

SHELBY AIR FORCE DEPOT

MISSION

LINEAGE

Shelby Air Force Depot

STATIONS

Wilkins AFS, OH

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Col Narce Whitaker, #1955

Col Lester Kunish, #1959

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

By the mid-1950s, the Air Materiel Command had decided to overhaul its depot structure in the U.S. to reflect changes in the Air Force weapon inventory and to reduce costs. In 1957 cutbacks in manpower and funding that had been directed from above made it appropriate to proceed with such a consolidation. Already, two depots had been discontinued during 1952 and 1953,

namely, the Kansas City Air Force Specialized Depot in Kansas and the Spokane Air Force Depot in Washington.

Marked for phase-out by July 1960 were five of the seven remaining major depots--Maywood, California; Memphis, Tennessee; Topeka, Kansas; Shelby, Ohio; and Gadsden, Alabama--and nine storage sites, along with several lesser installations.

Altogether, the installations slated for elimination constituted nearly one-fourth of the command's storage space and managed 230,000 items, some 20 percent of the Air Force total; some 11,000 people worked at the sites. The Air Materiel Command calculated that closing the five depots and shifting their missions to the receiving air materiel area depots would slash costs from some \$29 million annually to less than \$6 million.

Phasing out these depots was possible because faster transportation, transceiver networks, and electronic data processing allowed the command's managers to control commodities which were dispersed to base level, reducing the need for depot stocks and warehouse space. The first of these depot closings to occur was Gadsden in March 1958; Maywood followed in January 1960, then Memphis in May 1960, Topeka in November 1960, and Shelby in January 1961.

With the Rome depot being redesignated an air materiel area in November 1958, this left only a single independent depot, the Dayton Air Force Depot at Gentile Air Force Station, Ohio.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.