

Oklahoma City

LANDED TINKER AIR BASE

in similar fashion. As in Tulsa, leaders there pulled together to purchase and prepare land as an inducement to build military facilities in the area.

Exactly one month after it was authorized for an initial cost of \$29 million, construction began on Tinker Air Force Base at Midwest City. This massive air depot, one of the largest and most modern in the United States, was named for Maj. Gen. Clarence L. Tinker, a native Oklahoman and part Osage Indian who was killed in 1942, while leading his bomber command on a strike against the Japanese at Wake Island.

With similar speed, the \$42 million Oklahoma Aircraft Assembly Plant Number Five in Oklahoma City was built in 12 months after construction was authorized on Mar. 24, 1942. The mission of the plant's 24,000 workers was to fabricate and assemble 208 C-47 cargo-transport planes every month. Nine months after construction began, the construction company turned over the first work area to Douglas, the operating company. The first C-47 rolled off the assembly line here, too, before the building was finished.³

Military projects were assigned on the basis of capability rather than on strictly geographic lines. Thus, both Tulsa and Denison Districts were responsible for construction work throughout a broad region that sometimes included the Fort Worth area, Arkansas, and Louisiana, as well as the Arkansas and Red River basins in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.



The fight to win World War II was grounded in the mud, sweat, and tears of work such as this: construction of Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City, 1942.



Photos courtesy Tinker AFB Department of History