

# The 1940s

**November 1944** – General Arnold directs formation of the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG).

**June 1945** – *Trans-Atlantic Memo* proposes the Air Engineering Development Center.

**December 1945** – Dr. Theodore von Kármán's report *Toward New Horizons* lays the foundation for an Air Force research and development program.

**March 1946** – Sverdrup & Parcel awarded contract to study possible sites for the Air Engineering Development Center.

**September 1947** – The United States Air Force becomes a separate military service.

**April 28, 1948** – The former Army training area Camp Forrest is named as the site for the Air Engineering Development Center.

**1949** – Congress authorizes \$100 million for the construction of the Air Engineering Development Center.

# The 1950s

**March 3, 1950** – The Secretary of Defense approves construction of the new facility.

**June 2, 1950** – The Army Corps of Engineers begins construction on a perimeter fence and access road.

**June 23, 1950** – Work begins on a dam on the Elk River to create a reservoir to provide cooling water for testing facilities.

**June 29, 1950** – The Arnold Research Organization (ARO) is awarded a contract from the Air Force to operate AEDC for 15 months.

**June 25, 1951** – President Harry S Truman dedicates the facility in honor of five-star General of the Air Force Henry "Hap" Arnold, naming it the Arnold Engineering Development Center.

**Oct. 21, 1952** – PeeWee, a one-foot wind tunnel built to identify problems in the 16-foot tunnels, goes into operation at AEDC.

**1953** – Construction on the Engine Test Facility (ETF) is completed.

**Sept. 9, 1953** – The Falcon guided missile is placed in the test section of tunnel E-1 and is tested at nearly five times the speed of sound.

**1954** – The first engine, a J47 turbojet for the B-47 bomber, is tested at a simulated altitude of 30,000 feet.

**April 1954** – The first issue of *High Mach*, the center's employee newspaper, is published.

**August 1954** – The Air Force executes another one-year contract, with a four-year option, with ARO.

**March 27, 1957** – Escape velocity, the speed needed to leave Earth's gravity, is reached in the Gas Dynamics Facility's Hotshot 2 tunnel.

**November 1957** – A jet engine is tested in the new Propulsion Wind Tunnel (PWT), validating the larger transonic wind tunnel design.

**July 1959** – The supersonic circuit of the PWT facility is completed.

**Oct. 30, 1959** – A facility designed for testing aerospace designs at high speeds is dedicated to Dr. Theodore von Kármán as the von Kármán Gas Dynamics facility.

# The 1960s

**1960** – Sverdrup and Parcel marks the 10th anniversary of the start of construction on the AEDC project.

**1960** – ARO photographer Phil Tarver shoots the iconic wind tunnel photo.

**July 1960** – The Air Force and ARO agree to a new contract for fiscal year 1961.

**Jan. 13, 1961** – The supersonic circuit of PWT is accepted by the Air Force.

**June 23, 1961** – Air Force Secretary Eugene Zuckert comes to AEDC to break ground for J-4, the world's largest rocket altitude cell.

**Jan. 23, 1963** – Congress votes \$944,000 for the construction of the J-5 rocket test facility.

**Dec. 11, 1963** – The Air Force accepts both the J-4 and J-5 rocket test cells.

**Dec. 19, 1963** – The first rocket engine – a Skybolt – is fired in J-5.

**1964** – The J-4 Large Rocket Engine Test Facility is dedicated.

**1965** – The University of Tennessee Space Institute (UTSI) is established.

**1968** – A 4-foot transonic wind tunnel (4T) is added to the PWT facility.

**May 9, 1969** – The McDonnell Douglas F-15 begins testing in the 16-foot supersonic wind tunnel.

## The 1970s

**April 1970** – ARO celebrates its 20 year anniversary.

**1972** – A design contract is awarded for construction of the new Aero propulsion Systems Test Facility (ASTF).

**1972** – A launcher to determine the effect of impacts of birds on high-speed aircraft is developed.

**1976** – The Department of Interior registers AEDC as a unique, natural area.

**1977** – ARO is awarded a three year contract for operations at AEDC.

## The 1980s

**1981** – For the first time, multiple contractors begin performing work at AEDC.

**1982** – Use of Computation Fluid Dynamics (CFD) begins.

**Oct. 2, 1984** – Construction is completed on ASTF, the world's largest jet engine test facility.

**Nov. 23, 1985** – An explosion during a test destroys the J-5 Rocket Test Facility. The facility is rebuilt a year later, ahead of schedule.

## The 1990s

**1992-3** – AEDC formalizes alliances with a number of commercial aerospace organizations.

**1993** – The first large commercial engine test takes place.

**1994** – The J-6 Large Rocket Test Facility is completed.

**Oct. 1, 1995** – Sverdrup Technology and Aerospace Center Support (ACS) begin their five-year contract with AEDC.

**1996** – The Decade facility is completed.

**Oct. 1, 1997** – AEDC assumes management of the Hypervelocity Wind Tunnel 9 in Silver Spring, Maryland.

**1998** – AEDC is named one the DoD's High-Performance Computing Centers.

## The 2000s

**2000** – Mark I is renovated

**June 25, 2001** – Rededication of the center marks its 50th anniversary

**Oct. 1, 2003** – Aerospace Testing Alliance (ATA), a joint venture between Jacobs Sverdrup, Computer Sciences Corporation and General Physics, begins a 12-year contract as the center's single contractor.

**2006** – AEDC assumes control of the NFAC, located at NASA's Ames Research Center, California.

**Jan. 26, 2007** – Arnold AFB receives the 2006 DoD Gen. Thomas D. White Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation.

**June 25, 2007** – AEDC commemorates its designation as an American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) historic site.

**April 7, 2008** – NFAC tests new helicopter rotor system, marking first military test since facility reactivation.

**Oct. 24, 2008** – Air Force awards \$26.1 million contract to produce the Space Threat Assessment Testbed ground test capability at AEDC.

**Nov. 21, 2008** – AEDC and Pratt & Whitney celebrate 50-year partnership.

**March 6, 2009** – The 100<sup>th</sup> rocket motor is fired in J-6.

*Compiled from Beyond the Speed of Sound*

<https://arnold.usaf.afpims.mil/Portals/49/documents/AFD-100322-069.pdf>