

FORT WAINWRIGHT HISTORY

From a cold weather test station to one of the Army's premier training areas, Fort Wainwright has come a long way. Covering over a million acres, the post has seen numerous face lifts, a branch change, a new name, and thousands of soldiers, family members and civilians.

The base was named Ladd Field, in honor of Maj. Arthur Ladd, an Air Corps pilot killed in a crash in 1935.



Ladd Army Airfield 1942-1943

The first Air Corps detachment assigned to Alaska arrived in Fairbanks in April 1940. Another 118 soldiers joined them in October. They lived in temporary shelters until permanent barracks were constructed. The men tested clothing and equipment during the bitter cold winters until World War II. Ladd Field then took on a bigger role, that of transfer point for the Lend Lease Program, in which the U. S. delivered nearly 8,000 aircraft to Russia.



**General
Jonathan Wainwright**

The Army assumed control of Ladd Air Force Base in January 1961 and renamed it Fort Jonathan M. Wainwright honoring the general who led delaying tactics on Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines against a superior Japanese force in World War II.

Since 1961, the post has been home to the 171st Infantry Brigade, 172nd Infantry Brigade, 6th Infantry Division (Light), and 1st Brigade, 6th Infantry Division (Light), once again, the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate), 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team and presently the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

The post is also home to Task Force 49, a brigade-size aviation unit with CH-47 Chinooks, UH-60 Black Hawks and OH-58 Kiowas, as well as support personnel.

Today's units include infantry, field artillery, engineer, logistical support and medical personnel. When a tactical unit is called upon to deploy, the support faction activates immediately to make the deployment fast, safe and efficient. Each unit works with the other to ensure a rapid response and a smooth operation. The 50-man detachment of 1940 ultimately grew into today's 7,700 soldiers. The soldiers of the U.S. Army, Alaska, at Fort Wainwright are prepared to rapidly deploy worldwide in defense of U.S. interests or on humanitarian missions.