

History



History of the Mt. Carmel Municipal Airport

The Mt. Carmel Municipal Airport, formerly known as Presbyterian Field, was deeded to the City of Mt. Carmel in 1948 from the U.S. Government.

Presbyterian Field (MCMAP) was one of four auxiliary fields that supported the training missions of George Field (Lawrenceville-Vincennes International Airport)

George Field was authorized by the United States Army Air Corps in April 1942 as part of the expansion of pilot training bases by the Air Corps Flying Training Command as part of the 70,000 Pilot Training Program. It was one of many air fields created in the country's interior during the war.

The airfield consisted of four main 5,200 ft concrete and asphalt runways.

In addition to the main airfield, four axillary fields were constructed to support the training mission. Those were located as follows

George Field Auxiliary #1 (Presbyterian Field, Mount Carmel IL) 38°36'20"N 087°43'34"W
George Field Auxiliary #2 (Emison Field, Vincennes, IN), George Field Auxiliary #3 (St. Thomas, IN), George Field Auxiliary #4 (Palestine, IL)

Initially named "Lawrence Army Flying School", the name was changed to honor General Harold H. George, who was killed in a ground accident at Batchelor Field, southeast of Darwin, Australia on April 29, 1942. He was killed when a Curtiss P-40 of the 49th Fighter Group lost directional control on take off and struck the parked Lockheed C-40 in which the General had just arrived at the base after escaping from the Philippines.

The school was opened on August 10, 1942 under the USAAF Eastern Flying Training Command, its mission to provide advanced pilot training in twin-engined aircraft.

Planes from George Field were fuselage-coded "GE".

Until the summer of 1944, George Field received cadets that had graduated from advanced flying training schools, primarily in the southeast and provided them upgrade training to twin engine aircraft. These pilots would go on to fly primarily medium bombers and transport planes

after completing their training.

By the summer of 1944, the need for C-47 Sky train transport pilots was critical and Training Command transferred George Field to Troop Carrier Command.

The last Training Command class graduated on 4 August, and training activities were terminated on 15 August and jurisdiction was transferred.

A change of mission was made and George Field was placed under the 805th Army Air Force Base Unit. Its training squadrons began training pilots for paratrooper drops and towing gliders. It also trained crews in combat re-supply and casualty evacuation procedures from rough forward airfields in the combat areas to hospitals in rear areas.

With the end of World War II, training ended at George Field on September 1, 1945. The field was placed on standby status. It was turned over to Air Technical Service Command (ATSC).

ATSC's mission was to remove all usable military equipment from the property and dispose of items which no longer had a useful need. Like many other surplus airfields around the country, public sales were held to offer the material to the public. It was declared excess by the Army in 1946.

George Field was conveyed through the War Assets Administration (WAA) to the City of Lawrenceville, Illinois on 16 November 1948 to establish a municipal airport