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Chanute Air Force Base Subject Files:  
Commanding Officers 1917-1993

COLLECTION 200.001

## Champaign County Historical Archives

**Compiled by:** Thomas Kuipers

**Creator/Corporate name:** Chanute Air Force Base

**Inclusive Dates:** 1917-1993, bulk 1949-1993

**Physical Description:** 1 box, 1.0 Linear foot

**Provenance:** The Chanute Air Force Base Subject files were donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives from the defunct Chanute Air Force Base Museum upon its closure. The Subject Files were curated and maintained by the History Office of the Chanute Air Force Base and later preserved by the museum.

**Access:**

The records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

**Biographical/Historical Note:** Chanute Air Force Base, formerly Chanute Field, had fifty-four commanding officers in their seventy-six-year history. During the first few decades, CO's had brief tenures at the base, many staying less than a single year. During and following WWII, Commanding Officers at Chanute had longer tenures at the base. Commanding Officers are the officers in command of the base. They are the central head of base functions, affairs, and personnel.

**Scope and Content Note:** The collection spans the complete history of CAFB as an active military institution. Files for a few of the Commanding Officers are missing, including the first Commanding Officer of the base. The files for early Commanding Officers' files contain minimal records, some including only a brief biographical sketch. Nearly every file starts with a brief biographical sketch prepared by former base historian Don Weckhorst. The bulk of the collection comes from 1949-1993, with the largest files from CO's during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

**Arrangement:** Materials are arranged chronologically by commanding officer. Each personnel file, records are typically arranged in order by biographical info, correspondence, publications, ephemera, newspaper clippings, and post-command records.

**Subject Terms:**

Chanute

Chanute Air Force Base

Commanding Officers

Subject Files

Military History

Air Force History

History of Flight



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**Container List:**

**Box 1**

**Series 1: Commanding Officers**

***\*Captain Charles C. Edgar, May 1917 – June 1917 – NO RECORDS\****

Folder 1: Captain Charles C. Benedict, June 1917 – July 1917

- Biographical Sketch
- History at CAFB
- Photographs
- Negatives

Folder 2: Major James S. Dunsworth, July 1917 – September 1917

- Biographical Sketch
- History at CAFB
- 1909 Military Academy yearbook entry
- Obituary
- Notes from Base Historian

Folder 3: Major Maxwell Kirby, September 1917

- Biographical Sketches
- Transcribed newspaper clipping

Folder 4: Lieutenant Colonel Fredrick M. Jones, October 1917 – March 1918

- Biographical Sketch
- Handwritten notes about Lt. Col. Jones (Weckhorst?)
- Correspondence related to records concerning Lt. Col. Jones

Folder 5: Major George Washington Krapf, March 1918 – July 1918

- Biographical Sketch
- Obituary
- Handwritten notes about Maj. Krapf (Weckhorst?)

Folder 6: Major Arthur E. Wilbourn, July 1918 – October 1918

- Biographical Sketch
- History at CAFB
- Photograph of newspaper clipping concerning Wilbourn's arrival at CAFB
- Handwritten notes about Maj. Wilbourn (Weckhorst?)

Folder 7: Major Adlai H. Gilkeson, October 1918

- Biographical Sketch
- Handwritten letter
- Correspondence
- Obituary
- Handwritten notes about Maj. Gilkeson (Weckhorst?)
- Base history inquiry related to Maj. Gilkeson

Folder 8: Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee Watson, October 1918 – January 1919

- Biographical Sketch
- Obituary

Folder 9: Lieutenant Colonel Ira Longanecker, January 1919 – July 1920



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Biographical Sketch  
Newspaper Clipping

Folder 10: Major John N. Reynolds, July 1920 – December 1920

Biographical Sketch

Folder 11: First Lieutenant Charles M. Leonard, December 1920 – January 1921

Biographical Sketch

Folder 12: First Lieutenant Langhorne W. Motley, January 1921 – February 1921

Biographical Sketch

Folder 13: Major George Edward Stratemeyer, February 1921 – October 1921

Biographical Sketch

Correspondence related to his service posts

Copy and partial handwritten transcription of clipping from Rantoul press, 03/16/1921

Handwritten note about Maj. Stratemeyer

Folder 14: Major Frederick L. Martin, October 1921 – December 1923

Biographical Sketch

Newspaper clipping

Article related to Douglas World Cruiser "Chicago"

Menu for celebration of "The Round World Flight"

Un sourced document

Folder 15: Captain Ralph R. Cousins, December 1923 – July 1924

Biographical Sketch

Handwritten note about Capt. Cousins

Folder 16: Major William C. McChord, July 1924 – February 1928

Biographical Sketch

History of Service

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence from CAFB History Office

Folder 17: Major Leo G. Heffernam, February 1928 – June 1928, February 1929 – June 1930

Biographical Sketches

Folder 18: Lieutenant Colonel Seth W. Cook, June 1928 – February 1929

Biographical Sketches

Newspaper Clippings

Transcribed Obituary

Folder 19: Colonel Jacob W. S. Wuest, June 1930 – March 1931

Biographical Sketches

History of Service

Anecdote from Summer 1989 "Friends Bulletin"

Copied Photograph

Newspaper Clipping

Correspondence from CAFB History Office

**\*Captain Thomas S. Voss, March 1931 – April 1931 – NO RECORDS\***

**\*Captain Walter C. Bender, April 1931 – May 1931 – NO RECORDS\***

**\*Captain Samuel C. Skemp, May 1931 – July 1931 – NO RECORDS\***

Folder 20: Lieutenant Colonel James A. Mars, July 1931 – August 1934

Biographical Sketches



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Transcribed Clippings from Rantoul Press, July 1931

Folder 21: Colonel Junius Q. Jones, August 1934 – February 1938

Biographical Sketches

Newspaper Clipping

Correspondence from CAFB History Office

Folder 22: Major Earle G. Harper, February 1938 – March 1938

Biographical Sketch

Photo Negative

Folder 23: Brigadier General Davenport Johnson, March 1938 – October 1940

Biographical Sketches

Handwritten History of Brig. Gen. Johnson

Transcribed Clipping from Rantoul Press, March 1938

Folder 24: Brigadier General Raymond E. O'Neill, Oct. 1940 – Nov. 1944, Feb. 1946 – April 1946

Biographical Sketches

CAFB Public Relations Memo

Newspaper Clippings about his death

Folder 25: Colonel Joseph H. Davidson, November 1944 – January 1946

Biographical Sketch

Newspaper Clipping

History of Sheppard Field, Texas

Folder 26: Colonel Harold L. Neely, January 1946 – February 1946

Biographical Sketch

Folder 27: Brigadier General Fay R. Upthegrove, April 1946 – December 1948

Biographical Sketch

Base Correspondence

Awards

Correspondence with Base, 1977

Oral History Transcription, 1987

Newspaper Clippings

Obituaries

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1987-1990

Folder 28: Brigadier General Aubry L. Moore, December 1948 – October 1949

Biographical Sketches

List of Decorations and Awards

Folder 29: Major General Byron E. Gates, October 1949 – May 1955

Biographical Sketches

Histories of Service

"Unforgettable 'Hungry' Gates" article by General Laurence S. Kuter

Correspondence related to retirement from CAFB

Ephemera related to retirement from CAFB

Newspaper Clippings related to retirement from CAFB

Newspaper Clippings related to investigation of Gates

Photo Negatives

Correspondences with Base Historian Don Weckhorst concerning Maj. Gen. Gates



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Folder 30: Major General Augustus M. Minton, May 1955 – June 1957

- Biographical Sketch
- Histories of Service
- Newspaper Clippings
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1991-1994

Folder 31: Brigadier General Andrew J. Kinney, June 1957 – April 1959

- Biographical Sketches
- History of Service
- Newspaper Clippings
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990

Folder 32: Major General Wiley D. Ganey, April 1959 – August 1960

- Biographical Sketches
- Complete Biographical “Newspaper”
- Enlarged reproduction of Armed Forces Day program
- Newspaper Clipping

Folder 33: Major General Lloyd P. Hopwood, August 1960 – July 1964

- Biographical Sketches
- Histories of Service
- History of Service at CAFB
- Aerospace Workshop Records, 1962
- Dedication Pamphlet for Hopwood Hall, 1975
- “Rantoul Air Patch (RAP)” Award
- Newspaper Clippings

Folder 34: Major General Leo F. Dusard Jr., July 1964 – July 1966

- Biographical Sketch
- Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1970
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Newspaper Clipping
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990

Folder 35: Major General James E. Roberts, July 1966 – November 1967

- Biographical Sketch
- Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1966
- Correspondence related to ceremony honoring Maj. Gen. Roberts
- Officer Lists
- Retirement Ceremony Pamphlet
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990

Folder 36: Major General Marvin C. Demler, November 1967 – August 1969

- Biographical Sketch
- History of Service
- Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1968
- “Challenge and Change” article from the *Instructors Journal* by Maj. Gen. Demler, 1969



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- Official U.S.A.F. News Releases
- Legion of Merit Award
- "Farewell M.C. Demler, Maj. Gen." Pamphlet, 1969
- Newspaper Clippings
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-1991, 2002

Folder 37: Major General James B. Knapp, August 1969 – July 1972

- Biographical Sketches
- Official U.S.A.F. Biographies
- Histories of Service
- Base Correspondence
- Awards
- Retirement Ceremony Pamphlet, 1972
- Oral History Transcription, 1990
- Official West Point Graduation Pamphlet, 1939
- Newspaper Clippings
- Obituary
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-1991

Folder 38: Major General Frank W. Elliot Jr., July 1972 – July 1974 (1/2)

- Biographical Sketch
- Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1973
- Histories of Service
- Publications about Maj. Gen. Elliot
- Speeches/Lectures
- Base Correspondence
- The Order of the Sword
- Retirement

Folder 39: Major General Frank W. Elliot Jr., July 1972 – July 1974 (2/2)

- Newspaper Clippings
- U.N. Mediator Card, 1948
- Chanute Heritage Foundation
- Correspondence with Base, 1977
- Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-2006
- Obituaries
- The Frank Elliot Airfield
- Directories
- Miscellaneous Notes

Folder 40: Major General Lloyd R. Leavitt Jr., July 1974 – June 1976

- Biographical Sketches
- Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1974
- Base Correspondence
- Change of Command
- Retirement
- Newspaper Clippings



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Correspondence with Base, 1977

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-1995

Misc. correspondence

Folder 41: Major General Edwin C. Robertson II, June 1976 – April 1979

Biographical Sketch

Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1976

Base Correspondence

Speeches

Ephemera

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1985-2007

Folder 42: Major General Norma E. Brown, April 1979 – July 1982

Biographical Sketches

Official U.S.A.F. Biographies, 1978-1980

Base Correspondence

Base Records

Official U.S.A.F. News Release

Ephemera

Newspaper Clippings

Obituary

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1985-2003

Folder 43: Major General Joseph D. Moore, July 1982 – August 1985

Biographical Sketches

Autobiography of CAFB service

Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1982

Base Correspondence

Ephemera

Publications

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1985-2007

Folder 44: Major General William J. Grove Jr., August 1985 – October 1986

Biographical Sketch

Official U.S.A.F. Biography

Base Correspondence

Interview Transcription

Ephemera

*The Pacesetter*, 1985-86

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1987-2000

Folder 45: Brigadier General Joel M. McKean, October 1986 – September 1988

Biographical Sketches

Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1987

Base Correspondence

Awards

Ephemera



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Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-2006

Folder 46: Major General Peter D. Robinson, September 1988 – January 1990

Biographical Sketches

Official U.S.A.F. Biographies, 1988; 1990

Base Correspondence

Base Records

Interview Transcript

Ephemera

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-2006

Folder 47: Major General Lawrence E. Day, January 1990 – November 1991

Biographical Sketch

Official U.S.A.F. Biography, 1987; 1990

Family History

Base Correspondence

Miscellaneous Correspondence

Interview Transcription

Ephemera

Newspaper Clippings

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1990-1995

Folder 48: Brigadier General Keith Tedrow. November 1991 - ???

Biographical Sketch

Base Correspondence

Ephemera

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1995-2006

Folder 49: Colonel James M. Cavanaugh, 1993?

Base Correspondence

Awards

CAFB Closing Ceremony Speech

Newspaper Clipping

Correspondence with Base Historian Don Weckhorst, 1995