

# **3740 BASIC MILITARY TRAINING GROUP**

## **MISSION**

## **LINEAGE**

3740 Basic Military Training Group

## **STATIONS**

Lackland AFB, TX, 27 Jul 1950-28 Jul 1950

Sheppard AFB, TX, 28 Jul 1950-1 May 1952

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

## **COMMANDERS**

## **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

In August 1950 Sheppard was again pressed into indoctrination training to receive the overflow of recruits from Lackland. The 3740th Basic Military Training Group and 10 of its squadrons moved from Lackland to Sheppard. This was planned to be a short term solution, as ATC activated another military training base, Sampson AFB, New York, in November. Before Sampson could open its doors to receive recruits. The number of enlistees at Lackland totaled over 70,000. The 3740th remained active at Sheppard until 12 May 1952, when ATC inactivated it. During that time, the group provided basic training for about 100,000 airmen.

The newly established 3660th BMTG was under the command of Col. Richard C. Greene (formerly Commander, 3740th BMTG, Sheppard AFB, Wichita Falls, TX). Soon the 3650th and 3670th BMTGs were formed. The initial Commander of the 3670th BMTG was Col. Raymond. C. Lewis. to reduce administrative overhead and span-of-control, the 60th and 70th were later to be merged into one 3650th BMTG, under the command of Col. Richard C. Boys

In an attempt to ease the plight of overcrowding, the Air Force reduced its indoctrination training from 13 to eight weeks and opened a second basic training center at Sampson AFB, New York. Lackland, in turn, became a processing center. The activation of a second basic training center created problems for Sheppard personnel in replacing cadres who were being sent to Sampson. During the first ten days, after medical processing, a new recruit learned close order drill, military customs and courtesies, instruction in character guidance, first aid, citizenship, sanitation and personal hygiene as well. as marksmanship, weapon training, psychological warfare and chemical warfare. Twenty-seven hours of the above consisted of marksmanship and familiarization with weapons. Training was not confined to classrooms and military discipline.

As a result of five weeks of hard work, the 3740th Basic Military Training Group constructed what was one of the "toughest" four and one-half mile obstacle courses in the Air Force. On the 20th day of basic training, all enlisted men received a practical introduction to soldiering. Twice each week one thousand recruits set out on a forced march following a morning of gas mask drill in a chemical chamber. The troops were divided into two columns. Each group encountered a waist-deep stream that had to be forded, rocky hillsides and wooded areas that had to be traversed all the while under tear gas or smoke bomb attacks from chemical personnel. Halfway through the exercise all the soldiers were required to traverse a narrow channel of water over a 38-foot suspended rope. At the end of the march, airmen had to cross a four-inch plank spanning a 24-foot open hole filled with water, scale an eight-foot wall, and crawl under 50 yards of barbed wire, then run 75 yards to an assembly area where they received practical demonstrations on camouflage, survival and detection.

When ATC transferred the 3740th Basic Training Group to Sheppard, it estimated that its stay would be limited to only five months. Two years later, 100,000 airmen had received basic training at Sheppard. At its peak the 3740 BTG absorbed more than one-third of Lackland's students, before its inactivation on 12 May 1952. Shortly thereafter, on 11 August 1952, ATC discontinued all civilian contract training. A major factor in the decision to do away with civilian contract schools was the excessive length of classes which were often twice as long as those being taught at Sheppard. Also, a survey of the two methods of training--civilian versus military--indicated that the training received by students at Sheppard compared favorably with or surpassed that provided in the private sector.

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#### Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.  
*Sustaining the Wings, A Fifty-Year History of Sheppard Air Force Base (1941-1991)*. Dwight W. Tuttle. Midwestern State University Press. Wichita Falls, TX. 1991.