

Missouri State Archives

Finding Aid RG 998.518

Manuscript Collections

Whiteman Air Force Base Collection

Photographs, 1942-1979

Abstract: Digital scans of original photographs of Whiteman Air Force Base, Johnson County, Missouri, and its predecessor Sedalia Army Air Field.

Extent: 14 Photographs; 19.2 MB.

Physical Description: .jpg and .bmp.

Alternative Formats: None.

Location: Missouri State Archives.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions: Access to original DVD is restricted; researchers should use the access copy

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Preferred Citation: [item description]; [date]; [image name]; Photographs, 1942-1979; RG998.518 Whiteman Air Force Base Collection; Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City.

Acquisition Information: Gift with deed; Accession #2022-0271.

Processing Information: Processing completed by EW on 10/17/2022.

Historical and Biographical Notes

Whiteman Air Force Base in Johnson County, Missouri, opened in 1942 as the Sedalia Glider Base. The Base was used as a training site for Douglas C-46, Douglas C-47 and Waco CG-4A glider pilots and paratroopers through multiple units of Troop Carrier Command. Its name soon changed to Sedalia Army Air Field (SAAF), and at its peak during World War II, the Base could house up to 7,500 men and women.

Following the close of World War II, the Air Field was placed on standby status and managed by the War Assets Administration as surplus property. Missourians lobbied for its reopening, which occurred in 1952. The new United States Air Force (est. 1947) and Strategic Air Command (SAC) (est. 1946) were assigned to the site now known as Sedalia Air Force Base. In October, "SAC's Finest" 340th Bombardment Wing was activated.

Now entering the Cold War era, Sedalia Air Force Base was renamed Whiteman Air Force Base in honor of 2nd Lt. George A. Whiteman, who was a Missourian killed on December 7, 1941 during the attack on Pearl Harbor. From 1958-1961, SAC maintained the Boeing B-47 Stratojet with its distinctive swept wings and the Boeing KC-97 Stratofreighter refueling tanker at Whiteman, always on alert against possible Soviet strikes.

In June 1961, SAC and the Air Force changed Whiteman's mission from a bomber site to the United States's fourth Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) site, home of the 351st Strategic Missile Wing. With its headquarters at Whiteman, approximately 150 missile silos were constructed across Missouri.

Whiteman Air Force Base was affected by the SMART II Treaty when the Cold War came to a close, which promised the removal of roughly two-thirds of America's ICBMs. The Minuteman II missiles went off alert in late 1991 and between then and 1995, the warheads were removed and nearly all the empty silos were imploded. Whiteman became home to a new technology: the B-2 Spirit "Stealth" Bomber. The Base would once again be a bomber site, hearkening back to its days with the B-47.

The B-2 Spirit program is the purview of the 509th Bomb Wing, which is supported by the 509th Operations Group, Maintenance Group, Medical Group, Missouri Support Group and Bomb Wing Staff Agencies. Various other Air Force units also operate at Whiteman: the 442nd Fighter Wing, the Training Support Squadron (Det. 12), 72nd Test and Evaluation Squadron, 325th Weapons Squadron and Air Force Office of Special Investigations (Det. 811). Lastly, the Air National Guard's 131st Bomb Wing and the U.S. Army's 1-135th Assault Helicopter Battalion take up tenancy at Whiteman.

Timeline

Year	Event
05/08/1942	Construction of Sedalia Glider Base begins
08/06/1942	Sedalia Glider Base officially opens; first troops arrive from Camp Williams at end of the month
11/12/1942	Name changes to Sedalia Army Air Field
07/12/1943	WAC Aviation Section arrives
09/01/1946	Sedalia Army Air Field placed on temporary inactive status and managed by War Assets Administration; standby status renewed in December and again in January 1947
05/11/1948	U.S. Sen. James Kem introduces a bill (S 2645) in Congress to re-open the Air Field and designate it as the new United States Air Academy (bill did not pass)

Year	Event
09/28/1951	Public Law 155 (HR 4914) An Act to Authorize Certain Construction at Military and Naval Installations, and for Other Purposes passes Congress, authorizing \$22,462,000 for Sedalia Air Force Base as a chief bomber site
12/03/1955	Sedalia Air Force Base is renamed Whiteman Air Force Base
06/14/1961	The Air Force announces that Whiteman will be a new Minuteman ICBM site
02/01/1963	The 351st Strategic Missile Wing at Whiteman is activated under the 17th Strategic Aerospace Division
09/01/1991	The 351st Strategic Missile Wing is designated the 351st Missile Wing
Jan. 1992	Whiteman Air Force Base is designated the home of the B-2 Bomber
06/07/1995	351st Missile Wing deactivation ceremony held at Whiteman

Additional Descriptive Information

Other Finding Aids

An Excel spreadsheet listing detailed information on each photograph is on the G Drive here: G:\archives_apps\FindingAids\Manuscripts\MS518 Whiteman Air Force Base Collection\MS518 Whiteman Air Force Base Collection INDEX.xlsx

Related Material

From the Missouri State Archives:

RG104 Department of Economic Development Commerce and Industrial Development (CID) Photograph Collection

RG998 MS192 Gerald Massie Collection, available online here:

<https://mdh.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p16795coll21>

Whiteman Air Force Base Flickr album:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/missouristatearchives/albums/72177720302301337>

Resources Available Elsewhere:

Whiteman Air Force Base official website: <https://www.whiteman.af.mil/>

Public Laws of Congress: <https://www.congress.gov/public-laws/117th-congress>

Air Force Historical Research Agency: <https://www.afhra.af.mil/>

K0338 Whiteman Air Force Base Dedication Collection, 1955 at The State Historical Society of Missouri: <http://files.shsmo.org/manuscripts/kansas-city/K0338.pdf>

P0593 Greg L. Atwater Photograph Collection, 2000 at The State Historical Society of Missouri: <https://collections.shsmo.org/manuscripts/columbia/p0593>

Record Group 18 Records of the Army Air Forces at the National Archives and Records Administration: <https://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/018.html>

Record Group 342 Records of United States Air Force Commands, Activities, and at the National Archives and Records Administration: <https://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/342.html>

Richard A. Gephardt Papers, 1940-2007 Folders 1 and 51 at the Missouri Historical Society:
<https://mohistory.org/collections/item/A2940-3-12914>
<https://mohistory.org/collections/item/A2940-3-22180>

Irv Schankman/Allied Photocolor Collection at the Missouri Historical Society:
<https://mohistory.org/collections/item/P0243-12498>

Photographs, 1942-1979

Extent: 14 Photographs; 19.2 MB

Arrangement: Chronological

Scope and Content

This series consists of scanned photographs in .jpg and .bmp format, courtesy of Whiteman Air Force Base. Images show the base, personnel, military band and the 1955 Whiteman naming ceremony. Original photos are maintained by the U.S. Air Force.

Container List

See Excel spreadsheet for an item-by-item listing.

Location	Description	Date
	Original DVD with original file names, unprocessed, access restricted to staff only	1942-1979
Z Drive	Processed access copies	1942-1979

Location	ImageName	Title	Description	Subject.LCSH	Subject.Local	Coverage	Date	Format	Photographer	Rights	Original File Name
Z Drive	MSS18_01.bmp	Sedalia Army Air Field Aerial	Aerial view of the Sedalia Army Air Field, activated in 1942 during World War II. The base would later become Whiteman Air Force Base. Three gliders are visible in the bottom left. Other airplanes, roads and buildings are also visible.	Aerial photography; Military bases; Military facilities; Military gliders (Aeronautics); Airplanes, Military; Air forces;	Sedalia Army Air Field; SAAF; S.A.A.F.; Sedalia Glider Base; Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1942-1945	100dpi .bmp	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	SAAF_c1940s.bmp
Z Drive	MSS18_02.jpg	Sedalia Army Air Field Band	The band from Sedalia Army Air Field's First Troop Carrier Command performs on stage.	Military personnel; Musicians; Musical instruments; Bands; Piano; Stand-up bass; String bass; Guitar; Drum; Saxophone; Trumpet; Trombone; Violin; Fiddle;	Sedalia Army Air Field; SAAF; S.A.A.F.; Sedalia Glider Base; Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	10/10/1943	300dpi .jpg	Associated Press	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	SAAF band 1940s.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_03.jpg	S.A.A.F. Orchestra	The Sedalia Army Air Field Orchestra - the Sedalia Skyliners - poses with their instruments in front of a cartoon mural depicting malicious elves sawing the wing of an airplane and pouring beer into the engine.	Military personnel; Musicians; Musical instruments; Bands; Piano; Stand-up bass; String bass; Guitar; Drum; Saxophone; Trumpet; Trombone; Violin; Fiddle;	Sedalia Army Air Field; SAAF; S.A.A.F.; Sedalia Glider Base; Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1942-1945	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	SAAF band.2 1940s.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_04.jpg	Open Ranks Inspection	A few lines of men stand outside at Sedalia Army Air Field during an open ranks inspection.	Military personnel; Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces;	Sedalia Army Air Field; SAAF; S.A.A.F.; Sedalia Glider Base; Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1944	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	Open Ranks inspection SAAF c1944.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_05.jpg	Sedalia Army Air Field	Bird's eye view of Sedalia Army Air Field, activated in 1942 during World War II. The base would later become Whiteman Air Force Base. It is winter and there is snow on the ground.	Military bases; Military facilities; Barracks; Military housing; Winter; Wintertime; Snow; Air forces;	Sedalia Army Air Field; SAAF; S.A.A.F.; Sedalia Glider Base; Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1944	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	Sedalia AAF c1944.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_06.jpg	Whiteman Name Dedication	View of the dedication ceremony re-naming the base Whiteman Air Force Base in honor of Lt. George Whiteman who was killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941. Because of rain, the ceremony is in a hangar and the scheduled flyovers for the day were cancelled. Featured speakers were U.S. Sen. Stuart Symington and Maj. Gen. Francis Griswold. Whiteman's parents were in attendance.	Military bases; Military facilities; Hangars; Military personnel; Officers; Air forces;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	12/03/1955	600dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	1955 Whiteman name dedication.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_07.JPG	Whiteman Air Force Base Hospital	A winter view of the Whiteman Air Force Base hospital.	Military bases; Military facilities; Military hospitals; Winter; Wintertime; Snow; Air forces;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1955	150dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	WAFB Hospital 1955.JPG
Z Drive	MSS18_08.JPG	Base Operations	Airmen and officers stand and salute outside the main Whiteman Air Force Base Operations building for the 340th Bomb Wing.	Military personnel; Airmen; Officers; Military bases; Military facilities;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.; 340th Bombardment Wing; 340th Bomb Wing;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	1950s	96dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	WAFB Base Ops_1950s.JPG
Z Drive	MSS18_09.jpg	Whiteman Air Force Base Aerial	Wintertime aerial view of Whiteman Air Force Base, home of the 340th Bombardment Wing. The building to the right of the main entrance is marked Transit Aircraft Field Elevation 869 MSL (miles above sea level).	Aerial photography; Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces; Wintertime; Winter; Snow;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.; 340th Bombardment Wing; 340th Bomb Wing;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	1950s	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	WAFB Control Tower c1950s.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_10.jpg	Whiteman Air Force Base	View of Whiteman in the winter with snow on the ground. Many buildings, vehicles and a control tower are visible.	Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces; Wintertime; Winter; Snow;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1960	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	WAFB c1960 (5).jpg and WAFB c1960 (9).jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_11.jpg	NCO Club	View of the NCO Club (Non-Commissioned Officers Club) on the grounds of Whiteman Air Force Base: elevated pipe in the foreground.	Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces; Officers' clubs;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1960	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	WAFB c1960 (3).jpg and WAFB c1960 (7).jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_12.jpg	Whiteman Parade Float	Representatives from Whiteman Air Force Base ride a parade float with the phrase, "A Decade of Security thru Global Air Power" on its side and "USAF" on the back. Decorations on the float include a picture of a plane, a sign for Whiteman A.F.B. 340th Bombardment Wg. [Wing], a globe and a missile. Two of the men hold flags.	Military personnel; Airmen; Parade floats; Parades;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.; 340th Bombardment Wing; 340th Bomb Wing;	Missouri, United States	c1962	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	340 BW Parade float c1950s.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_13.jpg	Temporary Contractor Housing	Aerial view of the temporary contractor housing at Whiteman Air Force Base: 351st Missile Wing.	Aerial photography; Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces; Barracks; Military housing;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.; 351st Missile Wing;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	c1962	300dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	Temp contractor housing 351SMW c1962.jpg
Z Drive	MSS18_14.jpg	Missile Launch Control Facility	A chainlink fence topped with barbed wire secures an area of Whiteman Air Force Base's Launch Control Facility H-1. A sign on the fence reads, "Welcome to Whiteman's LCF of the Year." At the time, Whiteman was home to Minuteman ICBMs.	Military bases; Military facilities; Air forces;	Whiteman Air Force Base; Whiteman AFB; United States Air Force; U.S. Air Force; USAF; U.S.A.F.; Missile sites;	Johnson County, Missouri, United States	1970s	96dpi .jpg	unknown	courtesy Whiteman Air Force Base	Missile Launch Control Facility c1970s.jpg