the Salina Journal proudly announced that the first
of a $3.9 million runway improvement program was about to get underway.
, $55,000 was to be spent on repair of runways which the B-47s would use
es the man runway was rebuilt and expanded for the B-52 which was expected
arrive in 1962. 39 From here on, Salina would be looking to the skies for
ms that the "castles in the air" were arriving.

With the addition of missiles, the base used enough oxygen to warrant construction of a plant to manufacture it for both the missiles and bombers on the base. A special building was built for this project and was called the "LOX Building" for short.  

Speculation started about the future of the KC-97 propeller-driven tankers used to the base when the Salina Journal informed its readers on September 18, 1962 that the base was losing some of its KC-97s by March, 1963 when the base was deactivated. It was assumed that this was being done to make room for KC-135s and that shortly after this, the B-47s would be replaced by KC-135s. At this time, there were 5,083 military and 323 civilians on base or approximately 5,400 men and women assigned to Schilling.  

To keep the planes flying, "Operation High Blower" was created to maintain more than 100 planes assigned to Schilling. The way it worked was that the most a plane parked on the flight line, a crew of twelve men started swarming it looking for trouble and fixing it on the spot. They did everything from washing the plane to inspecting the machine guns and engines. Schilling had twenty-four teams on duty twenty-four hours a day for the B-47s and KC-97s.  

In the fall of 1962, a U-2 (a spy plane still in use) flying over Cuba took pictures revealing the existence of Russian missile sites capable of striking the United States. These sites had been installed by Russia and although not fully operational, they would be shortly if the United States did not act. President Kennedy demanded the removal of these missiles and for a while a war seemed probable. What was not publicly revealed until November 20, 1962.

the fact that Schilling's flying units were involved and had flown to
the southeastern part of the United States, ready for action. The
planes began returning to Salina on that date and by November 26,
misions and routine peacetime operations had resumed. A
according to the information office, Schilling had been on an "increased
status" for a period of around thirty-nine days. Schilling Air Force
had resumed its normal alert posture held prior to the start of the Cuban
Of the Strategic Air Command aircraft, fifty percent were on fifteen
alert and a greater percentage of the missile force were on a similar
President Kennedy had announced his plans for a Cuban blockade on the
as after learning that Russian weapons capable of offensive action against
ited States were being installed. Shortly after this announcement, strin-
security measures were instituted at the base, followed by a news blackout
was not lifted until November 28. Although base officials would not com-
about anything that happened during the alert period, Salina noted that
AP's on town patrol were recalled to the base and all leaves and passes
cancelled and most of the military personnel assigned to Schilling had
the base for TDY to other areas of the nation. 44

Today, many Americans can still recall when a medium-sized new car could
urchased for $5,000, but on March 7, 1963, Schilling accepted delivery of
and-new $99,000 P2 Fire Truck, which is nearly nine times the cost of a new
today. At this time, there were only sixteen such vehicles assigned to Air
bases and only bases which had KC-135s and B-52s would get them until

month later the Air Force announced that Schilling would definitely get
and KC-135s assigned to it in the near future. Formal announcement
be made through the Kansas delegation to Congress. "Schilling is one of
tion's better bases and every attempt will be made to hang on to it."
statement came from Maj. Gen. Delmar E. Wilson, Deputy Commander of the
while on a visit to the base. This was followed later by the state-
that the 24th Bomb Squadron was to be transferred to Schilling from Walker
with its complement of B-52 bombers in the summer of 1964. When this
was completed, Schilling would have lost 944 men and eleven civilians
as 4,571 military and 372 civilians on station. There would also be
an KC-135 jet tankers assigned to the 310th ARS.

It appeared that things were starting to pick up in the modernization of
Schilling's units. Schilling crews were to be retrained to fly and maintain
KC-135s. A sixteen-man field training detachment (FTD) was to arrive on
1, 1963 to start the training program. Selected KC-97 crews were to go
Castle AFB, CA for retraining in flying KC-135s. Colonel Arnold, 310th SAW
ander, announced that B-47 crews would probably be retrained to fly B-52s
he had nothing positive to offer the press at that time beyond the fact
there would be no mass movement of manpower from the base.

As the modernization process speeded up, there would be fewer aircraft at
base in 1964. The base had already lost twenty KC-97s when the 40th ARS

activated and the 379th, 380th, and 381st Bomb Squadrons were to be de­
ted when the 24th BS arrived with its B-52s in 1964 with the B-47s being
ferred to other bases for storage. At this time, there were 630 B-52s in
Force inventory and the plan was to have twelve B-52 wings and forty­
quadrons at thirty-six stateside air bases. The Air Force planned to use
2 through Fiscal Year 1971.\textsuperscript{49} The longevity of the planned use of the
is interesting to note here. It is still the major long-range bomber in
Force inventory and saw use in the Viet Nam Conflict. Had the B-47
ed the same life, it would only now be in the process of being phased-out.
chilling received seven utility aircraft in 1963 to ferry missile crews
 missile bases in early 1963. These planes, similar to the Army's L-20
or, were designed to land on grass landing strips and within the boundaries
twenty-acre missile bases.\textsuperscript{50} It is doubtful that these planes ever saw
use for the intended purpose, as most men seemed to prefer to drive to the
es, to which they were assigned. This writer knows that one officer drove a
Ford to his assigned sites in the area and he never mentioned flying. In
, the officer was one of the few Texans this writer knows to claim that
ma had more hills than many supposed, indicating a belief that flying to
 of the sites was not feasible.
To improve Schilling's response to any emergency, the Ballistic Missile
Warning System (BMEWS) was declared operational on October 24, 1963.
system was connected to bases with missiles to give them at least a fif­
m-minute advance warning of impending enemy attack.\textsuperscript{51}

At 10:30 A.M. on November 21, 1963, the last KC-97 tanker took off from
never to return. In a ceremony covered by the Salina Journal, Colonel
of the 310th SAW Commander, signed the plane off of the base's inventory. The
assigned to Schilling had flown 2,300 hours for the 310th ARS.
were only twenty members of the 310th ARS on hand to witness the affair
rest of the squadron were at other bases being retrained for the KC-135s
to arrive in early 1964. This plane was flown to the 9th SAW at Moun­
Home AFB, ID. Members of the last crew were: Capt. Nicholas H. Howell,
Capt. Donald K. Winston, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Clifford E. Shires, navigator;
Luther M. Wise, engineer; and A1C Connie A. Turner, boom operator. The
was expected to return the next day.
The first KC-135 to be assigned to a Kansas base was christened the "City
Salina II" on March 8, 1964. When completed, the 310th ARS was to have a
lement of fifteen KC-135s, flown direct to the base from Boeing's Spokane,
ant and there would be approximately 140 men assigned to the Squadron.
During the late 1950s, one-third of the B-47s had been kept on alert status.
had changed by April, 1964 while the base was in transition. Approximately
y percent of the planes assigned to the base were kept on "ground alert."
ake room on the base for its expanding role, most of the unused World War
vintage buildings on the south end of the base were in the process of being
own.
An unexpected "bomb" was dropped on Schilling and Salina on May 8, 1964
on the Air Force informed Salina that the B-47s would remain at the base at

til after Christmas, 1964. The B-52 squadron would not arrive until 1965. The delay was not expected to alter plans for the base but would greater number of personnel on base for Christmas. Behind this was the Son at Forbes. The 40th Bomb Wing was to be deactivated in the summer of its deactivation had been advanced from original plans of early 1965.55 Now this affected Schilling was not mentioned or explained.

Plans were finalized and announced on October 20, 1964 that the B-52s arrive. Starting on January 1, 1965, the B-47s were to begin leaving base and retired from the Air Force inventory. Then, the B-52s would start leaving on March 1. With this change, the 310th SAW would be redesignated a bomber wing. The 24th Bomb Squadron (Heavy) would be deactivated at AFB, NM at this time. Instead of being reactivated at Schilling as originally planned, it would revert to control by Headquarters, USAF, and the 379th Squadron at Schilling would be redesignated a heavy bomb squadron. The 381st Bomb Squadrons would be deactivated and revert to control by quarters, USAF.56

While speculation continued about the B-52s, it was learned that Schilling been named one of five Air Force bases having the best cost reduction pro-

was revealed that Schilling's personnel were being trained to handle with little effort. The 426C FTD had been on base since March, 1963 when arrived to start preparing the base for the KC-135. Equipment had ar-
on October 19, 1964 so that the training could start, preparing personnel a B-52. There were nineteen men involved in this project and they were the supervision of the 3346th Field Training Squadron at Chanute AFB, ll, IL. 58

Training

Training during this period was accomplished through participation in air-
competition and alerts and measured by Operational Readiness Inspections ). Schilling always remained at the top and closed out this period as the better bases in SAC and possibly in the Air Force. Schilling planesicipated in eight competitions between August, 1960 and October, 1962. that, the Air Force appears to have stopped the direct competition and shed to war games and alerts on base to prepare aircraft crews for the real

On August 12, 1960, it was announced that a 310th ARS KC-97 crew had first in a navigation and air refueling competition in the 15th AF. crew, commanded by Capt. William J. Bauer, was also going to represent the in the Air Force-wide competition scheduled for September.59 How it ed out was not learned until February 16, 1961 when Brigadier General key, 819th AD Commander, presented the "world's championship air refueling navigation team" with gold rings. They won the rings for their work in

The next competition started on September 18, 1961 and was dubbed "SAC's World Series." There were about thirty planes involved and the bomber crews each flew one simulated combat mission. Eight KC-97 crews from Schilling but no B-47 crews from Tinker participated. When it was over, the 40th and 310th ARSs had placed first and eighth, respectively. In the last competition reported on October 62, the KC-97s belonging to the 40th ARS had been named the best in SAC. They maintained a 97.5 percent efficiency in maintenance and operations and as a result, the plans to deactivate the Squadron were under review. In the years the unit had been active, it had logged more than 75,000 accident-free flying hours.

Between January 14, 1962 and September 23, 1964, the local press reported winning nine awards which varied from personnel improvement to the SAC Ground Safety Award. These were the golden moments for Salina's base. One of the awards worth mentioning in this section was the top Field Maintenance Squadron Award presented to the 310th FMS by SAC for its work in 1961. This squadron was responsible for the maintenance of the several types of aircraft assigned to the base. Later that year, the 310th SAW won the AF Haskell Gray Maintenance Award for the July through September quarter. This award, a twenty-six inch gold-plated traveling trophy (meaning that the trophy was re-presented each time another unit won the trophy), was awarded to the Wing on the basis of its management control system rating, alert aircraft

ity, base self-sufficiency, and personnel utilization. It was named after the late S. Sgt. Haskell Gray, crew chief in the 96th Bomb Wing, Tinker, OK, who was killed in a B-47 crash in Hawaii.\textsuperscript{64}

Schilling scored high again in 1963. SAC announced that the base had placed first in non-tactical and B-47 aircraft maintenance during the October 1 to December quarter of 1963. The non-tactical maintenance pertained to housekeeping chores of aircraft maintenance.\textsuperscript{65} The last award for this period was announced on September 23, 1964 when the base won SAC's private safety award for the first quarter of 1964. During that time, the base operated without any time due to private vehicle accidents. The base also received a SAC ground safety award for not having a single reportable civilian injury during three million manhours during March. Colonel John F. Scanlan, Base Commander, accepted both awards from Major General James Wilson, Deputy Commander of the 15th AF (and former 802nd AD Commander at Schilling), in an awards ceremony at 15th AF headquarters at March AFB, CA.\textsuperscript{66}

Six inspections were reported by the 15th AF and SAC during this period. One on January 7, 1963 when a KC-97 pilot complained to Schilling's control tower of engine trouble and requested permission to land. It was granted and the plane taxied to a stop, fifty-three Inspectors "jumped" out, signalling the start of an ORI (Operations Readiness Inspection). Schilling had not been inspected in approximately fifteen months while the Air Force-wide average was five months. When the inspection was over, the base came out on top with base activities receiving an "outstanding" rating, the highest rating possi-

\textsuperscript{64}Salina (KS) Journal, November 30, 1962.
550th SMS, which underwent its first ORI, came out with an average score on written and practical tests.\textsuperscript{67}

was termed a "unique inspection" was performed on Friday, August 16, 1963. Instead of military bearing, creased uniforms, and shined shoes, this inspection concerned itself with tread on tires, tuned-up engines, and rational procedures. This inspection involved over 500 vehicles at the base and was accomplished in compliance with a 15th AF Regulation, MIL 15, 1963 which required a semi-annual inspection of all ground vehicles assigned to a base.\textsuperscript{68}

The last two ORIs reported during this period occurred within two months of each other in 1964. On May 20, 1964, while Colonel Roy Crompton was on base to assume command of the 310th SAW, a twenty-eight man team from the 1st Inspection Group "swooped down" on the base for an ORI. Ironically, the Chamber of Commerce was busy planning an event which had been known as Schilling Appreciation Day which for 1964 had been changed to Schilling Aerospace Day to recognize modernization of the base. Despite all of the activity on base, the 310th flew through its fifth ORI in twenty-two months with ease.\textsuperscript{69}

During the week of July 15, 1964, around forty 15th AF inspectors paid a visit to the base for a facilities and maintenance inspection. All seemed to go well and 66 percent of the 162 facilities received an "excellent" rating which was just below an "outstanding" rating. This was to be expected as the base was in good shape and work had just been finished to modernize the base.

\textsuperscript{67} Salina (KS) Journal, January 7 and 24, 1963.
\textsuperscript{68} Salina (KS) Journal, August 16 and 22, 1963.
Alerts

Although related to training and inspections, alerts were different from what had been learned from training exercises and inspections were put in practice in conditions which simulated actual combat conditions. Whereas training and inspections were known to be just practice, few were really sure that the alerts were nothing less than actual war until the middle of the exercise. Alerts were also different in that they required maximum effort as a team from everyone involved rather than just a few. Everything had to be timed perfectly or else the whole war might just as in the real thing; and this was the objective of the alerts—work out problems before war broke out and it was too late.

Strategic Air Command units felt that they were always on alert. From time, however, things appeared so realistic from the outside that people. On March 14, 1961, Salina was informed that the base would be participating in a world-wide alert of all United States forces. It was to be of duration and not related to any special situation. However, the base allowed to say no more. On March 16, 1962, the base was closed to the public while simulated war games took place. Only emergency entrance permitted. Although the base "suffered heavy losses," the planes of the 819th AD kept watch on events. There were simulated radioactive fallout and when a man had suffered a lethal dose, he was taken to a morgue set up in the base communications center. The base thanked...


for not trying to get on base while this exercise was underway.  

However, in April of 1963, when the base underwent a similar exercise, it was a different story. Although the Salina Journal had announced on April 26 that games would be held on base on April 27 and that the base would be closed to civilians, some apparently did not get the word, because the base was deluged with phone calls from people trying to find out just what was going on.

A year later, the 310th SAW was engaged in a "Bar-None" training alert exercise. The planes from the base were tested on how well they could handle a simulated wartime mission. Every bomber crew was tested, bar none with no advance warning, which was where the exercise got its name. It was a quarterly event.

The exercise was completed, the crews returned to the base for an evaluation. In the last exercise, although no one knew it at the time, which was the "Bar-None" conducted during the first week of November, 1964, the bomb squad of the 310th SAW scored a "rare outstanding rating." Col. Roy Crompton, SAW Commander, sent his congratulations to all of the personnel involved in the Squadron Commanders.

There is a tendency in the military to "let go" and permit things to slide after an inspection is over. The personnel, through connections, usually know an inspection is coming and work overtime to straighten things out so that inspectors will find everything in top shape. After the inspectors leave, it is a "party to end all parties" and things start sliding until it is time to let go.

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or inspection. But at Schilling, this does not seem to have been the
though SAC is known for its "Marine atmosphere" and for being first
chilling seems to have adhered to the SAC creed better than most
a thoroughly trained unit is one that is relied upon in times of crisis
appears that Schilling was one base whose units were to be relied upon
of crisis.

Accidents

This period was a relatively mild one as far as aircraft accidents went.
two accidents at missile sites and three accidents involving four
reported which took the lives of six men. Only three planes were lost.
loss of life reported during this period occurred on Monday, October
0, when J. C. Nelson, 20, fell 170 feet to his death at the bottom of
missile site near Minneapolis, KS. A platform he and three others
working on started to collapse and they grabbed on to protruding steel
Nelson was too far away to do that. During the summer, a man was killed
Carlton site, bringing the missile deaths to two. 76

An incident that could have turned into trouble occurred on August 29,
when a 40th ARS KC-97 commanded by Captain Conrad L. Wilson developed
trouble shortly after takeoff on a training mission. The plane returned
to base without any problems after jettisoning its fuel. 77

The first fatal aircraft accident was reported on July 8, 1962. A 380th
47 took off from the base at 7:50 P.M., Friday, July 6 and crashed about
P.M. near Bird City, KS in the northwestern part of Kansas. 1st Lt. Howard
Steen, 29, Observer, was the lone survivor and he said he ejected on the

76Salina (KS) Globe-Sun, October 13, 1960.
1st Lt. Douglass P. Bishop, 28, Aircraft Commander, who died with 1st Lt. Welborn, junior, 27, Navigator. Debris was scattered over a two-acre site. Investigation at this site was hampered by a crowd of sight-seers that the Air Force could investigate the crash. Two months later, the Kansas Governor had to send in the National Guard to keep the crowd from the base. Part of the fuselage with the names of 1962, a 381st BS B-47 crew encountered engine trouble on a bombing and air refueling mission. They were supposed to fly about a mile apart with a 500-foot altitude difference. Before the crash, they were on a nine-hour and thirty-minute mission and landed the plane safely at Clinton-Sherman AFB, OK. Their plane started filling up with smoke and fumes, indicating a faulty engine. The approach and landing were without mishap and the crew was commended for the "calm, deliberate, precise manner" in the way they handled this emergency. Colonel Arnold, SAC Commander, recommended the crew for SAC Crew-of-the-Month.

The last accident reported during this period came on August 19, 1963 when two B-47s from the base collided into each other near Irwin, IA. The planes were supposed to fly about a mile apart with a 500-foot altitude difference. Before the crash, they were at 27,000 feet altitude. Three died in this accident, but one body was not recovered for seven days at a place two and one-half miles southwest of the crash site. Part of the fuselage with the names of the two officers killed in the crash and memorial marker near the site. Part of the fuselage with the names engraved on it was embedded in cement.

November of 1962, a 381st BS B-47 crew encountered engine trouble on a mission and landed the plane safely at Clinton-Sherman AFB, OK. Their plane started filling up with smoke and fumes, indicating a faulty engine. The approach and landing were without mishap and the crew was commended for the "calm, deliberate, precise manner" in the way they handled this emergency. Colonel Arnold, SAC Commander, recommended the crew for SAC Crew-of-the-Month.

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reactivated base had a far different safety record than did the base in 1940s. It would appear that the personnel were more thoroughly trained and showed greater pride in their work. Accidents often happen due to carelessness or other factors along the line and can be symptomatic of a problem in morale.

As of the base between 1951 and 1964 never approached the losses between 1949.

Commanders

This period starts at twelve noon on June 20, 1960 when the 802nd Air Division and the 802nd Combat Support Group were deactivated and the bulk of the 802nd Bomb Wing was officially transferred to Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS, leaving the 802nd Bomb Wing and the newly activated 310th Combat Support Group at Schilling. These units would be the major command units on base throughout the period. Between July 1, 1962 and June 30, 1963, the 22nd Strategic Air Division (SAD) would be headquartered at Schilling under the command of Col. J. Hayes, junior, who had served as Commander of the 310th Bomb Wing. He was the only Commander of the 22nd SAD while it was assigned to Schilling.

310th Bomb Wing
310th Strategic Aerospace Wing

Col. George Y. Jumper assumed command of the 310th Bomb Wing at twelve noon on June 20, 1960 and therein set a record on base which would never be broken. Before assuming command of the 310th, he had commanded the 40th Wing and the 802nd Air Division. The only other person to come this close to being Commander of the reactivated base. It was announced on February 2, 1960.

Colonel Jumper had been named Vice Commander of the Technical Training Lowry AFB, Colorado Springs, CO. He was being replaced by Col. Jack junior, Commander of the 341st Bomb Wing at Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX.

arrival in Salina, Colonel Hayes informed the Salina Journal that he had a "great deal about Salina. The Air Force figures that community as at Salina and Abilene (TX) are the best in the Air Force. I was very be assigned here." He had been assigned to Dyess AFB since 1955. 81

22nd SAD was transferred to Schilling AFB from Malmstrom AFB, MT on 1962 and Colonel Hayes assumed command of it. To replace him as Com-the 310th Wing, Col. Edison F. "Pete" Arnold, a twenty-one year veteran Air Force was transferred to Schilling from a base in England on July 11, Colonel Arnold served as Commander of the 310th SAW around twenty-months. He received orders on May 5, 1964 transferring him to Fairchild as Commander of the 92nd SAW. That unit was a B-52 Wing with a squadron of Atlas E missiles and KC-135 tankers. While in command of the 310th, Arnold had seen the last KC-97 leave and the first KC-135 arrive. 83

taking command of a wing that was equipped in the same manner that plans the 310th called for it to be equipped.

Unknown to him, or probably anyone else at the time, Col. Roy Crompton to be the last Commander of the 310th SAW. The new Commander of the 310th was born on July 12, 1919 in Atlanta, GA, received his wings in May of and since June 1, 1963 had been Commander of the 821st CSG at Ellsworth SD. In June of 1948, Colonel Crompton had piloted the first C-54 trans-

that landed in Berlin to relieve the Berlin Blockade. He had over

\[ \text{eqn} \]

From command of a combat support group to command

is a promotion and this was the only time that such a promotion had

in Schilling's history.

*Salina Journal* summed up the change of command of the 310th SAW at

in its May 6, 1964 editorial:

> Salina is glad to see Col. Pete Arnold, the wing commander at

Schilling, move out. . .Colonel Arnold has been able to achieve

a command record at Schilling that he is being promoted after

brief tour of duty. He has survived with honors a barrage of blitz

inspections, alert tests, and SAC 3rd-degree inquisitions. That he

done so is proof again that the men of Schilling and the facili­

ties of Schilling are of such high order that a commander who is on

the job has no place to go except up.

For some fifteen years, despite mischance, and occasional slips

the base has constantly improved. It has superb runways, a perfect

continental bombing range, compact support facilities of many kinds,

and a record of economical operation. The community continuously

enthusiastically has supported it. For one reason or another,

it also has attracted a large complement of skilled men who have met

all kinds of records in a wide variety of military activity.

The Department of Defense relies upon them to carry out some of

the most important of its missions. Sorry as Salina is to see the

Arnolds go, we are also proud that our base is the kind that can

insure good men deserved promotions.85

An editorial on a departing Commander at Schilling was unusual. With hind­s-

ly, it appears more significant than it probably was at the time. There

was nothing unusual about a Schilling Commander being transferred to

command of another Wing. Colonels Burchinal and Wells had done it in the

General Wilson had been transferred from command of the 802nd AD to

and of the 821st AD. But it was definitely a promotion for Colonel Crompton

command of the 310th SAW.

310th Combat Support Group

has been noted earlier, the 802nd CSG was deactivated on June 20, 1960 and 310th CSG activated to take its place. The name changed but the mission remained the same. Col. Julius B. Summers continued to serve as commander and 310th CSG Commander until July 31, 1961 when he was named commander of the 310th Wing. This was a promotion of sorts in that the logical step would have been a job as Wing Commander. However, it will be in another section that Colonel Summers found himself heading for Minot as Base Commander.

Col. Wallace F. MacGregor, on base since July, 1960 and Deputy Commander the 310th CSG since January 12, 1961, succeeded Colonel Summers as Base Commander on July 31, 1961. Colonel MacGregor was a native of Wycoff, NJ and entered the military in 1942. During his tenure as Base Commander, he was active in promoting good relations between the base and Salina. It was announced that Colonel MacGregor would be leaving Schilling for March AFB, CA on May 20, 1963 and would become Base Director of Services there. Until a successor was named, Col. Curtis Youngblood, Vice Base Commander, would serve as Base Commander on an interim basis.

Col. John R. King assumed command of the base on June 18, 1963 from Colonel Youngblood who assumed his former duties as Vice Base Commander. The new Base Commander had arrived from Grand Forks AFB, ND on June 16, 1963. He had received his BA degree from South Dakota State Teachers College, Spearfish, SD.

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After the Air Force on November 7, 1941, Less than one month later, King was named Commander of the 550th SMS on base and Col. Charles K. commander of the 550th SMS, became Base Commander on July 16, 1963. Colonel had been Commander of the 550th SMS since July 20, 1960 when he arrived after a four-year tour of duty at Offutt AFB, NE. No reason was or these changes.

Colonel Agan left for an assignment to Malmstrom AFB, MT less than a year. He was replaced by Col. James R. Sheffield, Vice Base Commander, on an basis until Col. John F. "Mike" Scanlan could arrive from England to command of the base. The new Base Commander arrived on base on August 4, 1964, from a three-year tour of duty in England. He was a native of St. Paul, had four children. In the late 1940s, he had served as Director of Ma- at then Smoky Hill AFB and two of his fellow officers assigned to the at the time had been Lt. Col. Curtis Youngblood, Base Director of Personnel who had also served as Base Commander for approximately a month in 1963), Chaplain Chester W. Ross. They were among the first to greet Colonel Scanlan returned to the base. Thus, this assignment was sort of a reunion for the men.

Mike Scanlan, who had received his nickname from Col. Leslie Mulzer, Smoky Commander from 1947 to early 1949, had originally been slated to become Commander of Mountain Home AFB, ID, but Colonel Arnold, 310th SAW Comman- had asked for him and his orders were changed about the same time that Colonel Arnold received orders to a new assignment. On his way to Schilling,

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manlan stopped off at Headquarters, SAC at Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE to see if he could find out about Schilling. He went over every inspection and learned that all was in order and the base was in very good shape. As he was about to continue his trip to Salina, a full Colonel friend called him into his office and showed him the criteria that SAC would use in closing bases. Schilling did not fit the criteria and he was assured that the base stood sixteenth or seventeenth on the list, meaning that SAC did not have to be drastically cut back before Schilling would be closed. 92

During this period, four men served as Commander of the 310th SAW and on served as Commander of the 310th CSG and the base. The longest time was twenty-two months by Colonel Arnold and the command of the 310th was fairly stable. But the command of the 310th CSG appears to have been less stable with seven men serving as Base Commander. Two men served less than one year and another served a little over a month. Of these three, two were Commanders. Lieutenant Colonel MacGregor served twenty-one months, 92 days, with Colonel Summers serving a little over twelve months, and Colonel Scanlan serving a little under a year.

This was a period of change for Schilling. The missiles were activated, EC-97s left, and the KC-135s arrived. Within months, the B-52s were expected to arrive on station. Colonels Crompton and Scanlan were on station in command fully expecting to serve at least a year at Schilling. Colonel Scanlan knew that his tenure was secure in that the base would not be closed as he was there.

Construction and Improvements

Missile construction was getting ready to shift into high gear at the

this period. To assist the Convair Corporation, which was in charge of the missile program, fourteen buildings on base were being remodeled to provide for the 1,500 technicians expected on base in the fall of 1960 to work on the missiles in the area. Local firms were invited to submit bids for the new readiness crew building at the base which Force accepted on July 28, 1960 and named "Minute Manor." This building would serve to enable the base to communicate with the personnel manning the twelve Atlas sites. The original purpose was for communication with the workmen but after they left, the tower was thought of and on August 28, 1960, it was announced that a 140-foot radio tower was being constructed in north to enable the base to communicate with the personnel manning the sites.

A new hospital was dedicated on October 14, 1960. Construction had begun in June of 1958. Plans were to tear down the old hospital as soon as possible so that the new building was completed and some of the old barracks-type buildings had already been sold. Since reactivation, the base hospital had treated 20,000 patients while in the old building. The principal speaker at the dedication was Brig. Gen. Theodore C. Bedwell, junior, Command Surgeon of Convair announced on September 27, 1960 that it would hire approximately 750 people locally for its work on the area missile sites. Only seventy-five...
employees were then in the area and most hiring would not start until
But by February 16, 1961 there were 1,800 people at work and that
expected to increase to around 3,000 by October, 1961. 97
w radar approach control (RAPCON) facility was dedicated on November
Lieutenant Colonel Greathouse, Commander of the 2028th AACS, accepted
ing for the base. It already had over $700,000 worth of modern radar
at it. 98 In 1961, the Air Force awarded contracts in excess of
7 for maintenance projects on base. This ranged from an $11,000 contract
replacement of space heaters to building rehabilitation. 99 On June 9,
was announced that the first stage of construction at the twelve Atlas
sites had been completed and formally turned over to the Air Force on
. Only the basic construction had been completed. 100
en the base had been reactivated in 1951, a labor dispute had broken
on a union tried to interrupt the work schedule by trying to organize
workers. In 1961, the pipefitters stopped work at several missile sites
area. There was no strike but the pipefitters charged that there was
ion over work jurisdiction involving members of their craft and General
ics, the firm then involved in the missile work. A tentative agreement
reached by October 2, 1961. 101
The runways received attention in the local press on January 16, 1962
it was announced that $1.8 million dollars was to be spent on runway im-

at the base. It was needed for the B-52s and KC-135s that were to
be released to the base. Congress had released the money and work was expected
shortly. The $1.8 million was changed to $2.3 million on February 28,

contracts for on-base repair and modification were released on March
and three went to Salina firms. These contracts varied from an $8,304
for modification of the automotive maintenance shop to painting pro-
duction of the motor pool parking lot in the amount of $12,782.103

base revealed how it intended to ready the runways for the new planes
be getting to the local press on April 17, 1962. First, the repair
base's 10,000 foot long "cross-wind runway" which was seldom used and
the east to northwest was being fixed up for use while the main runway
ed. In addition to strengthening the main runway, it would also be
3. Blast deflectors would be installed around the runways.104

the start of September, 1962, most of the work on the missile sites had
pleted and the 550th SMS crews were taking over. This had brought
a temporary reduction in Salina's population which was reflected in school
ments and the number of rental properties put back on the market. It
ssible that the los. of the construction workers would be made up by
defense programs as well as private industry and business development.

elieve Atlas sites were formally turned over to the Air Force on September
962 in a token ceremony at the Carneiro site west of Salina. SAC took
ession of them after they had been two and one-half years in the building.

more than 3,200 men had been involved in the con-

work. 105

on the runways was completed by November 18, 1962 and the Salina

interpreted it to mean that Schilling would continue to be used by SAC.

was capable of handling any aircraft in the United States which meant

Schilling Air Force Base is one of the major bases in SAC." Base officials

able to comment on the future of the base but in a carefully worded

ent, Colonel Arnold, 310th SAW Commander, expressed optimism: "Our runway

ments are certainly a solid indication that Schilling will probably be

as a SAC base for the foreseeable future." A major portion of the work

adding fifty-feet wide strips of concrete varying from twenty-two to

inches in thickness, were installed on either side of the runway and

ed the landing strips total effective length to 13,330 feet for the B-52.

y-four sets of blast-deflector fences were also installed alongside the

t line and were supposed to bounce noise into the air as well as keeping

ts from kicking up debris and protect ground crews. "It is now believed

the deactivation of the 40th ARS is a part of the Air Force upgrading of

lling."106 Continuing to improve the base and make it possible to expand,

lling officials announced on February 1, 1963 that five World War II-era

dings no longer in use were to be sold. A radio building, three adminis-

tive buildings, and a warehouse were to be sold by bids. 107

Rumors started circulating in June of 1963 that construction workers would

returning to Salina to update the Atlas missiles in the area and that someone

380

ring motel rooms. This was confirmed on July 1 when the first of 400

arriving for "Project Update." General Dynamics was charged with

and announced that the firm expected to hire 375 workers from the

labor supply to augment the labor force on the missiles. Over $6 million

located to be pumped into the local economy. As this work was finished,

authorized the installation of an "electric eye" system to replace

guards around the missile sites. This work was expected to be com-

sometime in 1965. 108

October of 1963, two contracts totalling $26,520 were released for the

of Schilling facilities. Salina Tent and Awning received a contract for

to repair missile enclosure boots at the twelve area sites and Woods

Construction of Salina received a $3,252 contract to replace the glass

tower. This work was supposed to start on November 1, 1963. 109

were taken by the Army Corps of Engineers for the construction of a

d radar building at the base and for the installation of new equipment.

urrent unit had a range of fifty-three miles while the new one was to have

us of sixty miles and would be available for civilian use. 110 In 1964,

contracts were awarded for work at the base. The first was a series of

contracts involving $164,000. One was a contract for $64,000 awarded to

Betts Baking Company of Hutchinson to supply the base with bread for a

Four painting contracts were awarded on October 4 along with a contract

up a security fence around the south alert area for $11,847. Seventeen

later, it was announced that four more contracts had been released totalling

108 Salina (KS) Journal, June 5, July 1, August 14, 1963 and November 20,


One involved $5,023 for the construction of side-walks in Schilling.

**Community Relations**

has been noted in this paper that from 1951 on, community relations were continued to draw attention throughout the Air Force. Salina ap­
have continued remaining proud of the base. Examples of this rangedoudly displaying an Atlas missile in the Sunset Plaza shopping center brief period of time to noting from time to time that Schilling's economic on the area was quite significant to taking note that as a result of the Seline County was off limits to Communists to inviting Democrat President Johnson to visit Schilling and Salina during the 1964 Presidential elec­
campaign. 112

no examples of the state of base/community relations during this period reported to this writer by young officers stationed at the base. Col. K. Winston was a young pilot who served first as a KC-97 and then a KC-lot during his assignment at Schilling. He had heard of the old nick-pertaining to the base but found base/community relations to be "quite ant." "One payday, all military members were paid in cash and received pay in $2 bills. They, of course, flooded the local economy for several as the multiplier effect was experienced." 113

Wilfred C. Hamann arrived on Schilling during this period and it was his


113 Letter from Col. Donald K. Winston dated October 5, 1982. Col. Winston involved in another demonstration of a sign of base/community relations. 1964, the telephone company took a picture of his crew responding to an alert their then-new KC-135 and used the print on the cover of the Salina, Kansas book for that year. That phone book is on file in the Salina Library.
assignment out of pilot training. He found the base to be about like
base he had been to by that time in his career.

However, I found the people of Salina to be extremely friendly
and outgoing. For example, when my wife and I were shopping in a
thing store for the first time, I happened to be in uniform. We
selected the items we wanted to buy and were asked if we would
y cash or charge it. When I replied that I did not have a charge
ount at the store, the salesman's comment was: "Lieutenant, if
are stationed at Schilling, you automatically have a charge ac­
count at my store." I found this to be the attitude all over Salina.114

The base was Salina's chief industry and as such was the main prop in the
y. It was reported in early 1961 that Schilling occupied 37,410 acres
d (including the OQ Gunnery Range, Camp Phillips or Phillips Village, and
ssile bases), and had an inventory of over $267 million with an annual
ill of over $25 million. There were nearly 5,000 military and civilian em-
es on base with 13,000 dependents and these people spent approximately $1.8
onth in Salina as opposed overall to $5.6 million being spent totally
segments of the local society. The base bought over $3.5 million worth
ods on the local economy for local use.115

Schilling also did its part to keep community relations good in a variety
ays. One of those ways was to contribute to charity fund raising drives.
60, Schilling set a goal of $14,000 as its share for the Community Chest
ee and on October 25, Colonel Jumper, Commander of the 310th Wing, presented
check for that amount to local Community Chest officials. Little attention
aid to fund drives until December 5, 1963 when Lt. Col. Frank Knapp pre-
ted a check for $13,650 to local Community Chest officials which was 105

Whether Colonel Knapp was project officer for the base or merely a spokesman was not mentioned.

In 1961, it was revealed that every fourth person in Salina was either of the Air Force or a member of an Air Force family. The 1960 census total base population of 11,758, not counting those families who lived on base. Approximately 17 percent of the base's married personnel lived in Manor and 3,000 of the 4,500 military personnel assigned to the base married. Because of the economic impact that the base had on the area, there were concerns about the lack of industrial development in Salina. True, it had elevators and railroad yards, but that would not be enough to offset the economic impact that the base had on the area, there were concerns about the lack of industrial development in Salina. True, it had railroad yards, but that would not be enough to offset the base if anything ever happened. Although the base was expected to receive B-52s and KC-135s indicating that the base would be around a longer, there was a feeling that the base was not permanent and that Salina would start trying to build up an industrial base. What caused this fear was not stated. Was the writer of this article just speculating or was there something being whispered somewhere indicating that the base was doomed?

It was announced on April 20, 1961 that base officials were making arrangements with fourteen area communities for mutual aid in fire protection. Schiller's fire department had assisted communities in the past when help was needed. With the twelve missile complexes as far away from the base as fifty odd miles, the base saw the possibility that it might need assistance in the event

Julius B. Summers, junior, who had been at Schilling since June of 1962, received orders during the week of May 24, 1962 for Minot AFB, ND where he was to serve as Base Commander. Since his arrival at Schilling, he had served as Materiel for the 802nd AD, Commander of the 802nd CSG/310th CSG, and his last assignment was as Vice Commander of the 310th Wing. Before he left Schilling, he wrote a letter to the editor of the Salina (KS) Globe-Sun which appeared on June 3, 1962 stating that “we feel we’re leaving on the eve of our departure from Salina, Marion and I, quite naturally, I feel, go back in our thoughts to our arrival...three years ago. We had just completed a wonderful 3½ year tour, split almost evenly between Japan and Hawaii, and were wondering what the future held for us. As we left Colorado...Marion said: “Tell me something about Salina and Schilling.” I could only reply: “It’s flat,” not mentioning the tarpaper shacks, the snow, the wind and the cold I remembered from my last visit in February, 1954. Frankly, I was afraid to talk too much for fear that she would ask to be put off in Denver.

When we got to Salina, I found my fears unfounded. Trees shaded the beautiful lawns, flowers were in full bloom and most surprising of all, people smiled and spoke to us on the streets. We stopped at a very nice motel and the manager personally came over to see if we were comfortable. All of these were little things but believe me they counted.

At Schilling, we were also surprised. Almost all the tarpaper shacks were gone, buildings gleamed white in the sunlight and wonder of wonders, our belongings were on hand for immediate installation in a comfortable house in Schilling Manor. Of course, there have been problems over the three years. I couldn’t justify my...rank if there were none. I’ll never forget one morning when I got a hurry-up call from Wichita. The man explained that he was digging an oil well southeast of the base where a bombing range had formerly been located. His workers had uncovered an unexploded 1,000 pound bomb and in as much as he had heavy equipment running over it he was a little afraid that it might explode and someone might get hurt. You can be sure that we took care of that right away.

Tomorrow, we are leaving for our new duty station at Minot, ND.

and a new adventure. Naturally, we are wondering what the people and climate will be like. So far, all I've told Marion is that it is flat and gets a little colder than Salina in February. To the good people of Salina and Schilling, we feel that we can pay you no higher compliment than to say that in twenty-six years association with the military, and over thirty duty stations, we really feel for the first time that we are leaving home.121

Although the Colonel was slightly in error about the location of the bomb, he probably said it best as to how most Schilling personnel felt about it. Salina offered the personnel from the base a variety of events open to military personnel and their families.

"Honor the Uniform" Week

"Honor the Uniform" Week continued to be a distinctly unique Salina event that honored the men at Schilling and encouraged them to wear their dress uniform downtown for one seven-day period each year. For this, they received gifts from the merchants, free cups of coffee, and discounts off of any purchases they made.

The first "Honor the Uniform" Week of this period was held from November 11 to November 17, 1960. Local merchants donated over $3,000 worth of merchandise to the free Bingo Party held in Memorial Hall and open only to people from the base. Around fifty airmen were invited to attend a joint meeting of Salina's civic clubs on November 9. On November 4, Colonel Jumper, 310th Wing Commander, urged his men to participate in "Honor the Uniform" Week. "To the best of my knowledge, this event is unique to Salina and Schilling. The people are top-notch and helpful. We are lucky to be here." Over 1,700 people attended the Bingo Party on November 9. Colonel Jumper later stated that the Week was the best community relations project that he had seen in twenty-four years of serv-

more than thirty bases. 122

The only change announced that year was that the Salina Journal offered a 10 percent discount on all classified ads placed by members of the armed services in the area. 123 After it was over, Col. Jack W. Hayes, Commander of the 4W, sent an open letter to the Salina Journal, thanking Salina and its area for "Honor the Uniform" Week:

On behalf of the men and their families of the base, our sincere appreciation is extended to all of you who helped to make the week one of the highlights of this year's activities. This event is much looked forward to by all Schilling personnel and is concrete evidence of the goodwill existing between the military and civilian populace. Thanks for your generosity and good will. We are proud to be a part of your community. 124

About the only thing out of the ordinary that happened for the tenth "Honor the Uniform" Week was that it was supposed to occur between November 11 and 17, but the Cuban Missile Crisis forced the dispersion of planes from the base and the event was rescheduled for December 9 to 15, 1962. 125

The eleventh "Honor the Uniform" Week was routine. But during the last "Honor the Uniform" Week, held from November 8 to November 13, 1964, a special dinner and reception was held at the Salina Country Club honoring Schilling's NCOs. 126

It is interesting to note that eight days later, the closing of Schilling was announced, which will be covered in greater detail in the next chapter.

Schilling Appreciation Day

This event had become another Salina tradition and was openly designed to raise money for the base welfare funds. Still, it was popular and the Air Force had to condone it by permitting its "Thunderbirds" to put on shows whenever available and sent in popular aircraft for public tours. Ticket sales for Schilling Appreciation Day, 1961 were launched on April 10 and first day ticket sales marked $6,800 mark which was $700 over the previous year. This event was no assisted by an announcement on April 18 that the Thunderbirds, which had visited Salina in 1958, would return on June 2 for Appreciation Day. By June 23, eleven thousand tickets at one dollar a piece had been sold. Appearance by the Mills Brothers and Connie Stevens were confirmed for the June 3 mg floor show. 127

Finally, Schilling Appreciation Day came and went. Some 50,000 people of the base and showed their appreciation for the base (and their dollar tment) by attending the events on base. A change occurred in the beauty that it was done by each unit putting up a candidate for the "Miss atojet, 1961" contest and the winner was determined by selling tickets to contest by each squadron. The 36th MMS candidate won the title and $150 e money. 128

The last Appreciation Day, the eighth one, was held on June 6, 1964 and named Schilling Aerospace Day. "Thousands of visitors" showed up and toured base as "Salina saluted its warlike but friendly neighbor to the south." mong the visitors was Congressman Bob Dole, Wint Smith's successor, who was king re-election to Congress. A B-52 was on display and tours were being

The 310th ARS won first prize in the float contest. Crowd estimates difficult to determine owing to the number of cars that flocked in and out base.\textsuperscript{129}

Open Houses and Receptions

were a host of receptions sponsored by the Military Affairs Committee Salina Chamber of Commerce and several Open Houses sponsored by the base were reported in the local press. The first reception reported during period was for Schilling's Commanders starting at 6:30 P.M. on September 60 at the Salina Country Club. Other receptions planned for the rest of included ones honoring NCOs and Junior Officers. At the first event, Brigadier General Yancey, Commander of the 819th AD then the parent unit of Schilpraised Salina for its hospitality and stated that it was known through-
the Air Force. There were 227 people in attendance.\textsuperscript{130}

The first Open House of this period was on September 24, 1960 when the base open from 9:00 A.M. to 12 Noon in honor of Kids' Day. Around 500 kids and the base and saw the latest in Air Force equipment. Lt. Col. Bruce was the project officer for this event.\textsuperscript{131}

On February 7, 1961, Col. Jack Hayes, newly arrived Commander of the 310th was presented Salina's Key to the City by Mayor Carl Ramsey at the Kiwanis's weekly luncheon. Colonel Hayes stated that "this is the first key to a y I've received. I've been escorted out of several, however."\textsuperscript{132} This was first non-Chamber of Commerce event involving someone from the base reported

\textsuperscript{129}\textit{Salina (KS) Journal}, June 7, 1964. In early 1963, only 15,000 showed after 50,000 people had been expected.

\textsuperscript{130}\textit{Salina (KS) Globe-Sun}, September 15, 1960.


Corwin received a plaque and made a parting comment about base/community:

The best thing you of this community have done and can do for your country is to give the men who defend you peace of mind. When our pilots know that their wives and children are safe at home in Salina, a good town, with good churches and schools, with good housing and medical care, they can concentrate on doing a good job. I know of no other place in the service where military personnel so rightfully speak of our community and where the civilians so rightfully speak of our base.133

Over 1,000 people toured the base at its first full-scale Open House of period commemorating Armed Forces Day on May 20, 1961. The gates were open 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. and a display of thirty-three different types of aircraft then in the Air Force inventory were on display at the south end of flight line near the Base Operations building.134 Because of the proximity Armed Forces Day to Appreciation Day, the attention of the local press seems to have been concentrated on the latter event which raised money for the base.

By December 12, 1961, the base had just put together an hour-long slide film presentation titled "The Schilling Story." There was a twenty-minute briefing covering the mission of the base and a thirty-minute movie on Atlas program followed by a question and answer period. This was available church and civic groups and the base furnished a speaker to answer any questions the audience might have about Schilling and its operation. Lt. Col. James Farley, special assistant to the Deputy Wing Commander for Maintenance, was

133 Salina (KS) Journal, March 27 and April 7, 1961.
t guest.137

However, it appears that Salinans were not the only ones who read the Salina
Journal because at 4:00 P.M. on November 4, inspectors of the 15th AF arrived
conduct an ORI. Colonel Arnold, 310th SAW Commander, "pleaded to no avail"
get the inspection postponed to the next day. But twenty-five Commanders,
five wives, and Colonel Robinson did attend the Reception.138 Curiosity
ups the question whether the twenty-five Commanders who attended were ones
had their "shop ship-shape" and felt confident enough that they could attend
reception or whether these men commanded activities not essential to an ORI?
re is no satisfactory response to this question.

Twelve Salina women were taken on a tour of an Atlas F missile site on Jan-

1964. Carolyn Dunham wrote an article about that adventure and was impressed with what she had seen. After a tour of the operations part of the mis-
squadron on base, they (the women) had been taken on a tour of the McPherson

It has already been noted that Schilling held a christening ceremony for
first KC-135 tanker on March 8, 1964. The first Open House of 1964 was held
at time to show off the "City of Salina II," as the plane was named, to the
public. But the weather was not very warm that day and the temperature did not
reach past the mid-thirties. As a result, attendance at this event was low.

The last annual Commander's reception was held at the Salina Country Club
the evening of Monday, November 9, 1964. Over 200 Commanders, their
spouses, and members of the Salina Chamber of Commerce attended this event.

Red Cross Blood Drives

Participation in the Red Cross Blood Drives furthered base/community rela-
tionships and showed that the base was interested in helping to promote good will.

Local press reported on five blood drives involving Schilling and Salina

- December 16, 1960 and October 8, 1964. The drives of April 26, 1961
- October 8, 1964 received little attention. For the blood drive that was
  scheduled on December 15, 1960, Salina and the base had identical records. Both
  assigned quotas of 160 pints and both gave 192 pints. This drive was spon-
  sed by the Saline County Red Cross. On August 23, 1962, the Red Cross an-
  nounced that its bloodmobile had recently visited the base and collected 123

of blood. Schilling’s quota had been 121 pints. The bloodmobile planned
in visit for October 8 and 9 with Schilling having a 175 pint a day quota
\[\text{\textsuperscript{143}}\] Owing to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the bloodmobile did not return
base until November 26, 1962. Schilling was given a one-day quota of
nts to meet but only contributed eighty-seven. However, the Red Cross an-
and that it was pleased with the response considering the fact that the
was on alert.\[\text{\textsuperscript{144}}\]

Morale

Morale appears to have been high during this period. Everyone knew that
10th Bomb Wing and Schilling Air Force Base were the best, and with each
the base continued to hold its own. Schilling was in a state of transition.
was progressing on the missile sites and runways. New aircraft were ex-
ld and relations with Salina continued to be good. Everything was up to
at Schilling. At the start of this period, Schilling Dining Hall number
which catered to members of the 310th CSG, revealed that it was offering
ner-type meals. That is, those eating there who only wanted a sandwich or
of coffee could sit at the counter instead of at a table.\[\text{\textsuperscript{145}}\] In the last
ter, it was learned that the dining halls had waitress service. Whether
was continued after the 40th Wing was transferred to Forbes AFB was not
olved.

Personnel at Schilling continued to better themselves by taking college
es during their off-duty time. Bethany College of Lindsborg, Marymount
lege of Salina, and Kansas Wesleyan University of Salina, offered twenty-two

\[\text{\textsuperscript{143}}\text{Salina (KS) Journal, August 23, 1962.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{144}}\text{Salina (KS) Journal, November 27, 1962.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{145}}\text{Impact, July 8, 1960.}\]
courses to base personnel for the 1960 fall semester.\textsuperscript{146} The WAF Band, the only Air Force musical group composed entirely of women, was expected to perform at Schilling on December 16, 1960 at 7:00 P.M. in the theater. This performance was open to the public and admission was free.\textsuperscript{147}

A team of Air Force and civilian food service experts were on base during the week of February 24, 1961 as part of a world-wide Air Force food service competition. Schilling's dining halls were one of fifteen bases competing for the 1961 Hennessey Trophy for food service excellence. The 310th Food Service won had won the SAC competition three years running.\textsuperscript{148} It won the Trophy, the time of presentation of the award was not announced in the press.

"Schilling University" received more attention on July 9, 1961. The "campus" was a one-story building west of the 310th CSG Headquarters building on base. Amazing 95% of all personnel assigned to the base were enrolled in some off-duty training and the base led SAC in off-duty education.\textsuperscript{149} It appeared that either SAC or the 310th Wing Commander was deeply involved in encouragement of this program. Furthermore, it is doubtful that all airmen involved in college courses, as some may have been taking correspondence courses in such diverse trades as watchmaking and locksmithing or on-base vocational courses.

In July of 1961, it was learned that twenty airmen at Forbes AFB had been relieved of their regular duties and assigned to life guard duty at an officers' swimming pool. In addition, each squadron had been ordered to provide a quota

Personnel to take care of the golf course. Schilling responded that it had swimming pools on base but no golf course. Some airmen had been detailed to guards in the past, but that practice had been stopped pending word SAC Headquarters on procedures. To cover itself, Schilling announced that he used civilians from Salina for this duty from time to time in the past.150

There was a very real concern about nuclear warfare in the early 1960s, setting in a rash of fall-out shelter construction in the United States to be a means of surviving a nuclear war. However, the base informed the Journal that no special fall-out shelter construction was underway at the time and none was planned. The base was doing everything it could to prepare men and dependents for survival from "a possible nuclear attack."151

Schilling started an Air Force Aid Society Drive on August 2, 1962 which ran for fifteen days. The Air Force Aid Society was an emergency and aid fund set up exclusively for Air Force personnel. In 1961, Schilling had paid out $4,328 in eleven grants and thirty-five non-interest bearing loans. In August 1, 1962, it had paid out $2,967 in seven grants and twenty-five loans.152

President Kennedy inspired the fifty-mile hike and six airmen decided to prove that they were as tough as the Marines, who were supposed to be adept at such hikes, by going for a 50.2-mile hike. These men belonged to the FMS and four completed the hike in fifteen and one-half hours. Before they started the hike, they traveled the hilly course by car and measured the distance. "Dear Sal: Anything a Marine can do, an Airman can do better!"

A big boost to morale occurred on October 2, 1963 when President John F. Kennedy signed "with great pleasure" a bill granting an average 14.4 percent increase to members of the 2.7 million members of the armed forces. "The security of this world of ours and its security depend in good measure on these men." This act added $2.5 million a year to the base pay roll and most of it was expected to find its way into the local economy. A Colonel with twenty-four years of service would get $15,530 a year; Lieutenant Colonels with eighteen years $12,432; Majors with fourteen years $10,594; Captains with ten years $8,966; First Lieutenants with four years $7,596; Chief Warrant Officers with twenty-four years $9,936; Chief Master Sergeants with twenty-six years $7,632; Master Sergeants with nineteen years $6,792; Master Sergeants with eight-years $6,192; Tech Sergeants with fourteen years $5,472; Staff Sergeants with ten years $4,812; Airmen First Classes with five years $4,003; Airmen and Classes with one year $3,200; Airmen Third Classes with no time in grade $2,64; and Airmen Basics $1,968. This did not include allowances for quarters and rations. 154

Retention did not receive very much attention in either the local or base during this period. But on October 11, 1963 A1C Amil Collins was the eighty-first airman to re-enlist on Schilling between May and October, giving Schilling a 100 percent mark on its retention quota in SAC. 155

Schilling seems to have been an oddity as an Air Force base in that while it had a recreation facility at Kanopolis Reservoir west of Salina, a gym, two

tennis courts, a youth center, clubs, and a playground, it did not have a golf course. SAC released $56,000 for a nine-hole golf course to be constructed on the old Camp Phillips reservation on February 25, 1964, four miles west of the base. Ground was broken on October 7, 1964. It was to be a help project, meaning that volunteer labor was to be used, with technical assistance provided by the 310th Civil Engineering Squadron.\(^{156}\)

### Spiritual Affairs

In the early part of this period, the base's spiritual affairs received attention in the local press and then it died off after the early part of this period. The Chaplains assigned to Schilling were actively involved in life on base. On July 12, 1960, twenty-three women under the direction of Chaplain Smith began an Air Force-directed religious census of base personnel. Information collected was to be used in planning the religious and cultural on base.\(^{157}\) The results of this census were not revealed but they would have been quite interesting had they been released to the public.

It was learned on July 22, 1960 that Chaplain Hampe, A3C William Cowsert, Sgt. and Mrs. George Eaton, and Capt. and Mrs. Joseph C. Valentour were attending the eighth annual Spiritual Life Conference at Estes Park, CO from July 25 to July 27. Nearly 400 Air Force Protestants were expected to attend the conference.\(^{158}\) What the objectives of this Conference were was not revealed this was the only time that the Conference was referred to in the local press.

An ambitious project started taking shape on August 26, 1960 for the first Arbor's Day, scheduled for September 19 on base. It was to be an all-day ac-

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\(^{157}\) *Salina (KS) Journal*, July 1 and 12, 1960.

similar in organization to Law Enforcement Day. The area covered was
to Concordia, west to Russell, south to Hutchinson, and east to Abilene.

hundred invitations had been mailed out and sixty had accepted. Appar-
y, it went off without any problems and approximately 200 clergymen attended
cvent held in the chapel annex. They were greeted by Maj. C. V. Smith,
of Schilling's Chaplains, and Col. George Y. Jumper, 310th Wing Commander.

assumed that since there was a considerable amount of interest in the
ile program at the base that the clergymen discussed the impact that the
ile bases would have on their respective congregations.

The Jewish Torah was dedicated at Schilling on Sunday, November 20, 1960
4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. in the base chapel. This was the first time that
ceremony had been held in Salina. Around seventy-five people attended this

To acquaint personnel assigned to the base with different religious prac-
es of various Protestant denominations, Chaplain D. F. Riechers launched a
rent type of Protestant service at the February 24, 1961 evening service.
hope to get various churches in the community to cooperate in presenting
itive contributions of their particular churches demonstrating the riches of
Protestant Church and the contributions each denomination makes."162

Clubs

Ever since General Wilson opened the base service clubs to civilian member-
in 1956, the local press had given some coverage to what happened to them.

159Salina (KS) Journal, August 26, 1960.
clubs, both service-type organizations and special-interest, provided an
energy as well as boosting morale by giving personnel something to
base in their off-duty time. There was also a National Sojourners Club
Schilling Chapter 442 honored Col. Robert F. Corwin, retiring 802nd
Group Commander, on April 13, 1961 in the Officers' Club. Colonel
was a former President and its oldest member. The Club had forty members
Capt. Robert Cameron was President.

An airmen's annex to the NCO Club was announced as ready for opening on
1, 1961. The NCO Club Board of Governors allotted $3,000 to recondition
house the annex and a committee of ten airmen had been formed to
with the NCO Board in managing the annex. Membership was open to all airmen
twenty-one and over and they were to pay membership dues of two dollars a

The age restriction seems to indicate that the objective of this
was to provide junior enlisted personnel with a place where they could
liquor by the drink. The present Airmen's Service Clubs usually have only
ack bar where beer can be obtained and game rooms.

The Schilling AFB Coin Club announced on December 7, 1962 that it was
a round table auction at 7:30 P.M. on December 18 in the Base Community
er. Maj. H. L. Oberholtzer was President and Maj. L. Bolce was Secretary/
urer. The group had been organized in November of 1962.

lt. Col. Sam Elias had been manager of the Schilling Service Clubs for six
and had probably been the one charged with opening the Clubs to the public
1956. It was announced that he had been transferred to Homestead AFB, FL to

charge of the Clubs on that base effective July 16, 1963. He was to be
headed by CWO Frederick W. Gaddis who was serving in the Pacific and would
arrive until sometime in September. Until then, the Clubs would be run by
men assigned the job on a temporary basis. 166

Holidays

Holidays are always a festive occasion and in the early days of this period,
received attention in the local press. But for some reason, the coverage
ended after Thanksgiving Day, 1962. The Base Fire Department and Salina's
had cooperated in 1960 to ensure that 200 underprivileged children in
received Christmas toys. Broken toys were to be collected by the Jaycees,
d by the firemen at the base, and then distributed in town. S. Sgt. John
was in charge of this program and was assisted by twenty of his col-
dues. 167

For the third consecutive year, the 310th Air Refueling Squadron, SAC's
champion air refueling unit, entertained forty orphans from Wichita's
ren's Home. They were brought to the base in Air Force buses and welcomed
major Cantrell, 310th ARS Commander. Then they were taken on a tour of the
and treated to lunch in the 310th Wing Dining Hall, which had been chosen
one of the Air Force's best dining halls for 1960. Movies were shown and
laus appeared presenting each child with candy and a gift. At 3:30 P.M.
children left Schilling to return to Wichita. 168

As far as things went for the base, a traditional holiday menu was planned
the men who remained on base for the 1960 Christmas holiday. Most of the

onnel would be off but alert crews, security forces, maintenance men, and operations personnel would be on duty. However, the base reminded Salina that base aircraft crews remained on alert—a Christmas present to the nation. To reduce loss of life, Schilling launched a "stay at home" campaign over three-day 1961 Labor Day weekend. The idea was to keep as many people as able at home and off the highways. Festivities included events at all of Service Clubs on base to keep the men occupied. But what occupied the at the Clubs was not mentioned. The 310th Wing held a semi-formal Yuletide party for its officers and their at the Officers' Club on base. Approximately 250 couples attended the 169 which was held on December 16, 1961. For the fourth and last time that Salina Journal reported it, the 310th ARS, with Maj. Charles J. York as Commander, collected $500 for presents for forty-one orphans from the Wichita Children's Home. The squadron had originally planned on having thirty-three children guests. If the 310th ARS sponsored more such events, the press did not report it during this period. Schilling units were still on alert as a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis Thanksgiving time, 1962. Arrangements were made so that each man could have an all-course dinner without interfering with his alert status. The 310th Food Service Squadron had prepared more than 4,000 pounds of turkey, 800 pounds of , 1,000 pounds of potatoes, 600 pies, and 200 pounds of cranberry sauce. And 4,000 people were expected to eat Thanksgiving dinner on base. At this

there were 117 people assigned to the squadron.  

Dependents

The first activity concerning Schilling's dependents was announced on August 19, 1960. Military personnel and dependents were given the opportunity to participate in a briefing held at the new alert crew building on August 20 from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. Manor, as it was named, was located at the north end of the base near the edge of the flight line. It was designed for quick exit and crews who would use it on August 21, were expected to be able to reach their planes in about half the time previously required.  

On October 13, 1962, around 500 dependents toured the base to see where they worked and the equipment they used. A briefing was held to acquaint visitors with the Air Force, SAC, and Schilling mission. Each squadron also gave a briefing to explain the role they played at the base. Colonel George C. Jones, Vice Commander of the 310th SAW, was the project officer for this event.  

Of interest was the announcement that an Air Force Wife's Orientation course was to be held at Schilling in 1963. "All wives new to the Air Force or who are required to attend this three-day course." Certificates of completion were to be presented at the end of this course. What happened if the wives did not attend this course was not mentioned. This was the last time that such a course was announced in the local press.

Civilians

With the start of the missile complex construction in the Salina/Schilling area.

A civilian labor shortage occurred and would not really end until late 1961 and early 1962. The Salina Journal announced on September 4, 1960 that there were immediate openings at the twelve area missile sites for over 100 mechanical and electrical inspectors. Salaries ranged from $4,345 to $6,435 a year and these were Civil Service positions which meant that an exam had to be taken. It was learned on November 10, 1960 that 147 civilian employees at the base would get a five-cent-an-hour pay increase effective November 18. At this time, there were 326 civilians working at the base. Two years later, this group received an eight-cent-an-hour pay increase.

In June of 1962, Civil Service jobs were available on base for sewage plant workers, warehousemen, and pest controllers. The starting pay was $2.20 an hour for warehousemen who started at between $1.75 and $1.90 an hour. Fourteen months later, jobs for auto mechanics at $2.36 an hour, gardeners at $1.84 an hour, electricians at $2.36 an hour, laborers at $1.67 an hour, and refrigeration personnel at $2.36 an hour were announced as being available at the base.

The Salina Journal announced on May 4, 1964 that examinations were being given at the base for Civil Service jobs. Jobs available were for water and sewage plant workers, carpenters, painters, plumbers, sales store checkers, heavy equipment operators, and auto mechanics. These jobs paid $2.34 an hour except for mechanics and heavy equipment operators who received $2.23 an hour and sales store checkers received $302 a month.

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Personnel Difficulties

Only six incidents were reported during this period in the category of personnel difficulties relating to base/community relations. The first event was reported in November, 1960 and announced the arrest by the Saline County Sheriff's department of an airman who was to be charged with grand larceny and burglary after investigations had been completed. Between $5,000 and $10,000 worth of merchandise, allegedly stolen from the area, was found in his trailer home beneath a nearby bridge. No further report was forthcoming.

In the only bad check case reported in the 1951 to 1967 era, which in itself is an amazing statistic, the accused Air Force representative was released on bond after waiving a preliminary hearing on an arraignment on charges of reporting falsely drawn checks in interstate commerce. There is no report on the outcome of this case.

It was learned on March 5, 1962 that three airmen were being detained in connection with an alleged racial fight in Hutchinson, KS in which two men were robbed. One of the airmen was charged with maiming and wounding a Hutchinson man on March 4, but he was acquitted by a Hutchinson jury and returned to duty April 15.

In October, 1962, two airmen stationed at Schilling, who, as soon as they were discharged from the Air Force, called the base and reported that a bomb had been planted there. They were identified, arrested, pleaded guilty, fined $100 each, and given suspended three-month jail sentences.

183 Salina (KS) Journal, March 5, 14, and April 15, 1962.
The Salina Journal in March, 1963 reported a serious domestic relations situation involving two members of the Air Force and the ex-wife of one of them. The men had suffered emotional problems due to their recent divorces, according to the newspaper account, and with a contemplated marriage, the one man tried to kill the wife, killed the other man, and himself.185

The last incident reported in this period found an airman charged with assisting with a deadly weapon in connection with a tavern fight. He was released on a $5,000 bond.186 No further details were given.

Recognition

Recognition of personnel for various acts is recognized in the military as a means of enhancing morale. It is usually done through promotions, medals, commendations for suggestions made to improve job performance, and other like things. During this period, promotions were given considerable attention by the Salina Journal. Twenty-two articles appeared in that paper concerning them.

The first mention was made on December 4, 1960 when twenty-six NCOs were promoted to Tech and Master Sergeant. The last promotions announced during this period was on November 8, 1964 when three Majors were promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the 310th SAW.187 On June 1, 1962, a record 422 airmen were promoted; forty-two NCOs were promoted on November 29, 1963; ninety-nine Lieutenants were promoted to Captain between October 1, 1963 and September 30, 1964; thirty Captains were promoted to Major between January 1 and March 31, 1961; and twenty Majors were promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on March 15, 1962.188 Only two Lieu-

Colonels were promoted to full Colonel during this period. Lt. Col. M. Berry, Chief of Maintenance for the 550th SMS, was promoted to full Colonel on March 31, 1963. He had been in the Air Force since 1940. The Commander of the 310th OMS, Lt. Col. James R. Sheffield, was promoted to full Colonel on November 13, 1963. He had been on base since April of 1961. Later, he would become Vice Commander of the base and serve approximately forty days as interim Base Commander in 1964.

There were seven presentations of medals reported at the base between May 1961 and January 20, 1964 involving forty-five men. M. Sgt. Paul Batterman received the Air Force Commendation Medal (AFCM) on May 22, 1961 for his work with the 310th Wing's Logistics Branch. He had been transferred to Dover AFB, MA. S. Sgt. Delbert L. Presslor received the Airman's Medal on May 19, 1964 for preventing a fire on a B-47 engine from spreading on May 19, 1963. During this period, five men received recognition for suggestions they made which improved job performance. Lt. Col. George W. Eldridge developed the idea of reflector shields on radar. Several were built for the base and were installed at the OQ Gunnery Range. He received the recognition on May 6, although he had been transferred to another base. The last suggestion to receive attention in this period was on January 3, 1964 when SAC decided to try civilian Bill Haase's suggestion of purchasing vehicle parts on the local economy rather than stockpile them as had been the practice. Mr. Haase is a civilian working at the base in the automotive section.

There were thirteen other reports of recognition which contributed to morale during this period. Six of these were for Airman, NCO, and Crew of the Month. The first of the articles appeared on September 2, 1960 when a 310th ARS won the Saunders Trophy for outstanding performance in a 15th AF competition. When the crew, commanded by Capt. William J. Bauer returned to the base September 16, 1960, they received spot promotions as did ten members of the maintenance crew. 193

T. Sgt. George E. Tucker, 310th FMS, and A1C Robert Bright, 802nd Medical Group, were named NCO and Airmen of the Year for 1960 by a board of officers at the 310th base on November 4, 1960. On January 31, 1961, S. Sgt. Donald L. O'Krabel A1C Gary L. Adams, members of the 4310th OMS, were named Maintenance Crew of the Year for 1960. They had won a similar award the previous year. T. Sgt. Forrest G. Bessler, 802nd Medical Group, and A1C Douglas Q. Jones, 310th AES, were named NCO and Airman of the Year for 1962. In 1963, M. Sgt. Robert E. Wallace, NCOIC of the Quality Control Division for the 310th SAW Deputy Commander of Maintenance, was selected to represent the 310th Wing in SAC's NCO of the Year Competition. The last individual honor was announced on May 22, 1964 when T. Sgt. Arthur G. Washer, Crew Chief of a B-47, was named Schilling's Outstanding Airman and nominated to represent the 15th AF at further competitions. 194

Colonel Arnold, 310th SAW Commander, returned from Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE September 13, 1963 where he had received a trophy from General Thomas S. Power, Commander of SAC. The trophy was for Schilling's having achieved management leadership and best overall participation by a SAC base between July, 1962

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August, 1963. An unusual honor was that acquired for standing in line.

A2C Sal Dimatteo and A2C James R. Shaw, members of the 310th CES, stood in line through the night of January 1, 1964 outside the Saline County Courthouse. For their efforts, they had eggs tossed at them but they got the two 1964 car tags issued in Saline County.

Visitors

Over thirty different groups of people were reported to have visited the base between July 8, 1960 and September 21, 1964. This figure does not include 200 clergymen who visited the base in 1961 but does include such groups as Boy Scouts, Civil Air Patrol (CAP), NATO officers, a United States Senator, the Governor of Kansas.

With the deactivation of the 802nd AD on June 20, 1960, the 310th Wing was under the command of the 819th AD at Dyess AFB, Abilene, TX and remained so until July 1, 1962 when the 22nd SAD moved to Schilling. Brig. Gen. R. Yancey, 819th AD Commander, visited the base on July 5 and 6, 1960 and toured the OQ Gunnery Range. He returned on November 17, to present two awards. Brig. Gen. Pinkham Smith, General Yancey's successor, made his only reported visit to the base on September 7, 1961. He commented on the base/community relations being the most impressive feature about the base.

Robert J. Dole was running for Congress from the Sixth District when he made his first reported visit to Schilling on October 12, 1960. While there, he pledged his full support to the base, commenting: "If elected to Congress,

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196 Salina (KS) Journal, January 2, 1964. Until recently, one bought car annually in Kansas and the sooner one got to the courthouse, the lower the number one got.
Housing

At the start of this period, the housing situation in Salina appears to have been critical and in short supply. Although 535 units at Schilling Manor had been opened for occupancy with 200 more planned, and with the 40th Wing moving to Topeka, the missile construction workers were moving into the area. The situation was such that the Army, which was supposed to man the two Nike sites in the area, had offered above average rent to get seventy-five houses for its men but was met with only limited success. Then, before the Nike sites made operational, they were declared obsolete. Some property owners in Salina had signed rental agreements with the Army. On June 30, 1960, the Army informed these people that their contracts carried a cancellation clause. However, the Army was mute about whether it would pay for damages done to the property it had already occupied.204

Ground was broken for 200 new Capehart units on August 11, 1960. Col. George Y. Jumper, 310th SAW Commander, turned the first spadeful of dirt and construction started immediately. These units were to cost around $16,000 each and take around 450 days to complete. By June 11, 1961, construction was running ahead of schedule and all construction was expected to be completed by early November, 1961.205

In May of 1942, the 7th Service Command of the 5th Army, constructed a hospital, barracks, etc., to train draftees at Camp Phillips, southwest of Salina.

After the war, it had been converted into a housing area for men assigned to the air base. Until Schilling Manor was opened in 1959, it had served that purpose. During the week of November 4, 1960, A1C Oscar M. Bullock, 9th Supply Squadron, the last resident of Phillips Village, moved out for an overseas assignment. He left with the distinction of being the last airman to live there, because there would be no more military living there in government housing.

When the final 116 units were accepted by the Air Force on November 29, 1961, Schilling Manor then had 735 units. Earlier that month, eighty-four units had been accepted and thirty families had moved in. Plans called for moving in fifteen families a day until all units were occupied. The older section of the manor had been made up primarily of two and three-bedroom units while the newer section was composed mostly of three and four-bedroom units and were south of the older section.

This should have ended the housing crisis in Salina and it did until March 1963 when the Air Force announced that it wanted 100 more units for Schilling. Local developers were concerned and the Salina Chamber of Commerce launched a housing survey to determine if the area needed the units. In the end, nothing came of this request although it made it through both houses of Congress in separate bills only to be struck out in conference.

This matter did not seem to help those who rented homes in the area. The Salina Journal informed its readers that despite the new pay raise, the airmen did not make as much as was believed and could not really afford an increase in

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assuming that the President signed the new military pay raise. Then September 5, 1963, it was learned that the General Accounting Office (GAO) charged that the Air Force did not follow legal procedures in spending $919 on Schilling Manor. The money had been spent on venetian blinds, traverse curtain rods, clotheslines, redwood fencing, and a central TV antenna; categories for which no request had been entered in any budget request. The base made no comment on these charges.

Rumors

Salina was literally a total Air Force city, just as neighboring Junction City was a total Army town. But the similarity ended there, for the Army had been in the Junction City area first whereas Salina was a small city of approximately 20,000 people when the military arrived in 1942. In the 1940s, Salina lived with rumors of the base closing, something that Junction City seldom had to do.

This changed with the reactivation of the base on August 1, 1951 and until then, the future of the base was taken for granted. When news of the deactivation of the 802nd Air Division and the transfer of the 40th Bomb Wing was announced, Salina grew concerned but was eventually calmed down when it was learned that the base was to get missiles which would be the first to be enclosed in underground silos.

From June 20, 1960 to November 18, 1964, there was some concern about the future of the base. Yes, Schilling was a permanent base whose buildings had been constructed for twenty-five years usage which technically gave it a life until 1977. The runways were among the longest in the Air Force and the base had


new hangar that it was using. There were 535 Capehart houses on base 200 more under construction. Better yet, morale was high. During this time, the missiles were modified and the KC-135s arrived but there was probably concern about when the B-52s, which seemed to be the linchpin to the base's future, would arrive.

Ironically, the *Salina Journal* took some solace in the Air Force's December 1960 announcement that four major bases were to be closed. The transition to new missiles and bombers was expected to reduce the number of personnel on base 20 percent but:

...the exact future of Schilling beyond the mid-60s can only be speculative. If the world picture remains unchanged, it is likely that the facilities here will be adapted for new bombers, new missiles, and new missile-carrying bombers as they are developed. Closing of the four bases will require the transfer of 16,000 officers and men plus the elimination of 2,300 civilian jobs within the next two years... However, Schilling is considered to be one of the top bases in SAC.211

The concern that caused this article to appear may have been due to the election of John F. Kennedy, a Democrat, as President but he had run on the issue that there was a missile gap between the United States and Russia. Schillings was helped by two things in the election; it was becoming a missile base, Kennedy venerated President Eisenhower who was from the Salina area. By Dec. 28, 1961, it appears that the Department of Defense was changing its priorities but the Atlas program at Schilling was not to be curtailed. The base expected to lose its B-47s in the future but they were to be replaced by Bs. "However, as is always true of military programs in these changing times, the future of any particular base, unit, or weapon is strictly in the lap of

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211 *Salina (KS) Journal*, November 29, 1960. The bases closed were Mitchell AFB, NY; Chennault AFB, LA; Donaldson AFB, SC; and MacDill AFB, FL. The latter survived and is now a TAC base.
Always on the lookout for any means of securing the permanency of the air
bases and the Pentagon.\textsuperscript{212}

the \textit{Salina Journal} latched onto the Air Force proposal to base the then-
Minuteman Missiles in the area. In an editorial titled "Minutemen Welcome,"

er per commented:

Now is not the time to get excited about whether Minuteman Mis-
soles will come to the base. The AF hasn't said yes and it hasn't
said no. Only soil tests are to be made. If they come, it will be
at least a year. If they come, Salina will welcome them. Salina
has been, is, and will continue to be a friend of the AF. Regardless
of future deployment of forces and weapons, Salina will continue to
welcome AF children to its schools, AF wives to its bridge clubs,
and AP families to the community. Bomber men or missile men, they
are our good neighbors.

As for those persons who may feel that more missile installa-
tions would make this a prime Russian target area, we can only say:
Has anyone been naive enough to believe it hasn't been all along?
The Russians would give a sputnik full of rubles to have this and
other defense centers eliminated, but we have called their bluff.
They can't and won't dare move against us so long as a strong retali-
tory defense force is maintained. There is every evidence that that
force will be kept and strengthened. Schilling AFB will continue to
pack a big part of that punch.\textsuperscript{213}

There was a valid point in this editorial. Since Schilling had been pre-
bably an enemy target ever since the 802nd AD was activated in 1952 with two
Wings, its importance seems to have grown with the addition of the Atlas
mile complex. Something not mentioned was that Salina, as an agricultural
ter in the mid-west and a point where two major highways met, was certain
be a target, with or without Schilling. But the idea of soliciting the
pons of war which with one accidental mishap could destroy the whole area
bout the benefit of an enemy attack is interesting. The truth was that Salina
really a one-industry town and that industry was the prevention of war.

\textsuperscript{212} \textit{Salina} (KS) \textit{Journal}, March 28, 1961.

\textsuperscript{213} \textit{Salina} (KS) \textit{Journal}, May 11, 1962, editorial.
Schilling was made the headquarters of the 22nd SAD on July 1, 1962 and again the base appeared to be on the upswing in the eyes of SAC and the force. In a July 2, 1962 editorial, the Salina Journal sought to explain this meant to Salina.

Even when Joe Kelly (the last Commander of the 301st Bomb Wing when it was at Smoky Hill/Schilling in 1949) locked up the tarpaper hacks more than a decade ago, it was essentially a good base. The AF knew this and within a dozen months sent John de Russy to put the shop in shape for revival. From B29s to B47s, from Smoky Hill to Schilling, from wing to division and back to wing, so Salina's base went, up and down and up again.

This week, the base becomes the headquarters of the 22nd SAD. The Commander is Col. Jack W. Hayes. The significance of the division headquarters to Salina is this. The 310th itself is in the process of assuming greater importance in SAC. In the future, it will be possible but only possible that a gaggle of Minuteman missiles will be added to the armament. Chances are that in terms of manpower, the base will not grow and might shrink in terms of importance. The men and hardware are here because they are required by the SAC mission to preserve the base through strength.

This Salina has always known. The town and the area may take a quiet pride on the eve of Independence Day that the citizens support the mission with pat enthusiasm. This community relationship is as important in its way as the flying climate, the flat terrain or the geographic location.

Schilling existed, as this editorial stated, because it was required by mission imposed upon SAC to preserve the peace. The base/community relationship was important to the men and helped to keep morale high. Unfortunately, editor later forgot the second paragraph of his editorial. A little over months later, it was announced that the 40th ARS, the last reminder that 40th Bomb Wing had once been on Schilling, would be deactivated. Chamber Commerce leaders took the long-range view that the base was in a strong position to become the headquarters of a Minuteman missile squadron. "The base and will continue to be a strong portion of our community and economy. We proud of the 40th ARS and its record. It has been a fine military unit and

men have been a part of our community. It does not mean the end of the base of our relationship with the base and its men and that relationship is the not anywhere. We'll keep it." 215

Col. E. F. Arnold, 310th SAW Commander, addressed the meeting of the Romans on September 29, 1963 and informed them that the future of the base was likely the same as SAC's. The base was probably going to play an important role in SAC. The problem that confronted Schilling was the retention of young officers and airmen. Salina's role was important in that by remaining hospitable to personnel from the base and making them feel at home. The base pumped $25 million into Salina's economy each year. 216

What the Colonel did not mention but probably hinted at was that the future of Salina was also tied to SAC. If SAC did not feel that it needed the base and the air command could not find a use for the base, then it would be closed. Salina would probably be hit very hard in the pocketbook. The base/community relationship was a very important factor and by this time, the old thorn of the 26th had been removed due to the departure of most of the missile construction workers.

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara announced that twenty-six bases in United States would be closed or substantially reduced in size on December 1963. With this announcement, he stated that he had "every reason to believe that studies now underway will lead to further reductions in the coming months." Of the twenty-six bases involved, twelve were air bases but none in Kansas were affected. Nevertheless, Salina was concerned. In response to queries from Salina, Senator Frank Carlson, Kansas's senior United States Senator,

formed the Salina Journal that he was keeping in "close touch with the situ-

ation in regard to Schilling AFB." However, he believed that since Schilling

one of the top-rated bases in SAC and a center for the Atlas missile complex,

base would not be endangered by a reduction program. Besides, the aircraft

the base were slated to be changed to B-52s and KC-135s.217

A in an editorial titled "No Politics Seen In Closing of Bases" the Salina

Journal commented on the closings in what can only be described as a smug manner:

If politics entered into Secretary McNamara's decision this week to close 33 military bases, it is not apparent. There is no evidence of it.

If motives were political, these were not the bases to close.

Most of them are in populous states of crucial political importance or in the heart of the Democratic South.

While in other times, camp locations have been picked for political reasons, those reasons no longer are considered. The bases to be closed simply have outlived their usefulness.

Secretary McNamara deserves praise for courage as well as for vision and fairness in this decision. The nation's defense does not depend upon "voting right," and that is the way it should be.

When the first word of the closing came, Salinans were concerned lest Schilling Air Force Base might be included. But Schilling has never been a "political" base. When it was reactivated more than a dozen years ago, it was to serve a major purpose of the Strategic Air Command. The location, the flying weather, the facilities and the community "climate" were such that Schilling made a first-class site. The many improvements since then have made it more so.

The outstanding records made by Air Force units stationed here are a further proof that Schilling was and is a right choice.

As long as the Air Force has a need for such a base in the midlands and as long as Salinans cooperate with enthusiasm and patriotism, Schilling may be expected to remain active.

The time may come when bases and missiles and bombers are no longer required. Technological and strategic changes may eliminate the need for such installations. When and if this occurs, politics will be of no avail and in all honesty we would not want politics to prevail.

In the meantime, we are proud of our part in the national defense, of Schilling's function in SAC, and we are eager to do what we can to promote its mission.218


218 Ibid., editorial.
Maybe politics did not figure into the base closings but maybe they did.

S. McNamara, a former President of Ford Motor Company, had been a Repub-

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cian when President Kennedy made him a member of his Cabinet in 1961. Secretary

McNamara was praised for his courage as well as for his vision and fairness in

decisions. Yet, the editorial jumped on the fear that Schilling

be one of the bases to be closed and pointed out all of the benefits that

did for SAC and the Air Force.

Congressman Bob Dole followed up on this by trying to find out what the

force had in mind for Schilling. He was assured that there were no plans

lose Schilling and that the mission of the base would remain the same. The

s would never be assigned to Schilling again and it would be receiving KC-

and B-52s, in that order. A B-52 squadron from Walker AFB, NM was being

rammed for transfer to the base. The changeovers would result in a loss

round 900 men at the base. Schilling was ready for the new planes and would

be receiving brand-new KC-135s within the next few weeks. Rumors were in

ulation that bases with B-47s would be closed but Congressman Dole was as-

that the B-52s would begin arriving at Schilling during the summer. There

at this time, eighteen SAC bases with B-47s and the Air Force had been

red to recommend the closing of thirty-three bases. 219

If this was not enough assurance, the Air Force assured Salina through Col.

ge M. Lockhart, Deputy Director of Legislative Liaison for the Air Force,

April 19, 1964 that the future of Schilling was secure. "Schilling Air Force

is considered one of the better Strategic Air Command bases from a facility

point. The adequacy of facilities plus the centralized location within

United States makes this base desirable for long-term Air Force retention."

As was in response to a letter from Wayne Dailey, chairman of the Salina Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee to Congressman Dole.\textsuperscript{220}

Was this concern due to any rumors in circulation in the area at the time? Certainly at this time, there was no serious rumor-mongering campaign transpiring in the local press. In fact, there was a belief the press of that time that Vietnam was going to be an active spot for United States military forces in the near future. Besides, 1964 was a presidential election year and seldom did an incumbent President close military bases if he wanted to win re-election. Far from it. In fact, there was usually the promise that the status quo would be maintained and perhaps a few new installations would be built.

There the matter rested until November 18, 1964. On November 17, 1964, the Salina Journal informed its readers that ninety-five more bases were to either be reduced or eliminated and that the names of those bases would be released the next day by Secretary of Defense McNamara. Congressman Dole stated that he had not learned which bases would be affected by that decision but that he did not think that Schilling or any other base in Kansas would be affected. Congressman Shriver of Wichita agreed with this assessment.\textsuperscript{221}

At the close of this particular day, Colonel Roy Crompton, 310th SAW Commander, was at Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ to receive an award on behalf of the base for its cost-reduction program. He planned to stay there a couple of days to visit old friends. The Base Commander, Colonel Mike Scanlan, had taken three KC-135s to England for a one-week TDY and had been gone since Saturday.

\textsuperscript{220}Salina (KS) Journal, April 19, 1964.

\textsuperscript{221}Salina (KS) Journal, November 18, 1964.
He was due back at Schilling on Saturday, November 20, 1964. Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, was preparing to lead a delegation to Abilene, TX to assist that city in devising a program to improve base/community relations with neighboring Dyess AFB, TX. General LeMay was preparing to retire from the Air Force, closing out his career as Air Force Chief of Staff and former President Eisenhower was living a comfortable retirement at his farm near Gettysburg, PA. All was quiet. Perhaps the only ones dreading the next day were those communities who knew that their military installations would be slated for closure. Salina probably slept soundly that night content in the belief that Schilling would be in operation a few more years. As of November 18, Schilling Force Base had approximately 6,000 people assigned to it. But the B-52s had not arrived.

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222Interview with Col. Mike Scanlan (USAF, ret.), September 1, 1982.
CHAPTER VIII

CASTLES IN THE AIR
NOVEMBER 18, 1964 TO APRIL 3, 1967

Castles in the air and castles on the ground. Schilling AFB had the Atlas missile complexes which helped make the base a well-defended castle on the ground. It also had KC-135 tankers, then the largest air tanker in the world, which gave United States warplanes virtually unlimited range. In addition, Schilling had been promised the B-52, the largest bomber in the world, a castle in the air. Unfortunately for Salina and Schilling, it remained a mythical castle in the air. Salina and Schilling were constantly looking to the horizon, signs of the plane's imminent arrival at the base; in vain, for it never arrived, save for an occasional visit.

Since the late 1950s, Salina had been told that B-52s and KC-135s were to be assigned to the base by the early 1960s. First, the B-52 was to arrive in 1962, then 1963, 1964, and finally in early 1965. The last KC-97 flew out of Schilling in late 1963 and the first KC-135 arrived in early 1964. By 1964, the 379th, 380th, and 381st Bomb Squadrons of the 310th SAW continued to fly B-47 stratojets, the "long rifle" of SAC.

There was nothing really mystical about the B-52 heavy bomber. It was a giant eight-engined bomber designed to deliver nuclear payloads to the enemy's turf. This had also been the purpose of the B-29, B-36, and B-47. But to Salina, it was the modern plane that would assure the future of its air base, which was Salina's largest employer and the keystone of its economy.
Schilling Air Force Base was ready for the new bombers and had been since when the runway modification program had been completed. In fact, the was ready for an expanded role in the defense needs of the United States. deflector had been installed to deaden the noise of the planes and old blastings, dating back to World War II, had been removed to permit construction newer buildings as needed. The 310th SAW and 310th CSG had received new commanders during the summer of 1964. If all went according to the norm, Col. Crompton, 310th SAW Commander, would be on base until 1966 and Col. Mike flan, 310th CSG Commander, would be on base until late 1965.

In its history, the air base, which had started out as the "Army Air Base Salina, Kansas," had been the home of castles in the air only once before that was when the B-29 was the largest bomber in the Air Force inventory. in the late 1940s, it had been denied the B-36 which replaced the B-29. Salina thought that Schilling would once again claim the largest bombers in Air Force inventory for its own. Everything was ready.

Prelude to Closure

By the morning of November 18, 1964, Salina, Kansas, the county seat of Saline County, was a small city of over 40,000 people enclosed in an area of 1,159 acres. Of that acreage, 414 were in use as public parks. There were sixty-two churches, two privately-owned hospitals (Asbury—Methodist and St. John's—Catholic), twenty public and four parochial schools, two private four-year colleges (Kansas Wesleyan University—Methodist and Marymount College—Catholic), St. John's Military School for Boys (operated by the Protestant Episcopal Church), two schools of nursing, and Brown-Mackie School of Business.¹

Transportation in and out of Salina was relatively easy. Highways I-70 and US 81 (now I-135) met at Salina. Two commercial airlines provided daily service and Salina was a railroad center. Bus service was provided by Continental Trailways and Greyhound.

If one did not wish to travel, there was a variety of means for entertainment. There were three radio stations, Cable TV, movie theaters, taverns, sports events, concerts at Memorial Hall, and civilians had the privilege of membership in the Schilling AFB service clubs. Salina also had a public library and the Salina Journal was the major daily newspaper in the area.

Schilling Air Force Base on this day was a "sprawling complex of nearly 900 acres" of the Strategic Air Command with over 700 buildings, a complete utility system, and airport facilities which could accommodate the largest aircraft in the Air Force inventory. This did not include the 30,000 acre gunnery range, some acreage in what was left of Camp Phillips, and the twelve Atlas missile bases, each on at least twenty acres of land. As was noted in the previous chapter, the primary aircraft assigned to the base was the B-47 stratojet in three squadrons of fifteen each and one squadron of fifteen KC-135 tanker. There were around 5,000 personnel assigned to the base.

Salina knew that Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was going to announce the closing or reduction of a number of military installations on November 18, but knew that Schilling would not be affected in any manner. To demonstrate the confidence that Schilling would not be affected, the two major Commanders at Schilling, Colonels Crompton and Scanlan, were away from the base this day; one to receive awards at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ and the other commanding a three-tanker TDY in England. A delegation of the Salina Chamber of Commerce arrived on this day to announce the closure of the installation.

*Ibid., p. 16.*
force's Military Affairs Committee were awaiting the departure time of a
flight that would take them to Abilene, TX to explain the Salina/Schilling base/
unity relationship that seemed almost unique. There was also an overage
of personnel on base this day. Certainly, if the base were one to be closed,
commanders would not have been away and instead of an excess of personnel,
would more likely have been a shortage of men with many units undermanned.

The Announcement

Norris D. Olson had been City Manager of Salina since May 1, 1964. At
9 a.m. on November 18, his telephone rang. It was his wife and she immedi­
ately asked: "Have you heard the news?" Assured that he had not, she went
on to state that she had just heard over Salina radio station KSAL that Secre­
ty of Defense McNamara had announced that Schilling AFB would be closed by
30, 1965. The information had been received as a radio news bulletin with
supporting information.

That night, the Salina Journal under the banner headline "MAC’S AXE ON
SCHILLING" went into greater detail about the closing. Schilling was one of
seventy-five installations to be reduced in activity or closed. The last B-47s
would leave by March, 1965 with the last KC-135s and Atlas missiles leaving by
June 30, 1965, Schilling AFB would be officially closed. "Dear Sal:
"a Merry Christmas to you, too, Secretary McNamara. Yours, Ina."

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3Ibid., p. 14. Olson states that the delegation was bound for Walker AFB,
However, both Mike Scanlan and Wayne Dailey, a member of that delegation,
ated to this writer that Abilene, TX was the destination. It will be stated
that according to the Salina Journal, a group had been to Walker AFB,
well, NM prior to the day of the announcement.

4Ibid., p. 10.

5Salina (KS) Journal, November 18, 1964. The term "officially closed" is
aptive. There was no air activity on base, but as in 1950, there was mili­
activity on the base until April 3, 1967 when the last Air Force unit was
activated.
Few events had ever caught Salina more off-guard than this announcement. Many of 1964, Salina had been assured by the Air Force that the base was permitted to remain open, and Colonel Scanlan had learned, during a stop at Offutt AFB, on his way to assume command of the 310th CSG in August, that the base was sixteenth seventeenth on the list of SAC bases to be closed. The fact that Schilling was not on the list without any advance warning has to make its closing one of the best-kept secrets in Washington, D.C.

Colonel Roy Crompton, Commander of the 310th SAW, immediately flew back to Schilling from Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ. Then he called Colonel Scanlan, who was in England on a TDY. Colonel Scanlan had not heard the news and was surprised to learn that his job would be abolished by June 30, 1965. Since most of the details were unknown, it was decided that he would return to the base at his scheduled time on Saturday.6

At the same time, the Salina delegation to Abilene, TX was in a quandary whether to make their trip to Abilene to explain base/community relations or to cancel it. It was obvious to them that something must have gone wrong else they would not have lost their air base. Finally, it was decided to go on the trip and explain that they did not know what had happened.7 How the trip went off was not revealed.

Senator Frank Carlson, whom the Salina Journal had called "average" when he endorsed him for re-election in 1956, announced that he intended to ask President Johnson for a review on the status of Schilling in the hope that the closing order would be rescinded. "We have always been assured that Schilling is one of the best bases in the Air Force and that it was considered a perma-

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6 Interview with Col. Mike Scanlan, September 1, 1982.

7 Ibid.
The meeting of President Johnson and Senator Carlson have been interesting, but unfortunately, this writer could not find how or for that matter, if the meeting were ever held. But at the same time Senator Carlson announced his plans, Secretary of Defense McNamara said that his decisions on the fate of the military installations slated for retention or closure were "absolutely, unequivocally, without qualification irresistible." Some new evidence might cause him to change his mind, but the chances of that are damned small."9

Why was Schilling closed? That was the question of greatest interest to me. There seemed to be a number of reasons, but the two major ones offered by the Department of Defense were that the base had B-47s and Atlas F missiles. B-47 was a relatively "old weapons system" and had been in the Air Force inventory since the early 1950s. As for the Atlas F missile, it was a first-generation ICBM and was programmed for withdrawal from the Air Force inventory.10

Schilling did have KC-135s and was ready to receive the B-52s, but the catch was that the B-52s had not arrived, even though millions of dollars had been spent modernizing the base and the primary function of the base was to be command, not air refueling.

Like his mentor, William Allen White, Whitley Austin, editor of the Salina Journal, was capable of wielding an editorial sword in defense of his town when it was in trouble. On November 20, 1964, he lashed out at the decision to close Schilling AFB in one of the bitterest editorials he was ever to write:

Old Soldiers understand SNAFU—situation normal, all fouled up. Well, Schilling was snafued. It's like the time the Air Force bombed us in Burma because some cluck couldn't read a chart.

9Ibid.
10Ibid.
Meeting in Washington

The Salina city government met in an informal meeting during the evening of November 19 to chart a course of action. In his thesis, Norris Olson states that the only purpose of the meeting was to determine, if possible, whether a common consensus existed between the business community and City Hall. Ten topics were discussed at this meeting:

1. If the base closure were definite, it should be closed totally and completely, and not relegated to a partial or standby operation--military or otherwise.
2. What could or would the Federal Government be able to do to protect local property values during the deactivation period and until military owned and occupied homes were again being lived in?
3. If closed, what type of title would be available to local buyers or users?
4. Could the Federal Government re-activate the facility at a later date by a similar McNamara decision?
5. Would the closing actually result in a time saving to taxpayers, or was this only a statement--easy to make and impossible to prove?
6. Did not the central and strategic location of Schilling outweigh any economic consideration that was given in the closure announcement?
7. If Schilling were closed, every effort possible should then be expended to return the approximately 32,000 acre bombing range back to agricultural use and to the local tax rolls.
8. Could the Schilling flight facilities be transferred directly to F. A. A. and the municipal airport operations be moved to the base areas?
9. How could we be assured the McNamara decision was not one based totally on politics?
10. Could the City of Salina or Saline County even afford to maintain the base if it were given to either of them at no cost?13

A delegation of three was appointed and meetings arranged for them to visit with Department of Defense officials in Washington, D. C. on December 14. This group spent its time before the meeting collecting pertinent data on the base which might provide answers to the questions discussed at the November 19 meeting.

13 Olson, pps. 24 and 25.
Who represented Salina at the meeting has not been determined but at the Washington meeting, the group was joined by Senator Carlson, Congressman (and governor-elect of Kansas) Avery, Congressman Dole, and staff representatives from the offices of Senator Pearson and Congressman Shriver. This group was met by Col. George Kelley, who gave the group a short briefing, and was then joined by Secretary of the Air Force Eugene Zuchert, Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus Vance, and a couple of others.

Schilling had twelve Atlas F missile sites which cost one million dollars a year to operate and maintain. This was ten times more than each Minuteman missile site cost. (The Minuteman was the successor to the Atlas.) In addition, the manpower requirements per site were eighty for the Atlas to twelve for the Minuteman. Then there was the B-47 jet which was obsolete and was to be completely phased-out by June, 1966. An original plan to replace B-47s with B-52s at Schilling had been scrapped. Without the Atlas, B-47, or B-52, Schilling would not be kept open for KC-135s. There was nothing to do but close the base.

Never answered or explained at any time was why so much money was spent on the base between 1960 and 1964 improving the runways for the B-52 and KC-135 if these things were so obvious? If the Atlas missile was obsolete, why was money spent modifying it in 1963? If the base was doomed why did the Air Force continue to send personnel into the base in 1964 until there was a surplus of around 900 men on base as of November 18, 1964? At what level was the

14 Ibid., p. 25.
15 Ibid., pps. 26 and 27.
16 Ibid., pps. 27 and 28.
decision made to close the base? Why were the new KC-135s assigned to the base in early 1964 when it would have been cheaper to send them to a base that would be able to utilize them for an indefinite period of time? With hindsight, it is possible to analyze the decision to close Schilling as one designed to release a group of trained personnel for the Viet Nam Conflict which was escalating at this time. But during this period that could not have been obvious to all; only to those who were "in the know."

December 1, 1964 to June 25, 1965

Operations

The Salina Journal announced on December 3, 1964 that some B-47s (with their three-man crews) had already left and would not return. The three B-47 squadrons on base were to gradually lose their aircraft until by March 31, 1965, none would be left on base.\textsuperscript{17} Whether the departure of the B-47s had been planned prior to the closure announcement is speculative. Although the base was closing, the three squadrons sent one B-47 each to Washington, D. C. in a flyover honoring retiring Air Force Chief of Staff General Curtis LeMay.\textsuperscript{18} It was only fitting that the base that General LeMay had helped create in an image that he felt Air Force bases should resemble was retiring around the same time as the base and was honored by that base in one of its last missions.

Colonel Roy Crompton, Commander of the 310th SAW, announced the next day that the last two B-47s would leave Schilling on February 25 for Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ where they would be placed in storage. The 379th, 380th, and 381st Bomb Squadrons would be formally deactivated on March 15. Around the same time, five KC-135s, with nine crews, consisting of a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, and

\textsuperscript{17}Salina (KS) Journal, December 3, 1964.

operator, would be transferred to Bunker Hill AFB, IN. The remaining KC-135s would go to Walker AFB, Roswell, NM at a later date. "Dear Sal: The people who used to complain about the bombers' roar probably will now complain about the silence. Yours, Ina."  

Just as the transfer of planes and equipment was accelerating, the Vietnam Conflict, in which United States involvement was increasing, affected the base. The Air Force confirmed rumors on February 12 that certain Schilling units were taking part in an "operational exercise" owing to the crisis in Vietnam. Base officials refused to confirm or deny that all personnel on orders had been temporarily frozen, keeping them at Schilling. The 310th ARS was the only Schilling unit still combat-ready. For a brief period of time, there was a glimmer of hope that Schilling might not be closed.

But true to schedule, the last B-47 lifted off the runway at 10:00 A.M. on February 25, 1965. All that was left of the B-47 era on base were three "ghost" squadrons. (What this meant was that the squadrons were still active and had personnel requirements although no planes were assigned to them.)

"Dear Sal: Now that we can no longer look up and see the gleaming B-47s, we'd better start looking around for something to make Salina's future gleam even more brightly. Yours, Ina."  

The Air Force shipped ten brand-new station wagons to Schilling, arriving in Salina by rail on April 2, 1965. No one at Schilling knew what had snarled up in the military bureaucracy or why the base had received the vehicles, or

whether they would be kept or shipped to another base. 22

At 9:30 A.M. on April 15, 1965, the "City of Salina II," Schilling's last C-135 jet tanker, which had also been its first, left for Bunker Hill AFB, IN piloted by Capt. Donald K. Winston who had also piloted the last KC-97 to leave Schilling in late 1963. The moment the KC-135 lifted off of the runway, Col. Loy Crompton, 310th SAW Commander, turned off the red telephone which had linked Schilling to every SAC base in the world. Schilling still had some support aircraft assigned to it, but these were irrelevant to the future of the base.

Transient aircraft would be permitted to land at the base with prior permission until June 1 when the runways would be closed to all aircraft. 23

As the base prepared to close, it was revealed that the 625 buildings and takeoff installations were valued at $80,345,000. They covered 3,197,551 square feet with a land cost of $1,064,000. These figures did not include the 735 housing units. 24 This appears to have made the aircraft formerly assigned to the base worth approximately $200 million when the worth of the base was last reported in the early 1960s.

The Schilling Radar Approach Control (RAPCON) center was scheduled to be closed for good by June 30, 1965. By May 25, this fairly-new facility, with a sixty-mile range, was operating from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. every day. The base weather radar was no longer in operation. 25 In fact, the weather observers may have been the first to leave for other assignments. For some unexplainable reason, there has always been a shortage of weather observers in the Air Force.

Missiles

One of the reasons given for closing Schilling was that it was an Atlas F missile base and the Atlas missiles were obsolete although the 550th Strategic Missile Squadron (SMS) was one of the newer squadrons activated at Schilling. The first Atlas F missile left during the first week of 1965 aboard a C-133 transport aircraft for Norton AFB, San Bernadino, CA. It was a spare missile that had cost over three million dollars and weighed 16,200 pounds. The loading process had taken all day. Less than a month later, the first active missile was deactivated and shipped to California. The site near Carlton in Saline County was the first site to lose its reason for existence.26 By March 7, 1965, the last Atlas F missile assigned to Schilling AFB had been pulled from site number six near Lyons and shipped to Norton AFB, CA. With this act, the 550th Strategic Missile Squadron (SMS) became a missile squadron without a mission.27 Although it had no missiles, the men of the 550th SMS continued to man the twelve empty silos. The official reason given for this was that the diesel engines and maintenance of equipment still in place required twenty-four-hour-a-day attention. But as soon as community power was available, manning would be reduced.28

Hospital

The base hospital was an integral part of Schilling AFB and was important enough to be designated a Group rather than a Squadron, which gave it considerable command autonomy. It was located in one of the newest structures on the base and was rated seventy-five beds built on a 150-bed chassis. The closing

of the base affected the hospital differently than it did other units. On December 22, 1964, it was announced that the hospital would not be dismantled when the base closed except for equipment needed for "war readiness" and a few items needed at other Air Force hospitals. Everything else would remain.

"Dear Sal: Now all we need is a use for the hospital. How do you feel? Sick? Ins." 29

An unforeseen consequence of the base closing was a shortage of nurses in the Salina area. The two Salina hospitals had depended upon personnel from the base to assist them when it (the base) was active. 30 This was probably one of the first pains that Salina actually felt in the closing of the base. Although the base was preparing to close, few personnel assigned to the base had left for new assignments.

Changes in hospital care for Schilling personnel was announced on April 15, 1965. The obstetrical service officially closed that day after a decrease in the birth rate, e.g., the number of babies born on base. On May 1, all inpatient care would end when the hospital was replaced by a dispensary. After that date, all military patients needing hospitalization would be referred to Irwin General Hospital at Fort Riley, KS or to one of Salina's hospitals. After July 1, the dispensary would give outpatient care from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. daily, and would be staffed with two physicians, one dentist, two civilian nurses, one secretary, and eighteen airmen. 31

Community Relations

Although the base was to be closed and attention concentrated on the last

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by activities, one thing had been initiated before the closing was announced. The Salina Community Chest was presented a check for $15,635 by base officials on December 11, 1964. This amount exceeded the base’s goal by $69,16.32

Community relations appear to have remained good through this period. After all, it was not the fault of the personnel at the base that Schilling had been closed. Ironically, although the closing affected Salina, it also affected some students at Stanford University in California. They were enrolled in a course concerned with school planning and had chosen Salina as a project in September of 1964. The closing of the base was announced just as all of the term papers were being completed, making all of the calculations concerning the growth of the city and school system wrong. All of the term papers had to be re-written and new conclusions reached.33 There were no Open Houses or other public relations events reported during this period. Thus, the last Open House, Schilling Aerospace Day, "Honor the Uniform" Week, etc., had been held just prior to the November 18, 1964 announcement. At least Salina and Schilling were spared the humiliation of the closing announcement coming during one of those events.

Personnel

The key to the phase-out of the base rested on the personnel assigned to the base. They were in a position of making the closing of the base smooth or difficult. According to Colonel Scanlan, the last Commander of the 310th CSG, morale remained high and the chief concern of the personnel was their next assignment.34 If any serious problems arose during this period, they were not


34Interviews with Col. Mike Scanlan (USAF, ret.) October 13, 1981 and September 1, 1982.
ported in the local press. But civilian personnel at the base received a
visit on December 4, 1964. Some of them, if they desired continued employment
with the government, would have to move to other areas of the nation, which was
probably expected, and take a cut in pay, which probably had not been antici-
pated.35

There were five reports of promotions and recognition between December 24,
1964 and May 5, 1965. The first report was that eight Captains were to be pro-
moted to Major. On April 2, 1965, five Majors were promoted to Lieutenant Col-
nel.36 It is assumed that promotions of enlisted personnel continued during
this period, but none were reported in the local press. Although the base was
closing, it won an award on April 29, 1965 for the best comptroller performance
in the 15th Air Force from January through March of 1965.37 Schilling's reputa-
tion for being a top-notch base remained strong right up to its retirement.
Seven men received medals for devotion to duty and valor in early May of 1965.
Three were officers and four were NCOs. Four of this group were retiring from
the Air Force.38 Indeed, it would seem that the closing announcement speeded
up the decision by some of Schilling's personnel to retire, probably involving
several factors, such as the uncertainty of what the new assignment would be
like, the cost of moving to another part of the country, etc.

The first word that Salina received concerning plans for the future of the
base came on January 11, 1965 when Paul Wall, Deputy Civil Engineer at the base,
told a meeting of Rotarians that closing the base on June 30 did not end the

housekeeping chores on base. The government had $146 million worth of improvements on base which would be kept up until they were disposed of. It was expected that at least 500 military and civilian personnel would remain on base as a caretaker force after the base was officially deactivated on June 30. According to base officials, the Air Base Squadron could stay in existence on Schilling twelve months or longer. The number of personnel would gradually be reduced as the facilities were disposed of. Little else was known at that time.

One of the first high ranking personnel to leave Schilling was Col. George H. Watson, Vice Commander of the 310th SAW since June 1, 1962. He was to leave on February 2, 1965 to assume command of a detachment at Incirlik, Turkey.

It was revealed the next day that approximately one-sixth "of the normal complement of men" had received orders for new assignments. Schilling's military population had shrunk from approximately 5,000 to 4,200 men. Some men would not receive orders but would be transferred to the caretaker force left on base to maintain the facilities and physical property. Although the personnel were busy closing the base and moving, they found time to exceed a Red Cross blood drive quota of 150 pints by giving 182 with only twenty-one rejections. The 310th FMS had fifty-two donors followed by the 310th CES with thirty-one, the 36th MMS had twenty-four, the 310th Supply Squadron with twenty-two, the 310th AES with sixteen, and the 310th OMS with thirteen pints.

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By March 15, 1965, the duty roster at the base had only shrunk by 414 men. The base military and civilian population as of October 31, 1964 had stood at 4,990 men. As of February 28, 1965, there were 4,576 men. This figure may have been slightly deceptive. Many had already received orders with delay en-route provisions. Others were on leave or in the process of processing out. The majority of men at Schilling did have orders. Personnel were carried on the base duty rosters until they checked in at their new duty assignments.44 Tentative details of the housekeeping force to be left at Schilling after June 30, 1965 were released on March 15. The 4253rd Air Base Squadron (ABS) would be commanded by Colonel Scanlan with a manning authorization of twenty-seven officers, 548 airmen (including NCOs), and 156 civilians. In addition, there were expected to be an undetermined number of personnel on base awaiting discharge, early or scheduled retirement, and those awaiting an overseas assignment.45

Impact, the base newspaper, had been published since August, 1952 when it first assumed publication in time to welcome the 310th Bomb Wing to the base from Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS. Starting with an unusual anomaly for a military newspaper, it crusaded against the wrongs inflicted on the personnel assigned to the base in a column known as "Reflections In Print" or "RIP," which also featured gossip as well as blurbs on what personnel were sneaking out of the main gate ahead of time or who was violating the various regulations on base. This column lasted a few months before the writer was discharged. Another ruse used was "Dear Ina--Yours Sal" barbs which imitated the "Dear Sal--Yours Ina" blurbs in the Salina Journal. After the first year of operation, the newspaper

settled down to a typical military newspaper format of presenting articles on events on base which would not get anyone in trouble. Impact crusaded for personnel, etc., adherence to traffic regulations, fair treatment of commissioned and enlisted personnel, and so forth. The last issue of this base newspaper made its appearance on Friday, April 16, 1965 with farewell comments by the Commanders of the four major Schilling units, a rundown on the history of Schilling and the 310th SAW, and a host of farewell advertisements from Salina merchants. 46

On April 28, 1965, Schilling officials announced that the removal of major equipment and the transfer of personnel was nearly half-way completed. There were 2,628 men assigned to the base or 2,362 less than when the closure announcement had indicated on November 18. 47 Most of the sentry dogs left Schilling on May 11. Fourteen of the twenty dogs assigned to the base, along with their handlers, were sent to new duty posts. There were approximately twenty-one dogs assigned to the base and the remaining seven were eventually put to sleep owing to arthritis and old age. As of May 10, there were 2,328 men assigned to the base. Plans were being finalized to deactivate the 310th SAW and 310th CSG on June 25 and turn over operation of the base to the 4253rd ABS. 48

The civilian personnel office on base had some news of an ironical twist on May 21 for the area. Military personnel were leaving the base for new assignments but craftsmen were needed to aid in the closing of the base in the following positions; water plant worker, sewage plant worker, air conditioner ser-

viceman, steam plant operator, carpenter, auto mechanics, plumbers, and electricians. These were temporary appointments but some of them could last as long as a year. The salary range was from $2.39 to $2.50 an hour for a forty-hour week.49

As the end neared for the units of the 310th SAW, the base began preparing for its next phase of life. A new main gate was built one-fourth mile east of the old main gate. This was being done so that security checks could be made of cars entering the housing area as well as those entering the base proper. The north entrance to the base had been reduced to auxiliary status and was only open from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. on weekdays.50 The Salina Journal ruminated about the base's final days commenting that "the revolving beacon atop the water tower is dark. . .The barracks are shuttered, the doors barred by signs reading 'Off Limits.'" The last dining hall served its last meal on May 17, 1965. Most of the base was quiet with the lawn mowers replacing the whines of jet engines. "Dear Sal: The Schilling stories—and legends—are part of Salina's history. Yours, Ina."51

At no specific time on June 25, 1965, the 310th Strategic Aerospace Wing was deactivated, a much-decorated unit with a record virtually unrivalled in the history of the United States Air Force. On this date, Col. Roy Crompton left for his new assignment with the 15th AF at March AFB, Riverside, CA. In the stead of the 310th Wing was the 4253rd ABS under the command of Col. Mike Scanlan, dubbed "Sundowner" by Salina Mayor Jerry Waddell for his role in closing the base in 1949, a missile base in England, and Salina's air base, again.

Chief Master Sergeant William Retter was the first First Sergeant of the new unit.\textsuperscript{52}

The 310th SAW retired from active duty on June 25, 1965 and reverted to control by Headquarters, USAF but the base still had over fifteen months of life left as an Air Force installation. Schilling Manor and the OQ Gunnery Range would survive the closing of the base on April 3, 1967, with the former surviving until December, 1976 and the latter continuing in operation to the present time.

Housing

Housing posed a problem in this period that was different than it had been in the past. The demand for housing diminished in 1962 with the completion of missile construction. Salina over-extended itself in housing construction and as a result, many of the units started were never completed because there simply were no buyers. Over one thousand units were built as a result of the Atlas construction and many of Salina's builders were forced into bankruptcy.\textsuperscript{53} It is interesting to note that from 1942 to 1949 and 1952 to 1960, the Air Force had had to plead with Salina to get housing for its personnel, then the missile construction, known to be temporary in nature, e.g., the construction personnel would not be in the area very long, caused Salinans to over-build until it caused a minor economic disaster.

Rumors surfaced in December of 1964 that military personnel were being forced to move into Schilling Manor. Specifically, Range personnel, who were expected to remain at Schilling after the base was closed, were the ones that this policy affected. Colonel Scanlan denied this and stated that there were

\textsuperscript{52}Salina (KS) Journal, June 25, 1965.

\textsuperscript{53}Olson, pps. 104 and 105.
no openings in the Manor and it was doubtful that anyone would want to move twice knowing that they would soon be leaving Salina.\textsuperscript{54}

Many personnel, when they first arrived at Schilling, expected to be there a while and bought homes in the area. When they received orders to another assignment, they expected to be able to sell the home with ease, possibly to incoming personnel. However, the closing of Schilling created an over-abundance of housing, making it a buyer's market, especially since most of the airmen could not afford to keep making payments until Salina recovered economically from losing the base. This caused problems and on February 19, 1965, the \textit{Salina Journal} editorialized on the situation as it existed in Salina at that time:

Chances are that a few of our Air Force friends at Schilling will leave with a sour taste in their mouths for Salina. Many of these military and civilian personnel, who were buying homes while here, are going to suffer financial loss. Empty houses are many, buyers are few. Many properties which remain unsold will ultimately enter into foreclosure proceedings, as a number already have. Down payment and equity will be lost.

Such a situation provides a fertile field for the "equiteer." Several already are flourishing in Salina. He reaps a harvest of profits at no risk to himself, and the poor airman gets burned. Here's how it works. The airman, frantic over his predicament, is offered $50 or $100 for his equity in his property. It's like a message from heaven. He snaps at the chance to get out from under.

The wheeler-dealer installs renters in the house as soon as the airman moves out. He sets the rent low enough to insure the house doesn't long remain vacant. But the dealer makes no further payments on the mortgage. When the payments become several months delinquent, the mortgage holder applies for foreclosure. The house is sold at auction, often several thousand dollars below the outstanding mortgage. In that event, the VA or FHA, which guaranteed the loan, can file a deficiency judgement against the airman. Deeding a home to a third party does not relieve the homeowner of further liability. The note he signed in obtaining the original loan is his obligation and his alone.

Meanwhile the equiteer continues to rake in the loot. The law specifies a redemption of from six to eighteen months following foreclosure. During that time, the equiteer goes on renting the house. When the ownership finally reverts to the VA or FHA, he has collected the rent for periods of up to two years.

The Kansas Real Estate Commission is trying to stop this prac-

tice. When a real estate broker is involved, his license can be re­
voked. But that's not enough. The equiteer's dealings may be uneth­
cical but they aren't illegal. The only solution for the vet, if he
can not sell his home, is to deed it back to the VA or FHA. This
clears him of further liability. So tread carefully, Mr. Airman.
Don't trade $50 now for a big headache later.55

It would be interesting to find out how long this practice had been going
on in Salina. The closing of the base had been announced on November 18, 1964
and this editorial appeared on February 19, 1965, three months later. If the
practice had been going on for two years, long enough to see how this practice
actually operated, it would have had to have started in 1962 or 1963. But as­
suming that this practice had only started after November 18, 1964, then it
would appear from the length of this editorial that the practice was widespread.

While the problem of the equiteers was being dealt with, Schilling was
starting to mothball the first of 735 Schilling Manor houses. By February 19,
1965, twenty-two homes had been preserved and seventeen more would be taken
care of the next week. Mothballing the homes meant that the utilities had been
turned off and other measures taken to preserve the homes from the weather and
vandals. Due to the number of Schilling Manor vacancies, it was possible to
make units available to personnel holding the rank of Airman First Class (A1C)
with over four years of service, provided that they would be able to live there
at least sixty days.56 Originally, SAC had intended to purchase a large amount
of plywood lumber to put over the windows to protect the glass from vandalism.
But Colonel Scanlan persuaded SAC that the $250,000+ cost for the plywood was
not worth the cost of a few broken windows. For the time being, there would

be constant surveillance of the area by Air Police patrols.  

During a staff meeting in early March of 1965, Colonel Scanlan was dis-

tussing Schilling Manor when he got an idea on what to do with some of the 735 
units that would soon be vacant. He knew that the Army’s First Division, then 
stationed at Fort Riley, was about to embark for a tour of duty in Viet Nam and 
that when it did, the families of the men assigned to that unit would have to 
vacate any government housing they resided in to make room for incoming person-
nel. It made sense to invite the First Division to take advantage of the vacant 
government housing at Schilling Manor and he visited the Commanding General at 
Fort Riley to see if the First Division was interested. The General was, nat-
urally, busy handling matters concerning the transfer of his unit, but he did 
send his First Sergeant to survey the situation. Ten families soon moved in 
and after a few more had moved in and with more wanting to, Colonel Scanlan 
informed the Air Force of his action and obtained permission to make Schilling 
Manor units available to the families of military personnel going overseas.  

Salina’s Board of Education decided not to open Schilling School for the 
1965–66 school year on August 10, 1965. There simply were not enough students 
to justify it. Starting with 147 students, enrollment would have dropped rapidly 
after two months.  

But by October, the Board of Education may have started 
revising its plans. The Department of Defense had not declared Schilling Manor 
surplus, as it had the air base proper, nor was it expecting to do so in the 
near future. In fact, the Army was planning to run Schilling Manor as a tri-
service housing center. As of October 26, 1965, there were 150 Air Force and

57 Interviews with Col. Mike Scanlan (USAF, ret.), October 13, 1981, Septem-
ber 1, 1982, and June 13, 1983.

58 Ibid.

The Army returned to Salina for the third time since 1942 on January 3, 1966 with a staff of thirty-five people to run Schilling Manor. On that day, Colonel Scanlan relinquished control of Schilling Manor to Maj. Roger Bradley, United States Army, who was to run the Manor as a sub-post of Fort Riley. It was to be operated as an experimental housing project for the families of men serving overseas and was to be open to members of all branches of the United States military establishment. By January 30, there were 201 families living there, including ninety-six of men assigned to Schilling's caretaker unit and seventeen of men assigned to the Range.

By 1973, an average of 665 units were occupied at all times under the "Waiting Wives" program. With the end of the Viet Nam Conflict, approximately two-thirds of the units were occupied by Air Force families as the Air Force had more unaccompanied tours to send its personnel than did the Army.

For ten years, the Army ran Schilling Manor. Then starting in March of 1976, the Army began thinking of closing the Manor. As of March 3, 1976, only 564 units were occupied. A new Army and Air Force policy announced on April 1, 1976 permitted servicemen to leave their families at the base they were on when they received overseas orders. In addition, Fort Riley had opened 1,101 new military housing units. On December 1, 1976, the Army returned Schilling Manor to the Air Force which promptly declared the housing surplus and turned it over to the GSA. However, the units were not to be dumped on the local housing

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Schilling Manor had been a thorn in the side of Salina ever since it was first announced in 1955 and especially after November 18, 1964. When the Air Force decided to build the Manor, it was sort of in self-defense. The Air Force had pleaded with Salina to build more housing and Salina hesitated. Housing was scarce until 1962, when the situation reversed itself. Then, when the base was announced for closing, an abundant housing situation appeared on the verge of getting even worse. The decision of Colonel Scanlan to open the Manor to military families gave Salina eleven years to ready itself for the probability of 735 housing units being added to the local real estate market. What did happen after 1976 was that a private firm bought the houses, and after refurbishing them, did open them up on the market all at once in 1979. Salina's worst fears were never realized. The houses were cheap while the rest of the Salina housing market remained high, but there was no noticeable rush to buy former military housing and at the present time, the highest number of vacancies in Salina are in the Schilling Manor area.

**OQ Gunnery Range**

**Smoky Hill Bombing Range**

Salinans were assured on December 8, 1964 that the bombing range would not be affected by the closing of Schilling AFB. At the time, there were twenty-three men assigned to the Range and that number was expected to climb to sixty and possibly ninety by July 1, 1965, according to Maj. Charles R. Koons, Range Commander. Some 32,000 acres were in the bomb range complex and approximately 27,000 acres were leased to farmers for agricultural purposes. When

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the closure announcement was made, Salinans expected the Range to be returned to the local tax rolls and disposed of to private ownership. This dream, first espoused in 1944, was never to be realized.

In the summer of 1965, Senator James Pearson of Kansas queried the Air Force concerning the status of the Range. He was informed that until July 1, 1964, the Range had been operated by the Strategic Air Command. Since then, it had been operated by the Tactical Air Command (TAC). As of June 30, 1965, there were only fifteen military personnel assigned to the Range but until March 31, no personnel had been assigned there on a permanent basis. Support had come from Schilling on an "as needed" basis.66

It would appear that Senator Pearson was given an evasive line which could have been theoretically accurate. Likewise, the December 8, 1964 Salina Journal article would have been just as factual. The twenty-three men at the Range could have been on an extended TDY from McConnell AFB, Wichita, KS. Since the unit was a detachment from that base, personnel at the Range could have been carried on McConnell's personnel rosters. Or what the Air Force may have meant was that no one lived on the Range proper.

TAC spent $45,788 to provide facilities at the Range for personnel assigned there in 1965. Detachment 1, 23rd TFW had been replaced by Detachment 1, 835th CSG, McConnell AFB, KS but Major Koons remained in command of eighty men. Some of his men had lived in barracks on base but with the closing of the base, they had no place to live. Two buildings at the north end of the Range were remodeled; one for a dining hall and the other for a forty-man dormitory.67

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66 Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center, dated August 24, 1965.

Detachment 1, 835th CSG was strengthened during the last week in January of 1966 by personnel transferred from Schilling to the Range and at the same time from SAC to TAC. Twenty men were received in this manner bringing the Range strength up to fifty-six men. Major Koons received cooks, bakers, and five Air Police. At the same time, the barracks, dining hall, and a small Base Exchange (BX) were opened. 68

While the Air Force was closing Schilling, it was thinking of acquiring 2,200 acres for the Range. The Air Force felt that it needed the land as a safety corridor for tactical fighter planes in their approach to targets on the Range. 69

The desire for more land raised the ire of the Salina Journal and it lashed out at the Air Force in a July 5, 1966 editorial:

The Air Force should prove a critical need for national defense before it is allowed to confiscate 2,200 acres of crop and pasture land in Saline and McPherson counties as an addition to the existing Smoky Hill bomb range. That the need has not been studied thoroughly is perhaps indicated by the failure of the Air Force to consult county commissioners or other authorities in either county before making its request to the Congress.

This region has a long record of excellent cooperation with the Air Force and The Journal's questioning of the new proposal should be understood in that context. If patriotism demands the sacrifice of more productive land, we must be for it. 70

Despite this editorial, the United States Air Force went ahead with its objective. This, the Salina Journal had to recognize. Starting a July 24, 1966 article with "You can just about write off 2200 acres of crop and pasture land..." the paper informed the public that the House Appropriations Committee had approved $609,000 for the acquisition of the land and for realignment

of targets at the Range. 71

Unpublicized at the time was the fact that near the end of August, 1966, the Range personnel roster jumped to between 165 and 200 men for a short period of time. Transfers of from 100 to 150 men from the 4253rd ABS at Schilling were made to the Range. No one in the Air Force knew how many men were needed to effectively run a bomb range and since Schilling still had some personnel who were either about to retire or not re-enlist and for whom there was not enough time left in service to justify transferring them to another base, they went to the Range. 72

After this, the Air Force ran the Range with fewer and fewer personnel until 1973 when it leased the Range to the Kansas Air National Guard who assigned it to the 184th Tactical Fighter Group (TFG), McConnell AFB, Wichita, KS. On July 1, 1979, the 184th TFG replaced what had been a civilian operation with active-duty personnel and ran it with twenty-four Guardsmen.

4253rd Air Base Squadron

Colonel Scanlan probably had more experience in closing down Air Force installations than any other officer on active duty at the time. After the shock of the closing announcement wore off, he went to his immediate superior, Col. Roy Crompton, 310th SAW Commander, and asked for the job of closing Schilling. He had been offered command of Travis AFB, CA and wanted a California assignment before he retired from the Air Force but felt that a full Colonel might keep military and civilian agencies from running rough-shod over a person of lesser


72 Interview with Col. Mike Scanlan (USAF, ret.), October 13, 1981. While serving at the Range as a clerk from 1979 to 1982, this writer frequently heard how it had once taken 165 men to do the job that "twenty-four Guardsmen were doing." The individuals telling this story, of course, did not know the real reason for assigning that many men there, but their version sounded good.
rank in taking what they wanted off of the base. Normally, a Captain or a Major closed a base. He dreaded the "Sundown" nickname but there was a job that needed to be done and Colonel Scanlan wanted to see it done right. On June 25, 1965, he assumed command of the 4253rd ABS, the last unit to call Schilling home.

His headquarters were in the deactivated hospital and on June 27, 1965, he commented on the differences between his closing job in 1949 and 1965 in a Salina Journal interview:

This is a lot different than the 1949 closure. That was strictly a military move. We moved everything out--men and planes and desks and everything went to the same place. I was the director of materiel, a major, for Colonel Joe W. Kelly and he made me project officer. I stayed behind until the 15th AF had completed its inspection. This closure is considerably different. Men and planes went to the four winds and the civilian side has entered the picture. We're playing a lot of it by ear. I think we're about six weeks ahead of the time table for the closure, but there'll be caretaker troops here probably until next summer... 74

In actual fact, twenty-one months would pass before the last airmen would leave Schilling. One of the probable reasons that this closing was different than the 1949 closing was because Mike Scanlan had played a role in both of them. Undoubtedly, he did things in 1949 that he felt could have been done better and moved to do that in the 1964 to 1967 period. Then, another opinion held that the quality of personnel were different. One gets the impression reading about the 1940s that some hoped that the sooner the base closed the better, and few men were sorry to leave. It was different this time. There was more property to dispose of, and this time, it appeared that the Air Force Force had no intention of returning, whereas in 1949, there was that chance

73 Ibid.

that the Air Force would return. On July 28, 1965, SAC gave the Salina (KS)
Public Library the entire 20,000 volume Schilling Library, worth an estimated
$44,500. This included the remaining subscriptions and its collections of
periodicals and newspapers. 75

Finally, Schilling Air Force Base was declared surplus and was deemed ready
for turnover to local governmental agencies on June 29, 1965. 76 What this meant
was the Federal Government had no foreseeable future use for the base and was
ready to place it on the market.

A ceremony involving twenty-seven men was held in the Base Commander's
office on July 30, 1965. Fourteen members of the deactivated 550th SMS received
the Air Force Commendation Medal (AFCM). At the same time, thirteen men, each
with at least twenty years of service, retired from the Air Force. Col. John
R. King, former Commander of the 550th SMS, was acting Base Commander and pre­
sided over these ceremonies. 77

Most Salinans were probably unaware that their Chamber of Commerce had a
small investment at the base. The Military Affairs Committee held an auction
on the evening of August 4, 1965 and took in over $1,000 from the sale of such
items as pictures (for dormitory dayrooms), table lamps, a movie projector, a
ceramic kiln (for the base hobby shop), a snow blower, and seven lounge chairs.
This equipment had been purchased for use by the base because they were things
that could not be purchased with government funds but which helped morale. 78

By September 24, 1965, Col. Mike Scanlan's 4253rd ABS had shrunk to 584

military personnel; thirty-three officers and 551 enlisted. He expected the last airman to leave within twelve months. As it turned out, he was only off by about six months.

Military families living in the Salina area were informed by Lt. Col. Joe Chapman, 4253rd ABS Vice Commander, on November 3, 1965 that the Schilling Commissary would remain open a while longer. However, it closed for good on January 19, 1966 although the Army did open up a commissary for Schilling Manor (and presumably military families in the area) residents after it had established itself at the Manor.

The last Christmas Party at Schilling to be reported in the Salina Journal occurred on December 17, 1965 at Schilling's Community Center. There were presents, food, drink, Christmas decorations, and Santa Claus. But unlike at other Christmas parties of the past, no whines of jet engines were heard from planes about to take off, no one stood guard over a hot-line phone, and this party was held secure in the knowledge that it would not be interrupted by klaxons sounding an alert. Approximately 400 men were still assigned to the base and were in attendance with their families. Most of them did not have orders and did not know where Christmas, 1966 would find them.

Bit by bit, Salina and Saline County began to face a life after Schilling. On January 5, 1966, five county officials: County Attorney, his assistant, the Sheriff, Probate Judge, and District Court Clerk forfeited a total of $7,544 a year in pay which they had been receiving for the extra work the base had caused

79 Salina (KS) Journal, September 24, 1965. Most of these troops were Civil Engineer personnel.
Another facet of military life at Schilling was to be phased out on January 9, 1966 when Chaplain Chester Ross was to conduct the last morning services in the base chapel at ten and eleven o'clock on "The Unchanging Christ." Major Ross, a Protestant, was the last Chaplain on base and A1C Buddy G. Bray was the last Chaplain's Assistant. There would be an Air Force Catholic wedding on January 15 and a Protestant wedding on January 22. After January 9, base personnel were to be encouraged to attend Salina churches. Eventually, the chapel was to become an "all faiths" chapel for Schilling Institute. 83

Lt. Col. Norman Repp, 4253rd ABS Vice Commander, presented the guidons of the 379th, 380th, and 381st Bomb Squadrons to officials of Salina's Smoky Hill Historical Museum on February 17, 1966. 84 Colonel Repp had been the last Commander of one of the bomb squadrons before they were deactivated in 1965.

With the deactivation of the base, there was considerable curiosity about what was at the base and Salinans yielded to their curiosity by driving there. Some were curious as to how fast their cars would go and felt that the runways would be an ideal test, free from police interference. Salinans were warned that they took their lives into their own hands and were ordered to stay off of the runways. Schilling runways were still being used by Air Force and civilian planes for emergency purposes. Air Police patrols were trying to keep visitors off the runways. 85

84 Salina (KS) Journal, February 17, 1966. However, they are in storage in the basement of the Salina Library.
Col. John F. "Mike" Scanlan turned over command of the 4253rd ABS to Lt. Col. Homer H. Houghton on March 4, 1966 and left for Headquarters, SAC, Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE to assume duties as Director of Services. Before he left, he and his wife were honored with a farewell dinner on February 9, 1966 at the Salina Country Club. At the time of his departure, there were eighteen officers and 240 airmen on what was left of Schilling AFB. Although his new job sounded simple, it turned out to be complex. Colonel Scanlan had hoped to receive command of another base, preferably in California. Instead, he was nominated for the coveted Legion of Merit medal, given a desk in SAC Headquarters, and charged with supervising the closing of other bases in the same manner that he had closed Schilling.

Little was revealed in the local press about the last Schilling Commander. He had been a member of the 550th SMS before it was deactivated. As the last Commander of the 4253rd ABS, one of his duties, in addition to supervising the final phase-out of the Air Force from Schilling, was to host visitors from other communities which were losing their air bases. Salina/Schilling were again role models for a successful "swords into plowshares" transition.

Although the United States Air Force would soon be leaving, two things happened which were bound to arouse some sort of curiosity in later years. The Salina Airport Authority decided to rename the streets of the base proper. Formerly designated by letters and numbers by the Air Force, now they were to honor former Commanders with three exceptions: Schilling Road, the east/west road into the base and formerly the main gate road; Centennial Road, the north/
south road into the base; and Berschell Road, a street on the south side of the base which was named in honor of a former Civil Engineer assigned to the base in the late 1950s. 89

Plans were announced on May 15, 1966 for Salina to move its municipal airport from East Crawford Street to Schilling with the Base Operations building serving as the airport terminal. 90 This move fulfilled a dream that had first surfaced in 1945 and was a thorn in base/community relations during that period.

A B-47 stratojet bomber landed at Schilling on June 26, 1966 for the last time. It was the last B-47 on active duty and had been flown from Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS to Schilling where it was accepted by Mayor G. N. "Jerry" Waddell as a gift from the Air Force. The Air Force and Salina had finalized this deal on June 17, 1966. 91 Speculation immediately focused on what to do with the plane. There was talk of an air museum where Salina would acquire other planes and place them on display in the old base proper. Sad to say, the B-47 is the only plane Salina has acquired at the present time and the idea of an air museum has faded. The GSA sold eight of the twelve Atlas missile sites by sealed bid on July 19, 1966. Four were reserved for use by Schilling Technical Institute (Now KTI) and Kansas State University. 92 This action finished the missile story in Salina.

Colonel Houghton's command had shrunk to two officers, twenty enlisted, and thirty civilians by September 14, 1966. All personnel had orders except for Colonel Houghton and Senior Master Sergeant Williams, Personnel NCO. This

89 *Salina (KS) Journal*, April 21, 1966. See Appendix C for a complete list of names used.


group had thirty vehicles at their disposal. Headquarters of the 4253rd ABS had been moved to the Civil Engineering Building. At the same time, the Salina Airport Authority took possession of the airfield portion of the base. This transaction involved over 1,000 acres and fifty buildings as well as the runways, taxiways, terminal, tower, and support facilities. 93

Praise for Salina came from an unexpected source on November 17, 1966. Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, the man who had decided to close the base, in a statement read at the Ramada Inn, praised Salina for the way it had recovered from the jolt that his decision had caused almost two years prior. "Dear Sal: The patient is recovering nicely, thank you, Mr. McNamara. Yours, Ina." 94

Colonel Houghton announced on January 18, 1967 that the 4253rd Air Base Squadron would be deactivated on April 3, 1967. On that day, his command, which would consist of himself, two NCOs, two airmen, and eight civilians, plus a few guests would gather in his office in Building 595 where he would read the order deactivating his command. No bugles would blow, no trumpets would sound at Schilling's wake. "Dear Sal: The base is dead; long live the base. Yours, Ina." 95

April 3, 1967 was a bright, sunny spring day in Salina. Under normal circumstances, it would merely have been a typical day. But this day was to mark the final end of Schilling Air Force Base. For twenty-five years, Smoky Hill/Schilling Air Force Base, Salina, Kansas, two miles southwest of the center of the city, located near the center of Kansas, had played a role in the affairs

of a nation, a state, a county, and a city. At 10:00 A.M. on that day, twenty
guests gathered in Colonel Houghton’s office in Building 595 for the final mo­
ments of the base.

Special Order G-17 from Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, Offutt AFB,
NE was read: "1. The 4253rd AB Sq, Schilling AFB, Kans. is discontinued effec­
tive 3 April 1967. Personnel rendered surplus by this action will be absorbed
into other SAC units. Equipment rendered surplus by this action will revert to
stocks. Disposition of orgl records will be per AFM 181-5. Authority: AFM
26-2." 96

This ended the life of the base. However, there was a small ceremony
which made it more of a retirement party than a wake. Colonel Houghton, the
last Schilling Commander, made a few farewell remarks: "There are mixed emo­
tions. We're proud, naturally, of what Schilling has done and proud of the way
in which the base has been phased into the community's civilian life. But
saying 'Goodbye' is not easy. It makes us a little sad." The last personnel
assigned to Schilling were given keys to the city, then the group went outside
and watched the flag and headquarters sign pulled down. It was over. Schilling
Air Force Base had retired. 97

Before Schilling Air Force Base could officially retire from the pages of
the Salina Journal, it needed an editorial so that Whitley Austin could present
thoughts which represented the way the area felt about the retirement of the
base. On April 4, 1967, the last editorial concerning the active base was
presented:

The Strategic Air Command is gone from Salina. In an informal

97Ibid.
ceremony of coffee, cakes and pleasantries, the last handful of Blues pulled out Monday. The remarkable aspect of the drawnout closing of Schilling Air Force base is that there have been no tears. Not even many swear words. This is testimony to the maturity of the town. Emotionally and intellectually, Salina has proved its adulthood.

Since the word came out of Washington on November 19, 1964, Salina has known that the closing of the base would be painful. It still is. We have not fully recovered from the traumatic loss of men, payroll, and purchasing power. Nor have we replaced the friendship and leadership that the men and women of the Air Force provided in so many ways.98

Thus, ended twenty-five years of history in which a small city, so to speak, interrelated with the city and county outside its gates. Sometimes both groups managed to rub the other the wrong way, but on the whole each complemented the other. The editorial cited above in the Salina Journal was correct in stating that the Air Force would be missed. If people this writer talked to while researching the base were sincere, the Air Force is still missed sixteen years later.

On April 3, 1967, Lieutenant Colonel Homer H. Houghton, the last Commander of Schilling Air Force Base, lowered the flag and a carpenter climbed a ladder and pulled down the sign at the headquarters building. Twenty-five years had passed since this area had been transformed from farm land into a military installation. As was the case twenty-five years earlier, no bugles blew, no trumpets sounded, no drums beat, no troops passed by in review, and the flags were bundled up and dispatched to the United States Air Force Archives. An era in the history of Salina and the Air Force had ended. Schilling Air Force Base now belonged to the ages.

CHAPTER IX

NO BUGLES WILL BLOW

CONCLUSION

Ever since Spain settled Florida and the first English colonists arrived at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, military installations have existed to provide for the common defense and general welfare of the American people. Some have existed for a few days, while others, such as Fort Leavenworth, KS and Langley AFB, VA, have continued in operation for decades. The purpose of military installations in the United States has undergone change through the years. Originally, American installations were designed to protect settlers from Indians, marauding enemies such as the French, English, Spanish, and later Mexicans whose objectives were to harass America's continental expansion, and from possible invasion from the high seas. Today, with an enemy a hemisphere away, the advent of air power has caused change. Theoretically, the Army can set up a defense in a few fortified buildings or trenches, but aerial warfare and defense requirements mean a fairly stable and secure rear-echelon base. Here, there must be paved taxi areas, a strip of at least 5,000 feet in length (and preferably much longer to allow for mishaps), and the capability of handling aircraft carrying loads of 60,000 pounds and greater. In addition, it must have fuel storage facilities for at least thirty aircraft and that storage area should be able to withstand enemy attack.

At the time the "Army Air Base at Salina, Kansas" was constructed, the demands of aerial warfare were simpler and the average length of the runways, based upon sources available to this writer, seems to have been 5,000 feet long.
What became Smoky Hill/Schilling Air Force Base, was destined to have some of the longer runways in the United States military establishment. When it closed in 1967, it had two runways 13,330 feet long with 1,000 feet overrun at both ends for a total effective length of 15,330 feet and it still had two runways 10,000 feet long, making the base still one of the largest in the United States when it came to runways!

Salina's air base was created in the dark days of World War II. Although it started out with B-17 bombers, its creation was a center for the "Sky Dreadnaughts" later known as the B-29. It was one of three bases in the continental United States charged with training crews in that plane and its Gunnery Range was probably used for practice bombing runs. The base had four 10,000-feet-long runways and four 7,500-feet-long for a total of eight runways.

After the war ended, the base was probably kept open because of its runways. When constructed in 1942, it was designed for a five years operation. As such, construction was on a temporary basis. It does not appear that much permanent construction was accomplished during this period. The mission of the base after the war was primarily combat training, although at one time or the other, it served as a recruiting center, a post-basic training center, and a way station for hospital patients being transported to a major Air Force hospital. Several Smoky Hill Commanders from this period went on to promotions of at least Brigadier General.

Economy and the poor re-enlistment rate were given as explanations for the forced closing of the base in 1949, and it was placed on a caretaker status under the command of one officer assisted by four enlisted men and seventeen civilians. Some equipment was left behind to provide for a cadre should the base be reactivated.

The United States had been involved in the Korean Conflict for a year when
the decision was made to reactivate the base. A group of men from Forbes AFB, Topeka, KS were already attached to the base to reactivate the OQ Gunnery Range when the word came on August 1, 1951 that the total base was reactivated. These men became the nucleus of the units newly assigned to the base.

Smoky Hill was to be a different base in its second era than it had been in its first era. In the beginning, the aircraft was the same B-29 model, but these gave way to the new B-47 stratojet bombers, the "long rifle" of the Strategic Air Command. In addition, KC-97 tankers were assigned in two squadrons to give the base mid-air refueling capability.

Two other significant changes that made the base different were personnel and base/community relations. As far as can be determined, the most personnel assigned to the base during the 1940s was approximately 5,000 military. This figure varied from one man in early 1942 to 5,000 at the peak of the war to fewer than 3,000 in 1946. At one time, there were four groups assigned to the base, although in the post-war period there were only two groups under one wing. The reactivated Smoky Hill had the 802nd Air Division and the 40th and 310th Bomb Wings assigned to it for an approximate total of 8,000 military personnel.

It would be hard to write about the base without a look at base/community relations. Without going into detail or wandering off on a tangent, it is believed by this writer, on the basis of the material available to him, that base/community relations fluctuated during the 1940s seldom venturing past the "good" mark and on occasion dropping down into the "poor" area. But with the reactivation, relations seldom dropped below "excellent" and have often been described as "unique" in modern military history. In the last era of the base, there were frequent Open Houses and Receptions on base for civilians which were reciprocated by the city of Salina with the annual week-long "Honor the Uniform" Week in which men in uniform were given discounts, prizes, etc., by Salina
merchants and townspeople were urged to buy airmen cups of coffee. Salinans were given memberships in the base clubs. Two planes, a B-47 and a KC-135 tanker, were named "City of Salina" and "City of Salina II," respectively. The reputation of base/community relations in Saline County, Kansas was such that over 125 communities in the United States with military installations near them either wrote or sent delegations to Salina to see how it was done.

What effect base/community relations had on the base can only be judged by the reader. What can be stated is that the base set re-enlistment records which set an Air Force record in 1958 and it was named "The Golden Anniversary Base" in recognition of that fact. The units assigned to the base were frequent winners of various Air Force competitions. Morale was probably above average. Once, the Air Force tried to catch the base off guard with three Operational Readiness Inspections (ORIs) within three months at a time when the average inspection was once every twelve months. Each time, the base passed the inspections with ease.

Construction in the second era of the base started out as a five-year plan, was changed to ten years, and finally to twenty-five years by 1952, meaning that the base was virtually permanent. Most of the office buildings were constructed of concrete block and the barracks were among the most modern in the Air Force for the times. As has been mentioned, the runways were among the largest in the United States. A rumor surfaced in this writer's research that the runways were six feet thick of reinforced concrete and capable of withstanding direct hits by nuclear bombs. Material available to this writer makes that rumor appear false. The best that can be determined is that they are twenty-four inches thick of reinforced concrete with six artificial drainage systems. With this, the runways can handle the heaviest of military planes which currently need only runways with a depth of nineteen inches. Whether
this makes the runways capable of withstanding direct nuclear attacks has not been determined and hopefully will never be determined.

Worth noting here is the fact that the base did have a secure fuel storage system. Six salt mine caverns in western McPherson County had been leased to the Air Force for storage of jet fuel. A pipeline connected the base to these caverns and it is assumed that these caverns could survive a limited enemy attack.

In 1960, the base underwent several changes. First, the 802nd Air Division was deactivated and the 40th Bomb Wing was transferred to Forbes AFB, KS. In their stead, a squadron of Atlas F missiles was deployed in twelve sites around the base and attached to the base for support. The base was upgraded to receive the B-52 heavy bomber and the KC-135 jet tanker. Through these changes, the base only lost approximately 3,000 personnel.

Until the construction for the base and the missile sites ended, there was considerable mention in the local press about a housing shortage in the area. This writer has received letters from people assigned to the base between 1942 and 1965 stating that until 1962, reasonable housing was nearly impossible to find. This writer has mentioned in Chapter V of this paper that men assigned to the 310th Wing when it was at Forbes AFB made excursions to Salina in mid-1952 to secure housing before that unit was transferred to Smoky Hill. Yet, this writer talked to several Salinans who were surprised to hear that there had ever been a housing shortage in the area. Despite their surprise, this writer believes that there was a critical housing shortage during most of the history of the base and that it may have been responsible for some of the ill-feeling that the airmen had for the area in the 1940s. Furthermore, this writer believes that the base housing area was constructed by the Air Force only after Salina failed to construct enough homes for its personnel. Why it
was difficult for contractors to decide to build housing can not be determined. This is a matter for the reader to decide.

By November, 1964, Schilling had an overage of personnel assigned to it. There were nearly 5,000 men and women assigned to the base and it was ready to receive the first B-52s, then a relatively new plane in the Air Force inventory. It had received the new KC-135s in March, 1964. There was no indication that Schilling would be closed, yet the announcement was made and caught everyone, it seems, in SAC by surprise. By the end of June, 1965, the 310th Wing had been deactivated and the planes had left. Yet, it took the Air Force nearly two more years to close up shop and remove the last of its personnel.

This writer remains curious as to why the base, in which millions had been spent to upgrade, was closed. It is possible to believe that the exigencies of world war and location were responsible for its creation in 1942, but there is no clear-cut answer for its closing. Did politics play a role? Was money needed for the Viet Nam Conflict and closing the base was one means of getting it? Or was location no longer a variable to consider? Perhaps the answer to one of these questions is the reason the base was closed. On the other hand, the reasons the Department of Defense gave for the closing such as the facts that the base had the obsolete Atlas F missiles, B-47 bombers, and as yet did not have B-52s, is the answer. Maybe, it rests with something not readily apparent to this writer. Why the Air Force then took nearly two years to leave after the 310th Wing was deactivated is another mystery when one recalls that in August, 1949, the announcement was made to close the base and by April, 1950, there was only a skeleton caretaker force of twenty-two people on base. There are probably simple, justifiable answers to these questions but, again, they are not readily apparent to this writer.

Throughout its history, Smoky Hill/Schilling was a base which was con-
sidered a keystone in the military defense of the United States. Its planes could be rushed to either coast, since the base was nearly equidistant to both. It was endowed with long runways and in the second era of its history, it had above average personnel assigned to above average units and its facilities were in good shape. The base was economical to operate and on the day it was announced for closing, Col. Roy Crompton, 310th Wing Commander, was at a meeting at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ to receive an award recognizing the base's success in saving the government money. Some of the nation's most famous military aircraft such as the B-17, B-24, B-29, B-47, KC-97, KC-135, to name a few were assigned to the base at one time or the other. Many top Commanders went on to higher rank after they left the base. It does not appear to ever have been a detriment to anyone's career to have been assigned to Smoky Hill/Schilling AFB.

Finally, one thing stands out in the mind of this writer about this base. The history of the base is a microscopic study of the United States Air Force, yet it is also a study of how a community reacted to having that base next door as a neighbor. It is especially evident in the last era (1951 to 1967) that this base was the Air Force at its finest. At the same time, this writer believes that it is also a history of a Kansas community behaving as it felt a Kansas community should behave when it has a group of strangers as guests. It appears that no history of Salina or the United States Air Force is complete without considering the contributions each made to the other between the years 1942 and 1967.

Today, there are two overt reminders of past events in this area: A parked B-47 with peeling decals and the freshly painted orange and white checkerboard-patterned water tower, the latter common to United States military bases worldwide. Col. John F. "Mike" Scanlan (USAF, retired), the next to the last Base Commander, is the General Manager of the Salina Airport Authority which oversees
the area, and his contribution to the once glorious past is to see that the tower remains painted in that familiar manner.
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## APPENDIX A

### UNITS ASSIGNED

1942 - 1967

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<th>Name</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Base Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Julius B. Summers, Jr.</td>
<td>11-10-59</td>
<td>7-31-61</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lt Col</td>
<td>Wallace F. MacGregor</td>
<td>7-31-61</td>
<td>5-20-63</td>
<td>March AFB, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lt Col</td>
<td>Curtis Youngblood</td>
<td>5-20-63</td>
<td>6-18-63</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>John R. King (SD)</td>
<td>6-18-63</td>
<td>7-16-63</td>
<td>Malmstrom AFB, MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Charles K. Agan</td>
<td>7-16-63</td>
<td>7-64</td>
<td>Offutt AFB, NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>James R. Sheffield</td>
<td>7-64</td>
<td>8-5-64</td>
<td>Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lt Col</td>
<td>Homer F. Scanlan (MN)</td>
<td>8-5-64</td>
<td>3-5-66</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John F. Scanlan (MN)</td>
<td>3-5-66</td>
<td>4-3-67</td>
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### 22nd Strategic Aerospace Division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>John H. de Russy</td>
<td>6-52</td>
<td>11-25-52</td>
<td>Forbes AFB, KS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>Wiley D. Ganey (AL)</td>
<td>11-25-52</td>
<td>4-24-54</td>
<td>March AFB, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maj Gen</td>
<td>John R. Sutherland, 44</td>
<td>4-24-54</td>
<td>2-5-56</td>
<td>Offutt AFB, NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Burton H. R. Burns (TX)</td>
<td>2-5-56</td>
<td>2-24-56</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>James W. Wilson, 39 (WY)</td>
<td>2-24-56</td>
<td>3-24-58</td>
<td>MacDill AFB, FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>Harold L. Ochke (MO)</td>
<td>3-24-58</td>
<td>7-8-59</td>
<td>Plattsburg AFB, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>George Y. Jumper, 42 (CA)</td>
<td>7-8-59</td>
<td>6-20-60</td>
<td>Fairchild AFB, WA</td>
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### 310th Bomb Wing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>John H. de Russy</td>
<td>11-25-52</td>
<td>8-7-55</td>
<td>Wright-Patterson AFB, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Selmon Wells, 39</td>
<td>8-7-55</td>
<td>7-5-56</td>
<td>Mountain Home AFB, ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Delmar F. Woods</td>
<td>7-5-56</td>
<td>9-21-56</td>
<td>Westover AFB, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Bryson Bailey</td>
<td>9-21-56</td>
<td>1-12-58</td>
<td>Fairchild AFB, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Jean B. Miller</td>
<td>1-12-58</td>
<td>4-8-59</td>
<td>Greenland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Walter Y. Lucas</td>
<td>4-8-59</td>
<td>6-20-60</td>
<td>Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>George Y. Jumper</td>
<td>6-20-60</td>
<td>2-2-61</td>
<td>Mountain Home AFB, ID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Jack W. Hayes, Jr.</td>
<td>2-2-61</td>
<td>7-11-62</td>
<td>Lowry AFB, CO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Edison F. Arnold</td>
<td>7-11-62</td>
<td>5-5-64</td>
<td>Fairchild AFB, WA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Roy Crompton (GA)</td>
<td>5-5-64</td>
<td>6-25-65</td>
<td>Ellsworth AFB, SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Base Location</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Stanley J. Donovan, 42</td>
<td>12-8-52 to 5-2-53</td>
<td>Forbes AFB, KS</td>
<td>Travis AFB, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>David A. Burchinal, 38 (PA)</td>
<td>5-2-53 to 10-53</td>
<td>Pentagon</td>
<td>Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Robert J. Nolan, 35</td>
<td>10-53 to 1-54</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>William R. Large, Jr.</td>
<td>1-54 to 6-54</td>
<td>Offutt AFB, NE</td>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Robert J. Nolan, 35</td>
<td>6-54 to 6-14-54</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Burton H. Burns (TX)</td>
<td>6-14-54 to 6-57</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Andrew S. Low (RI)</td>
<td>6-57 to 7-4-58</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Maxwell AFB, AL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>George Y. Jumper, 41 (CA)</td>
<td>7-4-58 to 7-8-59</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Maxwell AFB, AL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Woodward B. Carpenter</td>
<td>7-8-59 to 6-20-60</td>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX C

#### STREET NAMES AFTER CLOSURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>In Honor Of</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVENUES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold</td>
<td>Col. E. F. Arnold, 310th SAW Cmdr, 7-11-62 to 5-5-63.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berschell</td>
<td>Civil Engineer in the late 1950s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hein</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Gordon E. Hein, 802nd CSG Cmdr, 3-7-56 to 7-7-59.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Col. Andrew S. Low, 40th Wg Cmdr, 6-57 to 7-4-58.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scanlan</td>
<td>Col. John F. &quot;Mike&quot; Scanlan, 310th CSG and 4253rd ABS Cmdr, to 3-5-66.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROADS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>Col. Bryson Bailey, 310th Wg Cmdr, 9-21-56 to 1-12-58.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burchinal</td>
<td>Col. David A. Burchinal, 40th Wg Cmdr, 5-2-53 to 10-53.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corwin</td>
<td>Col. Robert F. Corwin, Hospital Cmdr, 8-52 to 4-61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crompton</td>
<td>Col. Roy Crompton, 310th SAW Cmdr, 5-5-64 to 6-25-65.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Russy</td>
<td>Col. John H. de Russy, 802nd AD and 310th Wg Cmdr, 6-52 to 8-7-55.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes</td>
<td>Col. Jack W. Hayes, Jr., 310th SAW and 22nd SAD Cmdr, 2-2-61 7-1-63.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jumper</td>
<td>Col. George Y. Jumper, 802nd AD, 40th, and 310th Wg Cmdr, 7-4-58 to 2-2-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas</td>
<td>Col. Walter Y. Lucas, 310th Wg Cmdr, 4-8-59 to 6-20-60.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohlke</td>
<td>Col. Harold L. Ohlke, 802nd AD Cmdr, 3-24-58 to 7-8-59.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schilling</td>
<td>Col. David C. Schilling, Base named in his honor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summers</td>
<td>Col. Julius B. Summers, Jr., 802nd CSG and 310th CSG Cmdr, 11-10-59 to 7-31-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutherland</td>
<td>Brig. Gen. John R. Sutherland, 802nd AD Cmdr, 4-24-54 to 2-5-56.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells</td>
<td>Col. Selmon Wells, 310th Wg Cmdr, 8-7-55 to 7-5-56.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

THE BASE
1945

Location:

From City--4.0 air miles, SSW.
Position--Lat. 38° 47' 18". Long. 97° 39' 25".
Altitude--1,260'.
City Population--21,073.

Description:

Size--2,600 acres.
Landing area--Runways: N/S 10,000' x 500', NE/SW 7,650' x 150', E/W 7,650' x 150', NW/SE 10,000' x 500', concrete.
Drainage--Artificial.
Approach hazards--None.
Lighting--Beacons (rotating and code); course lights; obst.; contact; B-2 runway (portable); flood (stationary).

Facilities:

Hangars--(1) 200' x 184', door 120' x 29', wood; (1) 200' x 180', door 160' x 36', wood and concrete; (4) 120' x 80', door 120' x 25'8", steel.
Shops--Major engine repair and major aircraft repair.
Gasoline--73, 91, and 100 octane with 15 servicing trucks available on base. None reported in vicinity.
Oil--Available on base. None reported in vicinity.
Communications--Telegraph and teletype.
Personnel Accomodations (transient)--Available on base and in Salina.

Transportation:

Airlines--none reported.
Railroads--Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific; Missouri Pacific; Union Pacific; at Salina. Sidings on base.
Roads--US 40, 3.0 mi. NNE; US 81 2.2 mi. E; paved; access road, E. improved.
Facilities--Bus and taxi service.

Owned by the United States government and operated by the Army Air Force.¹

APPENDIX E
THE BASE
1965 TO 1967

Location:

From City—Southwest edge of Salina. 90 miles from the geographical
center of the nation.
Population—Over 42,000.

Description:

Size—Over 3,300 acres.
Landing area—Runways—N/S 13,330' x 300', NW/SE 10,000' x 500', NE/SW
10,000' x 150', concrete.
Taxiways—Concrete; 17,000' x 75', Bituminous; 10,500' x 70'.
Lighting—Complete runway and taxiway lighting. High intensity lighting
on N/S runway and related taxiways.
Administration building—9,000 SF.
Undeveloped areas—Numerous, ranging in size from fractions of an area to
over 40 acres. All served by existing utility systems.

Facilities:

Hangars—(1) 61,300 SF, (1) 47,000 SF, (3) 27,000 SF, and (1) 116,000 SF.
Shops—27,000 SF.
Aircraft Wash Platform—150' x 250'.
Buildings—Over 300, totalling 2,337,000 square feet including; 75-bed
hospital; 15-chair dental building; 3 dining halls; 30 dorms; gym;
laboratories; theater; chapel; bowling alley; 2 swimming pools;
dozens of shop buildings; 20 warehouses; and office buildings.
Natural gas heating and many buildings are air-conditioned.
Water system—Complete facility. Capacity of 1.5 million gallons a day
and storage of 1.5 million gallons above ground.
Streets—Over 12 miles of paved streets and 13 miles of all-weather
graveled and oiled roads.
Parking—190,000 square yards of bituminous surfaced parking with lots
located to serve all buildings adequately and conveniently.

Transportation:

Airlines—Daily service provided by Frontier and Continental Air Lines.
Railroads—On-base service provided by the Missouri Pacific on a number of
sidings.
Roads—I-70, 4 mi. NNW; US 40, 3 mi. NNE; I-35W/US 81 2 mi. E; paved;
access road, E. paved.1

**APPENDIX F**

**CHRONOLOGY OF THE 40TH BOMB WING PRIOR TO ITS ARRIVAL AT SMOKY HILL AFB, KS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 1, 1941</td>
<td>Activated as the 40th Bomb Group and assigned to Boriquen Field, Puerto Rico.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 1942</td>
<td>29th, 44th, 45th, and 395th Bomb Squadrons, Heavy, assigned to the 40th Bomb Group. Its mission was to patrol the Caribbean with B-17, B-18, and B-24 bomber aircraft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January, 1943</td>
<td>25th Bomb Squadron is assigned to the 40th Group and the 29th Bomb Squadron is transferred to another unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15, 1943</td>
<td>40th Bomb Group is rotated back to the United States and equipped with B-29 bombers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1945</td>
<td>40th Bomb Group is assigned to India and then to the Asian Theater of Operations where it was involved in the final missions over Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 14, 1945</td>
<td>Flew last World War II mission over Japan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 1945</td>
<td>Deactivated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28, 1952</td>
<td>Reactivated as the 40th Bomb Wing, Medium, at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ and equipped with B-29 bombers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 1953</td>
<td>40th Bomb Wing transferred to Smoky Hill AFB, KS and assigned to the 802nd Air Division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 20, 1960</td>
<td>Unit transferred to Forbes AFB, KS minus the 40th ARS which remained on base under the 310th Wing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer, 1964</td>
<td>40th Wing deactivated at Forbes AFB, KS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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# APPENDIX G

## CHRONOLOGY OF THE 310TH BOMB WING PRIOR TO ITS ARRIVAL AT SMOKY HILL AFB, KS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 1942</td>
<td>Activated at Tucson, AZ as the 310th Bomb Group, Medium, under the command of Lt. Col. William L. Lee with the 379th, 380th, 381st, and 428th Bomb Squadrons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 1942</td>
<td>Received 54 B-25 bombers at Westover Field, MA while enroute to Africa where it flew 1,200 sorties and dropped 849.27 tons of bombs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 12, 1945</td>
<td>Deactivated at Pomigiano, Italy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 27, 1946</td>
<td>Redesignated Headquarters, 310th Bomb Group, Light, inactive, and assigned to Hanscom Field, MA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 28, 1952</td>
<td>Reactivated at Forbes AFB, KS as the 310th Bomb Wing, Medium, and equipped as a B-29 unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 1952</td>
<td>Transferred to Smoky Hill AFB, KS and assigned to the 802nd Air Division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 20, 1960</td>
<td>Receives control of the 40th Air Refueling Squadron.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 1963</td>
<td>The 40th ARS is deactivated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 25, 1965</td>
<td>310th Wing deactivated and returned to control by Headquarters, USAF.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. *Impact*, July 26, 1957. The first Commander of the 310th Group was probably the same William L. Lee who later commanded the base in 1946-1947. He was a Lieutenant Colonel about this time and did rise to command of the 15th AF in Italy which had control of the 310th Group during World War II.

Note the 310th's paper status at Hanscom Field. This seems to have been common as Smoky Hill had the paper 96th Group assigned to it in 1946.
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Impact. 1952 to 1965. This was the base newspaper during the second era of the base.

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Newsweek. February 19, 1951, pps. 12 and 19.


Phelan, Hugh E. Letter, August 26, 1982.


Salina (KS) Globe-Sun, 1960 to 1963. This paper was the successor to the Salina Advertiser-Sun and ceased publication in late 1963.


Salvo. 1943 to 1945. This was the base newspaper during World War II.


United States Department of the Army. Station List of the Army of the United States. 1944 to 1946.


Winston, Col. Donald K., USAF. Offutt AFB, Omaha, NE. Letter, October 5, 1982. Used with permission.