



TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL
MARKERS DEDICATION

**FORT WORTH ARMY AIR FIELD AND
MAJOR HORACE SEAYER CARSWELL, JR.,
UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS**

**AIRFIELD FALLS PARK
THE CITY OF WESTWORTH VILLAGE, TEXAS
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2017, 10:00 A.M.**



FORT WORTH ARMY AIR FIELD

BY JANUARY 1941, NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN FORT WORTH CIVIC ADVOCATES, LED BY AMON G. CARTER, AND THE U.S. ARMY YIELDED AN AGREEMENT TO CONSTRUCT AN AIRCRAFT PLANT NEAR THE CITY TO BUILD B-24 *LIBERATOR* BOMBERS. LEGISLATION LATER AUTHORIZED THE CREATION OF A LANDING FIELD ADJACENT TO THE COMPLETED CONSOLIDATED VULTEE AIRCRAFT CORPORATION PLANT NO. 4 WHICH BECAME TARRANT FIELD/TARRANT FIELD AIRDROME. THREE MONTHS AFTER THE BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR II, THE PLANT WAS IN OPERATION AND THE ARMY MOVED FORWARD TO CREATE AN AIR BASE TO UTILIZE THIS PROXIMITY BETWEEN SITES TO FACILITATE B-24 CREW TRAINING. THIS AIR BASE OPENED IN AUGUST 1942 AND WAS NAMED FORT WORTH ARMY AIR FIELD (FWAAF) IN MAY 1943, TRAINING MORE THAN 4,000 PILOTS BETWEEN 1942 AND 1944. IT ALLOWED THE CITY TO CONTRIBUTE SUBSTANTIALLY TO VICTORY FOR THE U.S. AND ALLIED POWERS.

IN LATE JANUARY 1948, FWAAF WAS RENAMED CARSWELL AIR FORCE BASE IN HONOR OF FORT WORTH NATIVE AND MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT MAJOR HORACE S. CARSWELL, JR. THE SITE BECAME A KEY U.S. AIR FORCE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND (SAC) BASE DURING THE COLD WAR, SERVING AS A HIGHLY VISIBLE SYMBOL OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AND FORCE PROJECTION. THE SITE WAS THE FIRST SAC BASE TO BE EQUIPPED WITH THE FORT WORTH-PRODUCED B-36 *PEACEMAKER* BOMBER AND TRANSITIONED BY 1959 TO THE LEGENDARY B-52 *STRATOFORTRESS* BOMBER. IN 1972, B-52s STATIONED HERE PARTICIPATED IN THE MOST POWERFUL SAC CAMPAIGN OF THE VIETNAM WAR, OPERATION LINEBACKER II. AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR, CARSWELL AFB CLOSED IN SEPTEMBER 1993.

IN OCTOBER 1994, THE SITE REOPENED AS NAVAL AIR STATION FORT WORTH JOINT RESERVE BASE, SUPPORTING ACTIVE DUTY AND RESERVE UNITS IN THE NAVY, MARINE CORPS, ARMY, AIR FORCE, AND THE TEXAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD. THIS BASE GREATLY AIDED TRAINING AND SUPPORT OF THE U.S. MILITARY DURING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM AND CONTINUES A LONG TRADITION OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE IN THE DEFENSE OF THE NATION.

HORACE SEAVER CARSWELL, JR. MAJOR, UNITED STATES ARMY AIR CORPS

HORACE SEAVER CARSWELL, JR. WAS BORN ON JULY 18, 1916, TO HORACE S. AND BERTHA REA CARSWELL OF FORT WORTH. HE ATTENDED NORTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOL WHERE HE EXCELLED IN ATHLETICS. GRADUATING IN 1934, CARSWELL ENTERED TEXAS A&M COLLEGE AND LATER TRANSFERRED TO TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE LETTERED IN FOOTBALL AND BASEBALL AND GRADUATED WITH A DEGREE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN 1939.

IN 1940, CARSWELL ENLISTED IN THE U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS AS A FLYING CADET. HE UNDERTOOK PRIMARY FLIGHT TRAINING IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA, AND AT RANDOLPH FIELD (SAN ANTONIO), AND ADVANCED FLYING TRAINING AT KELLY FIELD (SAN ANTONIO). UPON RECEIVING HIS WINGS IN NOVEMBER 1940 HE SERVED AT RANDOLPH FIELD AND GOODFELLOW FIELD (SAN ANGELO) WHERE HE MET AND LATER MARRIED VIRGINIA EDE IN OCTOBER 1941. TWO MONTHS LATER THE U.S. ENTERED WORLD WAR II.

CARSWELL SERVED IN STATESIDE ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL APRIL 1944, WHEN HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE CHINA-BURMA-INDIA THEATER OF OPERATIONS AND TO THE 374TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON, 308TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP. MAJOR CARSWELL COMMANDED A UNIT OF RADAR-EQUIPPED B-24J BOMBERS AT LIUCHOW, CHINA. ON OCTOBER 26, 1944, HE LED A NIGHTTIME INTERDICTION MISSION OVER THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. WHILE ATTACKING AN ENEMY CONVOY, HIS AIRCRAFT WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED BY JAPANESE ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE. CARSWELL NURSED HIS AIRCRAFT TO THE CHINA COAST WHERE HE ORDERED HIS CREW TO PARACHUTE TO SAFETY. WHEN TWO OF HIS CREW COULD NOT BAIL OUT, HE SELFLESSLY REMAINED WITH HIS AIRCRAFT, SEARCHING FOR A SPOT TO LAND UNTIL THE DAMAGED PLANE CRASHED INTO A MOUNTAINSIDE.

CARSWELL WAS POSTHUMOUSLY AWARDED THE MEDAL OF HONOR, WHICH WAS PRESENTED TO HIS WIFE AND YOUNG SON. IN 1948, HIS REMAINS WERE REPATRIATED AND BURIED IN FORT WORTH. THAT SAME YEAR, FORT WORTH ARMY AIR FIELD WAS RENAMED CARSWELL AIR FORCE BASE IN HIS HONOR. ITS AIRSTRIP IS STILL OFFICIALLY NAMED "CARSWELL FIELD."