



FACT SHEET

Air Force Plant No. 4

Prior to World War II, Fort Worth's economy revolved around the cattle and oil industries. The Stockyards held the largest workforce in the city. However, the Great Depression affected both cattle and oil, and Fort Worth's economy took a nosedive. An aggressive campaign led by Amon Carter and other local business leaders in 1941 brought the city a contract with the U.S. Army to build the B-24 Liberator bombers at a plant along the shore of Lake Worth.

Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corp.'s Plant No. 4 was built and produced more than 3,000 bombers during the war and employed 32,000 workers. The mile-long plant was in operation three months after the U.S. joined the war. This created a shift in the local economy from agriculture to manufacturing and brought in a skilled workforce along with economic recovery to the city.

The facility would change hands over the years to various defense contractors — Convair, General Dynamics and, currently, Lockheed-Martin — and produce some of the world's most important aircraft, including the B-36 Peacemaker, B-58 Hustler, F-111 Aardvark, EF-111 Raven, F-16 Fighting Falcon, and the F-35 Lightning II.

During World War II, a Quartermaster Depot, Marine Air Base, and the Fort Worth Army Airfield were constructed in Fort Worth. The Army airfield was renamed Carswell Air Force Base in 1948 after Medal of Honor recipient Maj. Horace S. Carswell, Jr. who was a graduate of TCU before joining the Air Force.

Carswell AFB became the headquarters of the 19th Air Division in 1951. B-52 bombers of the 7th Bomb Wing — a crucial piece of the U.S. nuclear arsenal during the Cold War and part of the Strategic Air Command — soon called Fort Worth home as well.

With the end of the Cold War and the subsequent downsizing of the American military, the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission of 1991 recommended that Carswell AFB be closed by 1994.

Carswell was repurposed as Naval Air Station-Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base (NAS-Fort Worth JRB) in the 1990s. NAS-Fort Worth JRB is part of the oversight of the commander, Navy Region Southeast and is situated within the city limits in west Fort Worth. It's a joint defense facility that focuses on the training of aviation ground support personnel as well as the education and training of air crews.

It retains an Air Force Reserve presence as well hosting Navy and Marine Corps Reserve units while still connects Fort Worth to its military heritage in a time of diversification and growth.

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