THE US MILITARY IN WINSLOW

PRELUDE TO WAR

In 1940, President Roosevelt split the Civil Aeronautics Authority into two agencies. The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) was responsible for safety rulemaking, accident investigation, and economic regulation of the airlines. The Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA) was responsible for airway development, aircraft and personnel certification, and safety enforcement. In the interest of national defense and to the specifications of the Department of War, the CAA began construction or improvements on close to 300 airports across the country, chosen because they offered future value to commercial and civil aviation.

WORLD WAR II COMES TO WINSLOW

The United States officially entered the Second World War after the Empire of Japan bombed the naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941. On December 13, an Executive Order authorized the Secretary of Commerce to "exercise his control and jurisdiction over civil aviation in accordance with requirements for the successful prosecution of the war." The military converted the Winslow Municipal Airport into a refueling and repair stop with 24-hour guards. TWA manager Joseph Kasulaitis urged residents to stay away from the now-restricted military area unless on official business, which no longer included dropping off airmail.

THE COLD WAR IN WINSLOW

On February 23, 1949, the Northrop YB-49 "Flying Wing" lost four of its eight engines over Durango, Colorado, on its way from Dayton, Ohio, to Muroc, California, after a military air display at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. Winslow was chosen for the emergency landing because of its good approach and long runways. There were only two YB-49s ever built, and its design was the precursor to the Stealth Bomber.

MILITARY PLANES AFTER WORLD WAR II & BEYOND

The images below represent a small sample of the many military aircraft the Winslow Municipal Airport hosted over the years. Some made regular stops, some were there for special visits, and some were there for emergencies. Whatever the reason, all of them had a story to tell.

Photographs are left to right: 1-The first jet to land at the Winslow airport was a Lockheed P-80 in 1948. 2-Thiss Boeing B-50 Superfortress, which attracted a crowd when it stopped in Winslow in the mid-1950s, was the enlarged version of the B-29 that dropped the atomic bombs on Japan in 1945. 3-This huge Douglas C-124 Globemaster was one of the largest planes to visit Winslow. The heavy-lift cargo transport frequently delivered new engines for military planes that made emergency landings in Winslow. Seen here in 1957, the Winslow Control Tower is visible in the distance, as is a woman standing under the nose. 4-This Lockheed C-121 Constellation brought West German President Theodor Heuss to Winslow in 1958 to tour the 904th Radar Station just west of Winslow. 5-Seen here in the 1970s, the Convair C-131 military transport was used from the mid-1950s through the 1970s. 6-This photo of a Crismon T-7B jet trainer was taken during a 1974 Memorial Day air show that Senator Barry Goldwater attended. (Photos 2, 3, 4, and 6 courtesy of Ted Miley)