

GLENN MILLER

ARMY AIR FORCES ORCHESTRA

1943 – 2018

DIAMOND JUBILEE



ALTON GLENN MILLER 1904 – 1944

AMERICA'S NUMBER ONE BANDLEADER



Press Agent George Evans and Glenn Miller



"Sunset Serenade"

- ❖ Alton Glenn Miller, born on March 1, 1904 in Clarinda, was a successful jazz musician, arranger and musical director. Miller attended the University of Colorado Boulder and went on to work with prominent bandleaders including Ben Pollack, Red Nichols, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey and Ray Noble. He also gained valuable experience with Broadway productions and radio studio orchestras.
- ❖ In 1938 Miller launched his own successful dance orchestra and became America's "Number One Bandleader." He recorded the most "Number One" Billboard-charted hits of all time, broke attendance records at ballrooms and theaters from coast-to-coast, broadcast three times weekly over CBS for Chesterfield Cigarettes, broadcast over NBC, CBS and Mutual from hotels and ballrooms nationwide and made the motion pictures *Sun Valley Serenade* and *Orchestra Wives* for 20th-Century Fox.



- ❖ As the clouds of war gathered in Europe and Asia, Americans were conflicted about whether or when the United States would be drawn into the conflict. President Roosevelt won very narrow Congressional votes for Lend-Lease to Britain and the first peacetime draft. As young Americans reported for military service during 1941, Glenn Miller felt a great sense of responsibility for his audience and wanted to do everything he could to promote the health and welfare of service personnel at Army, Navy and Marine Corps bases.
- ❖ Joining forces with the newly created United Service Organizations (the USO), Miller dipped into his own pocket to produce *Sunset Serenade*, a radio series for NBC that saluted five military installations each Saturday at 5:00 p.m. Eastern time. The series was broadcast starting on August 30, 1941 and it was broadcast over NBC until January 3, 1942, and thereafter over the Mutual Broadcasting System until the end of May 1942. Each week, the public voted for their favorite of the five tunes nominated by each military base. The winning installation was awarded an RCA console Radio-Phonograph complete with 50 popular records (not all were Glenn Miller records).

GLENN MILLER ENLISTS

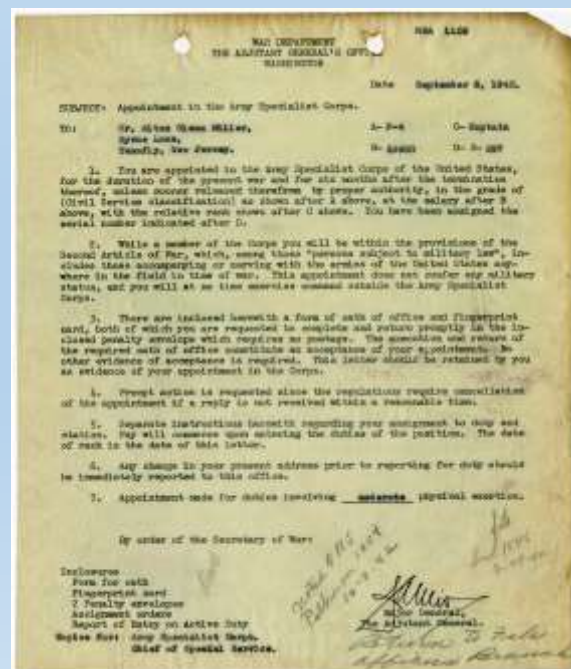
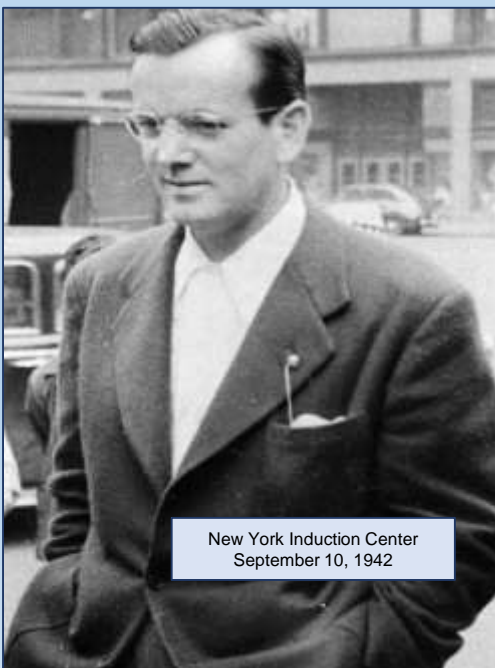
"Dave, you and I, our mothers and dads, the children we may someday have and even their children will be directly affected by what happened in the Pacific yesterday. America will never again be the way it was at midnight last Saturday. Even the world will never be the same. I don't know exactly what I can contribute to the war effort but I am damn well going to find out. There must be something a broken down old trombone player can do to help."

--- Glenn Miller, to *Down Beat* editor Dave Dexter, Jr., December 8, 1941



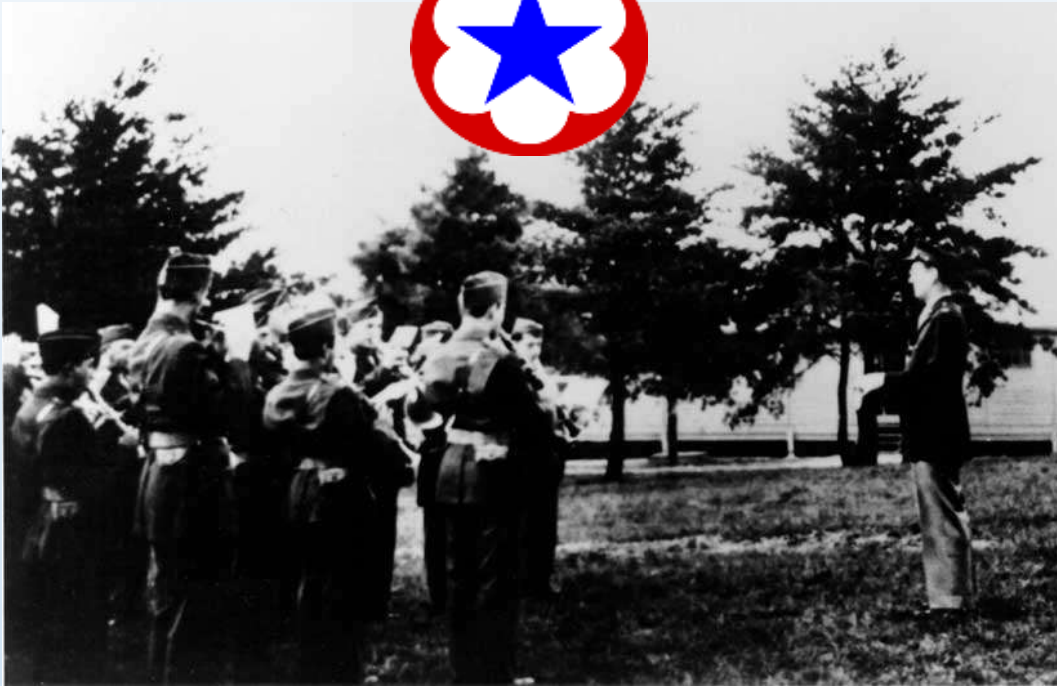
A SENSE OF DUTY

- ❖ The music industry and the American public were stunned on September 10, 1942 when Glenn Miller reported to the New York induction center to accept a commission as a Captain in the Army Specialist Corps. He was 38 years old and his draft classification was 3-A. Although his physical found him in excellent health, Miller was married, had respiratory issues and poor eyesight.
- ❖ Glenn Miller sincerely believed that he had an obligation to volunteer to do more for the war effort in uniform as opposed to whatever efforts he could contribute as a civilian. Having been turned down by the United States Navy, he was welcome by the Special Services Division and Bureau of Public Relations of the War Department. He reported for duty on October 7 at Omaha, Nebraska.
- ❖ A genuine patriot, Miller gave up an astonishingly lucrative career and business to enter the armed forces, walking away from his orchestra, fans, recording, broadcasting, personal appearance and motion picture contracts.



ARMY SPECIALIST CORPS

FORT GEORGE C. MEADE



- ❖ Upon reporting for duty as a Special Services Officer at Omaha, Capt. Miller is sent to the Special Service School at Fort Meade, Maryland for a brief officer training course. Miller is sick in bed for much of his training course. He finds that the course is a “waste of his time and talent.”
- ❖ Glenn Miller was familiar with Fort Meade. Earlier in 1942, three soldiers from the base won a contest with the song “Soldier, let Me Read Your Letter,” that Miller had recorded in Hollywood. It was the flip side of his famous record *American Patrol*.
- ❖ The Army Service Corps is a controversial agency created due to wartime expediency with the mission of training public relations, music, recreation and athletic program officers and other support personnel. It is disbanded while Miller is in training.
- ❖ Glenn Miller becomes a Captain in the Army of the United States on November 23, 1942. Within two days, his orders to report back to Omaha as an Army Special Services Officer are cancelled.
- ❖ The Commanding General of the Army Air Forces (AAF) requests Capt. Miller from the Army Service Forces (ASF).
- ❖ Miller is transferred to the AAF on November 25. He meets with the AAF HQ Public Relations and Radio Office in Washington, DC before being assigned effective December 5 to AAF Flying Training Command Eastern HQ at Maxwell Field, Alabama.



THE WORLD'S BIGGEST UNIVERSITY

ARMY AIR FORCES TRAINING COMMAND



General Henry Harley "Hap" Arnold



- ❖ Commanding General "Hap" Arnold needed to sell the concept of an Air Force to the American people and to recruit young men and women
- ❖ The AAF established Radio Production Units (RPU) and a Motion Picture Production Unit (MPU), working closely with the Broadcasting and Motion Picture Industries to develop the Air Force and meet the needs of its 2.4 million members.
- ❖ The AAF recruited top-notch talent, including Capt. Glenn Miller. His resume, reputation and objectives matched the objectives of the AAF.



Maj. Gen. Barton Kyle Yount



AAF Transfer Order

- ❖ The AAF Training Command included Flying and Technical Training Divisions, which would be merged in July 1943 under the command of Maj. Gen. Barton K. Yount, who was a West Point classmate of Gen. Arnold
- ❖ The HQ of the Flying Training Command and later the combined command was at Fort Worth, Texas
- ❖ Capt. Miller was assigned to the Training Command, which was the largest single part of the Air Force, including hundreds of training airfields, technical schools, officer and enlisted basic training sites

ALABAMA BOUND

MAXWELL FIELD



- ❖ Capt. Miller arrives at Maxwell Field in Montgomery on December 5, 1942.
- ❖ He is assigned as Special Services Officer to familiarize himself with the Air Force and its operations
- ❖ Miller travels to Air Force bases across the Southeastern United States to learn about operations and the needs of personnel
- ❖ The famous bandleader performs with the Maxwell Field Aviation Cadet Band on a WAPI, Birmingham broadcast – his first public appearance in uniform (left, above)
- ❖ The AAF begins to take advantage of Miller's high profile presence with public events such as a WSFA, Montgomery broadcast from the Maxwell Field machine shop (Left, below)



**YOU can have
SILVER WINGS**

If you are 17 and less than 18 you may be qualified now for membership in the Air Corps Enlisted Reserve and for future training as an Aviation Cadet with the **U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES**

APPLY AT ANY AVIATION CADET EXAMINING BOARD OR ANY U.S. ARMY RECRUITING STATION

Men employed in essential war industries or engaged in agriculture will not be accepted.
Men interested in Naval Aviation Cadet training may apply at any Navy Recruiting Station.
This announcement is made with the approval of the Joint Army and Navy Personnel Board.

REPORT OF CHANGE	
NAME	Miller, Arthur
DATE	12-5-42
TO	Maxwell Field
FROM	Montgomery
REASON	Assignment as Special Services Officer
APPROVED	[Signature]
DATE	12-5-42



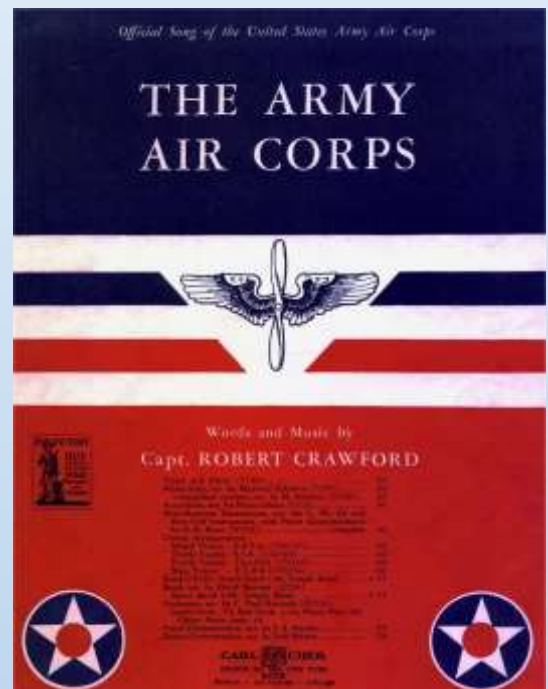
ATLANTIC CITY

AAF BASIC TRAINING CENTER #7



“If Frank Sinatra is drafted, I will get him”

- ❖ Capt. Miller circulates extraordinary instructions to musicians in uniform and about to be drafted about how to get transferred to him at Atlantic City --- and he obtains the talent that he wants
- ❖ Hundreds of musicians report to Atlantic City for assignment by Miller to AAF bands and his planned elite RPU, including famous and soon-to-be famous talents, including future composing genius Cpl. Henry Mancini
- ❖ Miller auditions dozens of men, including the 28th and 29th AAF Bands already stationed at Atlantic City. The 28th AAF Band is conducted by M/Sgt. Norman Leyden
- ❖ The elite unit is built with musicians who fit Miller's plans and not necessarily a complete “all-star” organization:
 - ✓ Jazz talents including Ray McKinley, Mel Powell, Hank Freeman, Herman “Trigger” Alpert, Carmen Mastren and Zeke Zarchy
 - ✓ Musical arrangers including Jerry Gray and Ralph Wilkinson
 - ✓ Musicians from major symphony orchestras, including concertmaster Sgt. George Ockner
 - ✓ Radio announcers, producers, motion picture actors and scriptwriters report to Atlantic City, including Pvt. Broderick Crawford and Sgt. George Voutsas



Cpl. Henry Mancini



M/Sgt. Norman Leyden

NEW HAVEN

AAF TECHNICAL SCHOOL - YALE UNIVERSITY



ELITE RADIO PRODUCTION UNIT

- ❖ Capt. Miller sends hundreds of musicians to AAF bases around the country and assigns dozens to join him at the AAF Technical School at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut and staff a large concert orchestra and radio production team
- ❖ Yale is the closest and best-equipped AAF facility to midtown Manhattan, where Miller's new elite unit will ultimately record and broadcast
- ❖ Additional talent is assigned to Miller, including singer/actor Pvt. Tony Martin
- ❖ Rehearsals begin as Miller negotiates agreements with the War Department, other government agencies, the AAF and radio networks for:
 - ✓ Broadcasts to the American public to promote the AAF
 - ✓ Recordings and broadcasts for service personnel
 - ✓ Broadcasts to sell War Bonds
 - ✓ Broadcasts to communicate American values to global audiences



I SUSTAIN THE WINGS

WOOLSEY HALL - YALE UNIVERSITY



Pvt. Broderick Crawford
Cpl. Ray McKinley
Capt. Glenn Miller

- ❖ A new AAF radio series is tested with CBS starting on May 29, 1943 using the facilities of WEEI, Boston and a regional network. The program is broadcast Saturday afternoons from Woolsey Hall on the Yale campus. On June 26, the program was broadcast from Stewart Field in Pawling, New York. Musical and script themes were tested and the series was considered ready for a national CBS audience on July 10.
- ❖ The July 10 broadcast was cancelled because of differences with the War Department over the script and identification of the orchestra under the command of Capt. Glenn Miller. This would not be the first time that War Department policy to de-emphasize celebrities in favor of unit names would surface. Miller prevailed and his name would appear on the masthead of the first nationwide broadcast from CBS in New York on July 17.



BLUES! - MY GOD!

THE MARCHING ("JEEP") BAND



- ❖ Capt. Miller's organization was much larger than the 28-man regulation for Army bands. Miller had to stash personnel in various departments at the AAF Technical School until December 1943, when Gen. Yount reorganized AAF Radio Production Units in terms of size and duties
- ❖ Miller's core musical organization at Yale was officially the 418th AAF Band. As such it was required to perform base duties including forming a marching band for retreat and cadet activities at Yale and on the New Haven Green.
- ❖ Jeeps were used to carry drum sets along with the marching musicians
- ❖ Arrangers crafted marching band scores of both traditional military marching music but also marching adaptations of jazz music, including "St. Louis Blues March," "Blues in the Night March," "Buckle Down, Winsocki" and even "Jersey Bounce" and "Deep in the Heart of Texas."
- ❖ Mid-level music officers around the country were frustrated with Miller's extraordinary authority and jealous of him.
- ❖ The music officer at Yale complained, saying, among other things, "Blues! - My God!" Miller replied, "Tell me Major, are we still flying the same airplanes that we did in World War I?" The amused commanding officer supported Miller, as did the entire AAF Training Command and Washington hierarchy.



MILLER VS. SOUSA

TIME MAGAZINE ARTICLE IRRITATES THE PENTAGON



Gen. George Catlett Marshall



John Philip Sousa

- ❖ The September 6, 1943 issue of Time magazine hit the news stands on September 2. It contained an article titled "Afro-Saxon in the Woodpile," about Capt. Glenn Miller modernizing military music. Although the article was satire, the Pentagon and Chief-of-Staff Gen. George C. Marshall were not amused.
- ❖ Capt. Glenn Miller was quoted as saying "anyone can improve on Sousa" and defended his use of jazz for his marching band and AAFTC bands nationwide. He was also quoted as saying that there were no effective and modern Army bands. Devotees of the legendary John Philip Sousa, including the eminent conductor Edward Franco Goldman, were outraged with Miller and the War Department pointedly asked the AAF where Miller had been given any authority to judge Army bands, or for that matter, traditional Sousa marches.
- ❖ The AAF carefully but deftly replied by having Miller write a letter demanding a retraction from Time and that ended the matter. In reality, the AAF was actually quite pleased with Miller. The Army and Marshall in particular were steamed that the AAF was running circles around the Army in terms of public relations and relating to young people as the modern branch of the armed forces that was actually in touch with the modern 1940s America.



The Yale Bowl, July 1943

THE AAF AT NBC

RADIO CITY - VANDERBILT THEATER NEW YORK

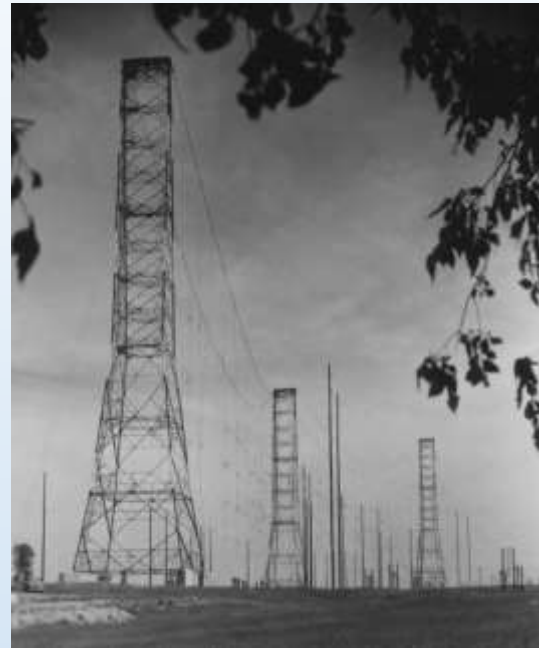


- ❖ *I Sustain the Wings* moves to NBC on September 18, 1943 and is soon broadcast every Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. Eastern War Time from the Vanderbilt Theater in New York.
- ❖ The program promotes AAF units, personnel and missions to a nationwide audience
- ❖ Lt. Donald Briggs becomes lead announcer for the series and the actor becomes executive officer of the Miller RPU. Miller's civilian manager Donald Haynes is commissioned and becomes Miller's administrative officer
- ❖ The 418 AAF Band becomes the 2nd AAF Radio Production Unit on December 6 following the merger of the Flying and Technical Training Commands under the command of Maj. Gen. Yount
- ❖ Miller's Yale-based personnel are split between the RPU and the new 718th AAF Band, which assumed marching and base duties, freeing up the radio orchestra for expanded broadcasting and recording activities, including Treasury Department *Treasury Star Parade* and *Home Base* programs and several Office of War Information (OWI) programs recorded at NBC Radio City

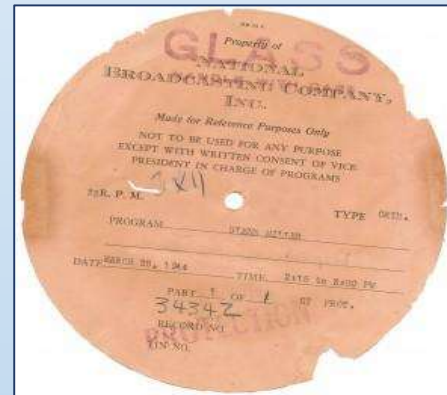


UNCLE SAM PRESENTS

THE OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION



- ❖ The Office of War Information (OWI) took control of American commercial shortwave broadcasting in 1942, to broadcast news and entertainment overseas
- ❖ The fledgling War Department Special Services Radio Branch, soon to be the Armed Forces Radio Service, broadcast to the armed forces overseas via the OWI operated transmitters and local overseas stations
- ❖ *Uncle Sam Presents* was a program designed for the armed forces overseas featuring service bands
- ❖ Miller's AAF organization made 15-minute *Uncle Sam Presents* programs at NBC Studio 6-A at Radio City in Rockefeller Center from September 1943 through May 1944



Sgt. Mel Powell



S/Sgt. Herman "Trigger" Alpert

V – DISCS



RCA Victor Studios
New York
October 29, 1943

- ❖ Beginning in 1943, the War Department, in cooperation with the Navy Department, launched a massive initiative to produce and ship phonograph records to the armed forces at home and overseas
- ❖ Led by Lt. Robert Vincent, the V-Disc program would ultimately make over 900 record releases including every major American artist. Since the musicians' union was on strike with the recording industry, an exemption was made to allow musicians to perform for V-Disc recording sessions
- ❖ Most V-Discs contained material sourced from radio broadcasts and the discs were made of a new, flexible material called *Vinylite*, which minimized breakage during shipping. This was the beginning of *vinyl* records as opposed to *shellac* records (78s)
- ❖ Capt. Miller and the 418 AAF Band held several V-Disc recording sessions beginning on October 29, 1943. Miller insisted on his name being included on the record labels
- ❖ V-Discs from March 1944 forward that featured Miller's AAF organization were made using performances culled from / *Sustain the Wings* performances



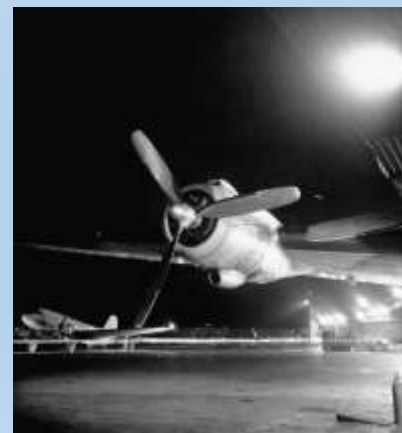
ARMED FORCES RADIO SERVICE

ARMY SERVICE FORCES



Col. Thomas Lewis

- ❖ In January 1943 the War Department consolidated radio broadcasting production within the Special Services Radio Branch in Los Angeles
- ❖ The Radio Branch was rebranded as the Armed Forces Radio Service (AFRS) in November 1943. Commanded by Co. Thomas Lewis, a former Young & Rubicam advertising and broadcasting executive, AFRS would become the world's largest radio network, with stations around the globe
- ❖ AFRS moved beyond unreliable shortwave broadcasting as a primary means of communications during 1943, supplementing it with an ambitious and enormous transcription disc distribution network. Original programming and off-network programs were mass-produced in California and priority shipped via the AAF Air Transport Command (ATC) from Long Beach to AFRS stations and military installations worldwide
- ❖ Capt. Miller's RPU participated in AFRS original programs including *Command Performance* and *G. I. Journal*. Their recordings were featured on AFRS original programs, including the popular *G. I. Jive* series
- ❖ At the recommendation of its musical director, Iowa-native Maj. Meredith Willson, AFRS created a series of radio station transcriptions called *Basic Music Library*, for the use of soldier and sailor disc jockeys. Capt. Miller's organization was featured prominently in the Popular Music *Basic Music Library* series



MUSIC FROM AMERICA

VOICE OF AMERICA



- ❖ April 1, 1944 AAF Base Units were re-designated and the 2nd AAF Radio Production Unit became the 2001st AAF Base Unit (Radio Production)
- ❖ The Office of War Information (OWI) was responsible for communicating American war aims to the people of the world as well as the people of the United States
- ❖ The OWI was an essential element of an extraordinary wartime partnership between the government and the media to control wartime domestic broadcasting and print media, to promote national unity and sense of purpose among the American people
- ❖ The OWI Foreign Branch launched the *Voice of America*, an international radio broadcasting service, which included a London operation, *The American Broadcasting Station in Europe* (ABSIE)
- ❖ To facilitate the use of musical programs in many languages, the VOA recorded a music-only series at NBC named *Music from America*
- ❖ Capt. Miller's organization recorded many *Music from America* programs beginning on March 10, 1944. The orchestra also made programs such as *Hello Latin America* and *Musica de las Fuerzas Areas* for the VOA



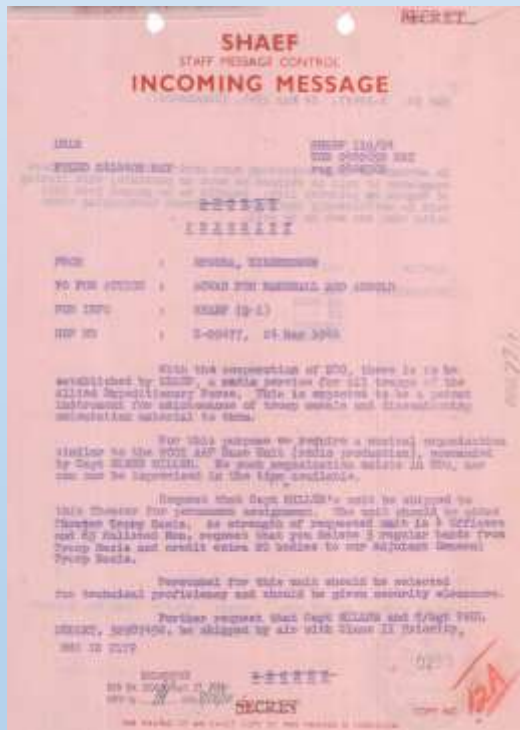
SUMMONS FROM IKE

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE



Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower

- ❖ General Dwight D. Eisenhower orders the BBC and the American Forces Network to create the Allied Expeditionary Forces Programme (AEFP), an Allied Radio Broadcasting Service, which will go "on the air" on D-Day +1, June 7, 1944
- ❖ Col. Edward Montague Kirby, War Department Radio Broadcasting Director, is named SHAEF Radio Broadcasting Director
- ❖ On April 29, Kirby meets with Capt. Glenn Miller in New York, subject: Overseas Deployment. They meet again in Washington on May 8 to finalize arrangements
- ❖ Eisenhower formally requests the Miller RPU on May 24. General Arnold and the AAF agree to the assignment under the condition that the Miller RPU remains an AAF organization
- ❖ SHAEF considers Capt. Miller and his organization to be essential to the Allied war effort in the European Theater of Operations (ETO)
- ❖ Capt. Miller takes a three-week leave to prepare for his overseas assignment and travels to California and Colorado. Upon his return, the RPU broadcasts their final "I Sustain the Wings" programs from Chicago on June 10



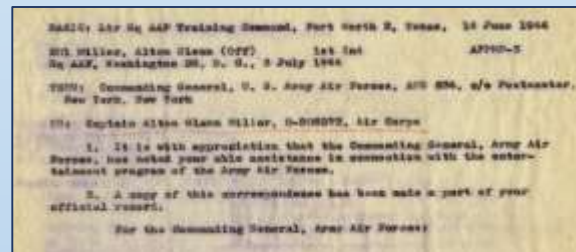
Col. Edward Montague Kirby



OVER THERE OVERSEAS DEPLOYMENT



- ❖ On June 14, 1944, the AAF announces that the Miller RPU is going overseas. The 2001st AAF Base Unit (Radio Production) is re-named the Army Air Forces Band (Special) and assigned to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), London, England. The 2000th AAF Base Unit (Radio Production) from Fort Worth, Texas under the musical direction of M/Sgt. Harry Bluestone becomes the new 2001st AAF Base Unit (Radio Production)
- ❖ Capt. Glenn Miller and Radio Producer T/Sgt. Paul Dudley fly ahead from New York to London on June 19, aboard an AAF Air Transport Command (ATC) C-54 passenger aircraft, stopping at Goose Bay, Labrador and Meeks Field, Reykjavik, Iceland, before changing planes to an ATC C-47 at Prestwick, Scotland. Miller and Dudley are billeted at the Mount Royal Hotel in London
- ❖ Lt. Donald Haynes and the personnel of the Army Air Forces Band (Special) board the Troopship NY8245 (the peacetime RMS *Queen Elizabeth*) on June 22. They arrive at Gourock, Scotland on June 28 and are met there by Capt. Miller, beginning their overseas mission.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

