On 1 May 1942 a new Squadron was born to the Fourth Air Force. It was christened the "323rd Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron" - a long and imposing name for so small an outfit. Its authorized strength was 7 Officers and 70 enlisted men. Its actual strength was 11 enlisted men who were transferred as a Cadre from the Muroc Bombing and Gunnery Range Detachment. Some of these men by the way, were veterans of the historic 7 December 1941, when the sleepy Muroc Bombing and Gunnery Range (as it was then) like the rest of the nation, sprang into feverish war activity. Some of them still speak of those times when men worked the clock around, messes were open 24 hours a day and lordly Master Sergeants rubbed elbows at KP with Buck Privates.

On 30 June when Capt. WILLIAM P. KENNA, because the first commander of the Squadron, the outfit numbered 158 men. Capt. KENNA was relieved 24 July, turning over the command to Major CHARLES J. MABBUTT. On 20 November, Major IRVIN M. HUNCILMAN assumed command vice Major MABBUTT, relieved. By this time the Squadron roster showed 27 Officers and 308 enlisted men.

On 28 March 1943, Major HUNCILMAN was relieved and Captain JAMES S. MONTGOMERY assumed command. It was shortly after this that the Squadron's somewhat monotonous existence was relieved through the instrumentality of a five year old youngster. On Sunday, 4 April, about 1800, word reached Muroc that a child had been lost on the Mojave Desert. After a fruitless six hours search by the parents and neighbors the Muroc Base was appealed to for assistance. Col. F. D. GORE, the Base Commander, called for volunteers to take part in the hunt, and a large percentage of the 323rd together with other base personnel turned out. The search continued until mid-night without result, when it was decided to suspend operations until next morning. At 0800 the search was resumed. At about 1400, John "Pee Wee" Winkley, the cause of the

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