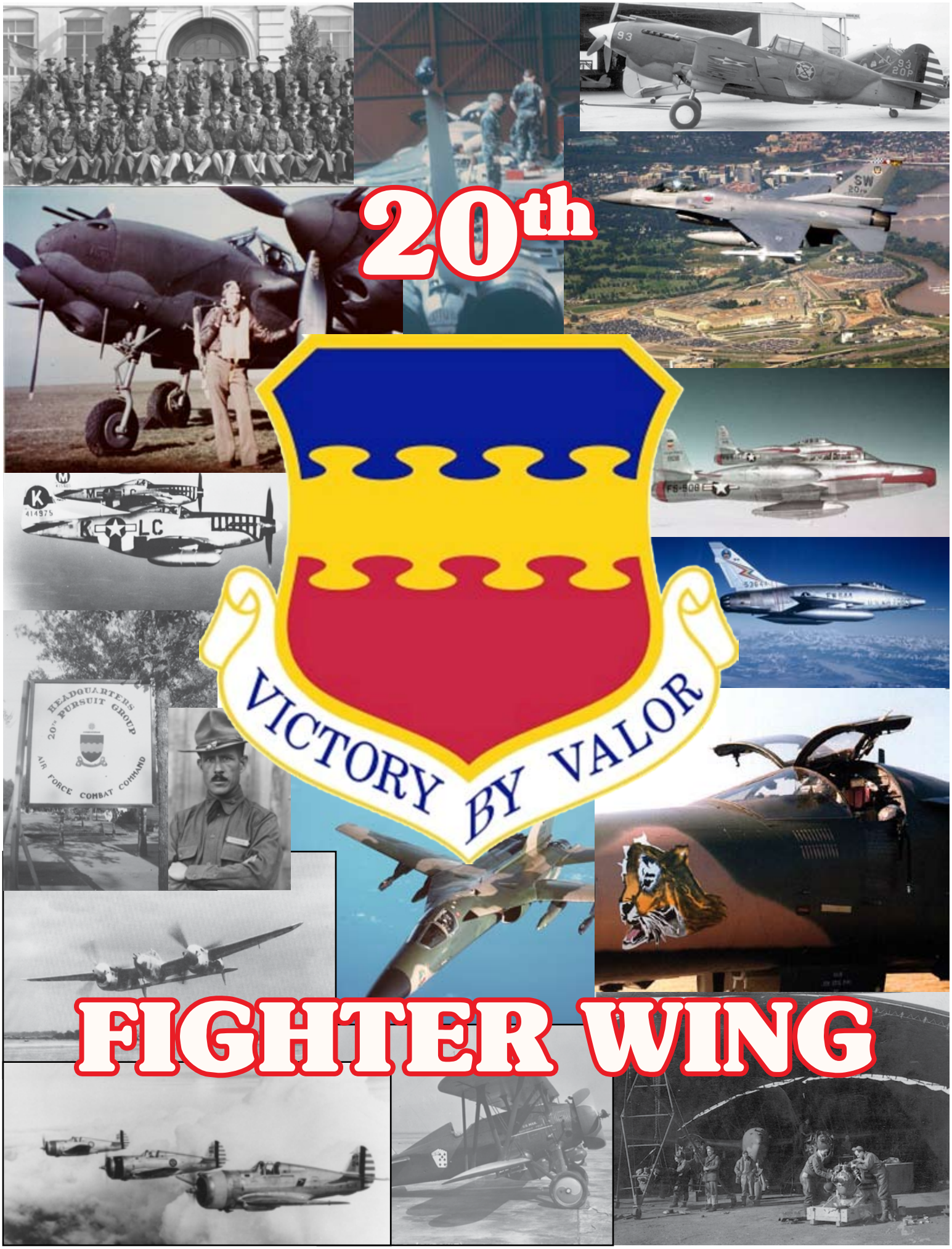

20th
VICTORY BY VALOR
HEADQUARTERS
20th PURSUIT GROUP
AIR FORCE COMBAT COMMAND
FIGHTER WING

PROUD BIRDS OF THE 20th FIGHTER WING

L-R: Wing Commander's F-16CJ Block 50, 00-0220, 79th FS Commander's F-16C Block 50D, 91-0379; 55th FS Commander's F-16C Block 50Q, 93-0554; 77th FS Commander's F-16C Block 50D, 91-0377.

Photo from 20th FW, Shaw AFB, SC

Office of History
20th Fighter Wing
Shaw AFB, South Carolina
December 2010

HISTORY OF THE 20th FIGHTER GROUP

Early History of the 20th FW's Squadrons WW I

It was August 1917. It had been only fourteen years since the first powered flight and ten years since the Aeronautical Division of the U.S. Army Signal Corps had been formed. Air power was in its infancy and growing. The possibilities were endless. New innovations were occurring everywhere you looked but the Great War raged in Europe and the US was gearing up for its part in that war. Three squadrons familiar to us all were formed at Kelly Field, Texas - the 55th, 77th and 79th Aero Squadrons (AS). It is also believed the first 78th AS was also formed there. Only the 55th's history would survive this initial formation to connect with the current squadrons. The Air Service hadn't yet figured out what it would look like, so there were many fits and starts as the service grew. By September the three squadrons had their designations changed to Aero Construction Squadrons (ACS). On 17 September 1917 the 55th ACS was on its way to NY for deployment to the AEF. By November 1917, the 77th and 79th had moved to NY for deployment to the AEF. In the AEF the squadrons were involved in construction of training facilities in France. The records do not reflect where the 78th ACS was.

In January 1918 a new numbering scheme for aero squadrons was established. Numbers 1-399 would be for Aero Service Squadrons (AS), 400-599 Aero Construction Squadrons (ACS), 600-799 Aero Supply Squadrons and 800-1099 Aero Repair Squadrons (ARS). The 55th became the 467th ACS, 77th became the 489th ACS, 78th became the 490th ACS and the 79th became the 491st ACS. All four squadrons went on to serve the AEF building facilities in France.

To add to the complexity of their history, the 77th, 78th and 79th ASs were born or reborn at Rich Field, Waco, Texas on 20th, 28th and 22nd February 1918 respectively. Our histories are linked to these squadrons (with the exception of the 55th). On 28 February the three squadrons moved by train to Hicks Field, Fort Worth, Texas. The 77th then moved to Taliaferro Field # 2 (later named Barron Field), Everman, Texas. As near as can be determined the squadrons provided a support role at their respective bases whose mission was training new pilots. As part of the stateside renumbering system all non-flying permanent party squadrons had their numerical designations changed to an alpha designation to free up those numbers for flying units.

The 55th ACS was demobilized on 16 March 1919 at Garden City, NY. The 78th (Sq. A) and 79th (Sq. B) were demobilized on 15 November 1918. Records show the 77th (Sq. A Barron Field) demobilizing on 18 November 1918 but recently found records show the squadron demobilized in March 1919.

It All Started With Balloons

P-12B of the 55th Pursuit Squadron. The squadron insignia at the time was a medium blue circle with a yellow surround, on which was superimposed a yellow swastika. This was the squadron insignia until 4 May 1932.

The 20th can trace its beginning to the authorization of the 20th Balloon Group which was authorized on 18 October 1927 as an inactive element of the Department of the Army Air Arm. The group was redesignated a Pursuit Group (PG) in May 1929 and finally activated on 15 November 1930 at Mather Field, California. The first combat unit of the 20 PG was the 77th Pursuit Squadron (PS), activated on the same day as the 20 PG. The 55 PS was also activated on 15 November as part of the 2nd Bombardment Wing, but attached to the 20 PG. The 55th wouldn't be assigned to the 20 PG until 15 June 1932. The 80th Service Squadron provided administrative and support functions for the group. The 78th PS was attached to the 6th Composite Group until it was assigned to the 3rd Attack Wing.

Upon activation, the group welcomed the arrival of the first of many famous airmen to grace its ranks. Major Clarence L. Tinker, its

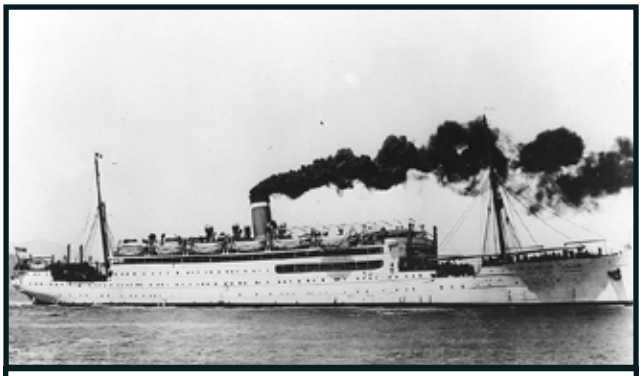
first commander, led the group until 13 October 1932. Major Tinker, part Osage Indian, gained fame as Major General Tinker, World War II Commander of the Seventh Air Force in the Pacific Theater. Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, was named in his honor a year after his death during the Battle of Midway in 1942.

The first combat aircraft of the 20 PG was a P-12 with serial number 29-355 assigned to the 77 PS. The group's P-12s were single-seat biplane fighters that featured two .30 caliber machine guns, an open cockpit, a 500 horsepower Pratt and Whitney engine, and a top speed of 180 miles per hour.

On 15 May 1931 the 20 PG made a cross-country trip while going on maneuvers. These maneuvers were part of the first of its kind for the Air Corps. "The Great Air Armada" put on shows in Chicago, NY, Boston, and Washington, DC. The maneuvers consisted of all Air Corps aircraft with the exception of basic trainers, around 640 aircraft.

To Barksdale By Sea

The Group remained at Mather Field for a little less than two years until 15 October 1932. On that date an advance party of more than 200 officers, enlisted men, and their dependents, under the command of Captain Thomas Boland, sailed from San Francisco aboard the USS Grant. They traveled through the Panama Canal and debarked at New Orleans, Louisiana, on 30 October 1932. On the following day, they arrived at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. The 55 PS's P-12s arrived at Barksdale on the same day. The 77 PS followed suit on 15 November 1932.



USS Grant used to transport the 20th Pursuit Group from San Francisco to New Orleans via the Panama Canal.

Major Millard F. Harmon, first commander of the newly opened Barksdale Field, took over command of the 20 PG on its arrival at Barksdale. Just prior to its transfer to Barksdale, the group was assigned, along with the 3rd Attack Group, to the 3rd Attack Wing in June 1932. The 3rd Attack Wing and Group operated out of Fort Crockett, Texas.

The 20th had hardly settled at Barksdale Field when, on 7 November 1932, it took part in its first tactical pursuit exercise from the new base. En route to Fort Crockett, its 27 P-12s engaged in mock aerial warfare over Beaumont, Texas. By February 1933 when Barksdale Field was formally dedicated, the group's training program was in full operation. Its aerial training mission focused on the development of procedures and techniques for engaging enemy aircraft and provided for the protection of vital industrial centers, airdromes, and bombardment aircraft. The 79 PS joined on 1 April 1933.

P-26A of the 77th Pursuit Squadron. 20th Pursuit Group P-26 aircraft did not have squadron markings. To identify them the cowl ring had a red scallop with a white strip and the engine face was also red. Similar paint scheme would be used for the 55th and 79th squadrons with their respective colors. Also note the long tube in front of the windscreen. This was the telescopic gun sight. The aircraft was armed with a pair of .30 caliber machine guns firing through the prop from below the fuselage.

In October 1934, the group (by then three flying squadrons strong) made its first aircraft transition from the P-12 to the Boeing P-26 *Peashooter*. This open cockpit monoplane had a 600 horsepower engine and a top speed of 253 miles per hour. Like the P-12, it possessed two .30 caliber machine guns. Unlike its predecessor, it also featured wing-mounted bomb racks.

In February 1935, the 20 PG was joined at Barksdale by the 3rd Attack Wing and 3rd Attack Group. Joint operations by the two combat groups were highlighted in 1937 by their participation in two aerial demonstrations, the first on behalf of the Command

and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the second during the American Legion Convention in New York. These demonstrations illustrated the effectiveness of newly developed pursuit and attack tactics and the significant firepower unleashed by A-17 and P-26 aircraft.

First Closed Cockpit Fighter

The 20th Pursuit Group acquired its first aircraft with a closed cockpit, the Curtis P-36 *Mohawk*, in September 1938. The P-36 had a 1,050 horse power engine, and a top speed of 303 miles per hour. It could carry up to 400 pounds of bombs on its undercarriage.

P-36A formation showing all three squadrons of the 20th Pursuit Group's aircraft. L-R: 77th, 55th and 79th with red, blue and yellow nose bands respectively. The P in PT identifies the aircraft as pursuit and the T, being the 20th letter in the alphabet, identifies the aircraft as from the 20th Pursuit Group.

On 15 November 1939 the 20th moved to Moffett Field, California, stayed there less than one year, and moved again on 9 September 1940 to Hamilton Field, also in California. At Hamilton the group changed aircraft once again, this time to the Curtis P-40 *Warhawk*. This was the top of the line pre-World War II pursuit fighter. It had a range of 750 miles, a top speed of 343 miles per hour, and six .50 caliber machine guns in the wings.

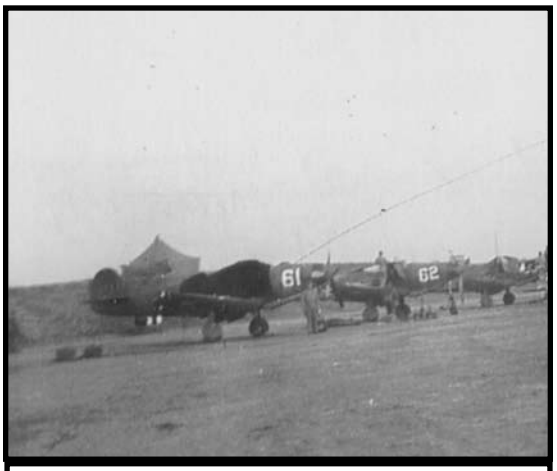
P-36A of the 77th Pursuit Squadron with maintenance crew. Photo from Floyd Huffman

Several events in 1941 marked the group's assignment at Hamilton Field. Deployed flights spent the first part of 1941 at Muroc Lake, California, and Esler Field, Louisiana, conducting maneuvers. Also in January 1941 the group gained Lieutenant Colonel Ira C. Eaker as its commander. Colonel (later Lieutenant General) Eaker remained with the group until September 1941. In October 1941, the group split into its component squadrons and deployed to various locations on the east coast, with group headquarters temporarily established at Morris Field, North Carolina. In December 1941, the 20th reassembled at Hamilton Field, California. Two days later the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

P-40 of the 55th Pursuit Squadron at Oakland Municipal Airport in 1940. This is not a B model, but just a P-40. No production A models were made. B models had the star insignia on the fuselage and no tail stripes. This model P-40 sports two .50 cal. machine guns in the nose and one .30 machine gun in each wing. Photo from Bill Larkins

The 20 PG made several station moves following the United States' declaration of war on Japan. Until February of 1942 the 20th performed air defense operations. From Hamilton Field it returned to the east coast and Wilmington, North Carolina, to Morris Field, North Carolina. The group's mission at this time was to act as a training unit to create new fighter groups. The group would receive new personnel, train them, and then they

P-43 *Lancer* 77 FS Spartanburg, South Carolina Spring 1942. Photo from Arthur Harszy



P-39D *Airacobras* of the 77 FS Sarasota, Florida August 1942. Photo from Arthur Harszy

would be transferred out in mass to form a new unit, leaving only a small cadre behind to start the process over again. This process is believed to have been used for as many as six new Fighter Groups. The individual squadrons were stationed at various fields in South and North Carolina and Florida. While at Wilmington, the group exchanged its P-40s for P-39 *Airacobras* as part of its training role. Additionally, the group received P-43 *Lancers* while in the Carolinas, also for training purposes. The P-43 was obsolete at this point and was never on the official record of the group. This aircraft was the predecessor of the P-47 *Thunderbolt*. At the end of September 1942 the group moved to Paine Field, Washington - all in the latter part of 1942.

In January 1943 the group moved to March Field, California, where it acquired its P-38 *Lightning* aircraft. At March the group would once again proceed with training new members but this time the results of the training would deploy to England as the 20 FG to write its pages of history.

To Europe in "Luxury" on the Queen Elizabeth

Eight months later, on 11 August 1943, the personnel of the 20th departed California aboard three trains and arrived at Camp Miles Standish, Massachusetts, five days later. From this European staging area the members of the 20th embarked on the HMS Queen Elizabeth and departed for the United Kingdom on 20 August 1943. If the members of the 20th had expected a typical Queen Elizabeth pleasure cruise, they were sorely disappointed. The ship had been refitted to accommodate over 19,000 men. Staterooms designed for two or three people had 20 to 30 bunks double and triple stacked for officers and enlisted men. In addition to these conditions, enlisted personnel also served shifts of 24 hours on deck, followed by 24 hours below deck. This doubled the number of personnel the cramped quarters could accommodate.

Due to its high speed, the HMS Queen Elizabeth traveled unescorted, despite the ever-present threat posed by German submarines. The five day trip across the Atlantic was reported as uneventful, except for long chow lines (two meals per day) and frequent boat drills. On 25 August 1943, HMS Queen Elizabeth dropped anchor and the men of the 20th disembarked at the Firth of Clyde. From there they were transported to the docks at Greenock, Scotland, and then, by train, to their new home, King's Cliffe Airfield, North Hamptonshire, England. Fortune smiled on the 55 FS at this time. Due to space restrictions they had to be stationed at RAF Wittering, about five miles from the rest of the group. The facilities at RAF Wittering were much superior to those at King's Cliffe. The 55th Squadron joined the rest of the group at King's Cliffe in April 1944.

King's Cliffe

Arriving at King's Cliffe, the group faced the prospect of operating from one of the poorest airfields in England. The buildings were old and inadequate and airfield facilities were close to nonexistent. The only thing in abundance was poor weather and mud. Overcoming the initial shock of these conditions the group soon settled in and got on with the serious job of flying. The group was assigned to the Eighth Air Force throughout the war.

P-38H of the 77 FS in September 1943. Pilots simulate a "scramble" for this publicity shot as they wait to fly their first operational mission.

Prior to the 20th's arrival in theater, the Republic P-47 *Thunderbolt* served as the primary U.S. fighter aircraft in Europe. This aircraft was a formidable match for the German Luftwaffe (Air Force) fighters in air-to-air combat but lacked one important feature--range. Without sufficient range, the conduct of daytime bomber

escort missions, first into Europe and then Germany itself, proved nearly impossible. That problem was perhaps best illustrated on 14 October 1943 when 60 of 293 unescorted bombers (20 percent), dispatched against the ball bearing works in Schweinfurt, failed to return from their mission.

The P-38 Era Begins

With the arrival in Europe of the Lockheed P-38, the long range escort mission of the Eighth Air Force began in earnest. Initially, due to a lack of available aircraft the 20th conducted operations as an attached component of the 55 FG. Full group operations for the 20th commenced in late December 1943 when the group became fully equipped with P-38s.

P-38H of the 55 FS based at RAF Wittering, England Aug 1943 to Apr 1944 then King's Cliffe, England until the end of the war.

One of the early highlights of the group's World War II exploits entailed the escort of a bombing mission into the Bordeaux area of France on 31 December 1943. This 1,300 mile round trip constituted the longest fighter escort mission to date. That distance, in fact, stretched the P-38s beyond their operational limits, forcing 17 of 31 aircraft to land at other bases due to insufficient fuel.

Lightning Limitations

Despite its advantages of range and speed over its German contemporaries, the P-38 suffered limitations which resulted in less than a break-even rate in enemy aircraft downed versus 20th aircraft lost. Within a 90-day span, from 31 December 1943 to 31 March 1944 the operational ledger disclosed 52 German aircraft destroyed while the 20th's losses amounted to 54 pilots. By the end of the P-38 era in July 1944, the 20th's kill rate improved slightly; the group logged 84 pilots lost versus 89 German aircraft destroyed in the air and 31 destroyed on the ground.

P-38J of the 79 FS Kings Cliffe England Spring 1944. MC and the white square identify it as 79th.

The P-38 was ill-equipped to deal with the extreme cold and high moisture conditions that prevailed at the operating altitudes of 20,000 to 33,000 feet over Northern Europe. A high number of group casualties resulted from engine failure at altitude. Thrown rods, engine explosions and unexpected power reduction during flight were all fatal flaws that the Axis aircraft exploited. The P-38 was equal to any German fighter at altitudes below 15,000 feet, but was usually at a disadvantage above that altitude.

Despite the shortcomings of its aircraft, the 20th earned a healthy reputation based on its escort of successful bombing raids and its secondary mission of ground strafing. From the outset of its World War II operations, the 20th's mission concentrated on escorting medium and heavy bombers to targets on the continent. It retained this primary mission throughout the war. Its escort missions completed, however, the group began to routinely strafe targets of opportunity while en route back to England. Pilots of the 20th focused their strafing attacks on railways

Ground Attack

In addition to its escort mission, the group furnished light bomber sorties. Between April and August 1944, pilots of the 20 FG machine-gunned, dive-bombed, skip-bombed, and high-level-bombed German airfields, trains, barges, flak positions, gun emplacements, barracks, radio stations, and other targets throughout France, Belgium, and Germany. Early in that period, on 8 April 1944, the group earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for "extraordinary heroism, determination, and esprit de corps in action against the enemy." During attacks against two German airfields near Salzwedel, Germany, the group destroyed or damaged 43 enemy aircraft on the ground and three in the air. Group pilots then deployed over a broad front, sweeping the area westward on withdrawal. During that sweep, German fighters made a rear attack on the P-38 formation, destroying four of the group's number. In counterattack, the 20th brought down three Me109s and an FW190 and dispersed the remaining force. The 20th aircrews continued their withdrawal west, and resumed their attacks on ground-targets of opportunity. Such was the ferocity of its attacks that day that the 20th Group recorded the destruction of 50 aircraft, 300 soldiers, 18 locomotives, 50 railway freight and oil tank cars, 30 oil tanks comprising three oil storage dumps, four high tension towers, two hangars, an electrical power house, six factories, one railroad station, 16 flak towers and gun positions, and two bridges.

P-38J of the 20 FG pulls up after strafing German supply train in the days following the Normandy landings. Note: invasion stripes on the wings.

The invasion of Normandy in early June 1944 featured 20 FG daylight escort operations in support of Allied fleet movements. The P-38 was specifically chosen for the task due to its distinctive shape (dual-boom fuselage) and the ease with which fleet anti-aircraft gunners could distinguish it from enemy aircraft. In July 1944, the P-38 era for the 20th came to an end. On 19 July, Lieutenant Colonel Cy Wilson, the Group Commander, led 49 Lightnings on a bomber escort mission into Southern Germany. The next day two squadrons of P-38s operated with one squadron of P-51s. The group flew its final P-38 combat mission on 21 July.

Transition to the P-51 (in Less than a Week)

By 22 July 1944, the 20th had completely transitioned to the new North American P-51 *Mustang*. Lieutenant Colonel Wilson equated the P-38 to flying an "airborne ice wagon," when compared to a P-51. With its extended range and horsepower, the P-51 helped sweep the last remnants of the Luftwaffe from the air. From mid-1944, many missions were flown unopposed by Axis aircraft.

77th FS tries out their new P-51Ds over the England.

During the first month of P-51 operations, pilots of the 20 FG demonstrated the increased air superiority of the *Mustang* by destroying 70 enemy aircraft. Their own losses numbered only 14 over the same period--a far better kill-to-loss ratio than they had achieved with the P-38. The increased range of the P-51 enabled group pilots to extend their coverage of European operations by two to three hours flying time. Standard flying time for a P-38 ran approximately four hours. Missions of six or seven hours were not uncommon for the P-51.

By November 1944, Allied air superiority had been so firmly established that the Luftwaffe attempted only two more full-scale interdiction missions against Allied bombers before the end of the war. On 2 November 1944, a German force of about 250 fighter aircraft intercepted 1,121 Eighth Air Force bombers and their fighter escort en route to the synthetic oil plants in Merseburg, Germany. In the ferocious air battle that followed, Eighth Air Force fighters destroyed 148 German planes, more than half the attacking force. Aircrews of the 20th Group contributed to the elimination of 33 enemy aircraft on that day. Lieutenant Colonel Robert P. Montgomery led the 20th's assault, destroyed three aircraft himself and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his performance.

Bomber escort missions by the 20 FG for the remaining eight weeks of 1944 met little German resistance. Weather conditions, limited the group's participation in the Battle of the Bulge. Nevertheless, Eighth Air Force (including the 20th) bombing and ground strafing of German road and railway lines of communication effectively strangled the enemy to death, and by 10 January 1945 the German army had begun its retreat to the Rhine.

The Luftwaffe's Last Push

Germany launched its final major air defense operation on 19 January 1945. This last full-scale attack against Allied bombers lasted approximately 20 minutes. In those 20 minutes, over the German homeland, aircraft of the Eighth Air Force downed a total of 121 out of 214 attacking aircraft without the single loss of a fighter aircraft. Only nine B-17s, two percent of the total force, were lost.

The late introduction of Luftwaffe jet aircraft, far superior to the P-51 mainstay of the Allied fighter force in both speed and high altitude performance, came too late to alter the course of the air struggle over Europe. The Me262 twin jet and Me163 single rocket engine aircraft first appeared in small numbers at the end of 1944. Though not a great threat in air-to air combat, (they lacked maneuverability), these aircraft proved almost impossible to stop when they attacked the heavy bombers.

The balance of the war featured little German resistance to Allied air power. Bombers of the Eighth Air Force saturated the German homeland almost at will. Strafing attacks by Allied fighters, including the 20th, paralyzed German communications, transportation, and airfields. During February 1945, pilots of the 20 FG expended approximately 165,500 rounds of ammunition, more than 16 percent of its wartime total expenditures. The 20th led all Eighth Air Force fighter groups in the destruction of enemy aircraft during that month.

In the last month of the war, aircrews of the 20th downed their first Me262s. On 10 April 1945, during airfield attacks around Potsdam and Brandenburg, 20th pilots destroyed five Me262s in individual encounters, while the group as a whole eliminated a total of 55 German fighters (mostly on the ground) without a single loss.

28 Aces

At the end of World War II, aces (pilots who destroyed five or more enemy aircraft (air & ground by 8th AF Sds.) of the 20 FG numbered 28. The 77 FS claimed group bragging rights with 10 aces, including the top three. Captain Ernest C. Fiebelkorn and Captain Charles H. Cole each had 11 total victories. Captain Fiebelkorn is generally acknowledged as the top 20th ace because his victories included nine in the air and only two aircraft destroyed on the ground. Captain Cole's total included five air victories and six on the ground. Captain James M. Morris missed out on sharing top honors with a victory total of 10 2/3, seven and one-third in the air and three and one-third on the ground. The 55th followed close behind the 77th with nine aces, the 79th had five and the Headquarters section claimed four.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the 20th lost 73 pilots to the Germans during the war, with a further 11 killed during training flights. The 20th also counted 56 of their number inhabiting Nazi prisoner-of-war camps during the war. Ten others bailed out in Axis territory, but evaded capture and eventually returned to Allied lines.

Following the war, the 20 FG returned to the United States for inactivation at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey on 18 October 1945. It became activated again on 29 July 1946 at Biggs Field, Texas. In October 1946, the group relocated to Shaw Field, South Carolina, where it was assigned under the 20th FW on 15 August 1947.

20th FIGHTER GROUP STATISTICS

Group Lineage

Authorized as 20th Balloon Group	18 Oct 1927
Redesignated 20th Pursuit Group	30 Jun 1929
Activated	15 Nov 1930
Redesignated 20th Pursuit Group (Fighter)	6 Dec 1939
Redesignated 20th Pursuit Group (Interceptor)	12 Mar 1941
Redesignated 20th Fighter Group	15 May 1942
Redesignated 20th Pursuit Group (Twin Engine)	30 Dec 1942
Inactivated	18 Oct 1945
Activated	29 Jul 1946
Assigned to 20th Fighter Wing	15 Aug 1947
Redesignated 20th Fighter Bomber Group	20 Jan 1950
Inactivated	8 Feb 1955
Redesignated 20th Tactical Fighter Group	31 Jul 1985
Redesignated 20th Operations Group	1 Mar 1992
Activated	31 Mar 1992
Inactivated	1 Jan 1994
Activated	1 Jan 1994

Group Components

24th Pursuit Squadron		*15 Nov 1930	16 Jun 1932
55th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter, Fighter-Bomber, Tactical Fighter, Fighter)	Attached	15 Nov 1930	15 Jun 1932
	Assigned	15 Jun 1932	18 Oct 1945
		29 Jul 1946	8 Feb 1955
		31 Mar 1992	30 Dec 1993
		1 Jan 1994	
77th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter, Fighter-Bomber, Tactical Fighter, Fighter)		15 Nov 1930	18 Oct 1945
		29 Jul 1946	8 Feb 1955
		31 Mar 1992	30 Sep 1993
		1 Jan 1994	
78th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter)		*1 Apr 1931	15 Jun 1932
		1 Jan 1994	30 Jun 2003
79th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter, Fighter-Bomber, Tactical Fighter, Fighter)		1 Apr 1933	18 Oct 1945
		29 Jul 1946	8 Feb 1955
		31 Mar 1992	30 Jun 1993
		1 Jan 1994	
87th Pursuit Squadron		* 1 Mar 1935	1 Sep 1936

*These squadrons assigned but never operationally active under group control during this period

Group Station Listing

Mather Field, California	15 Nov 1930	11 Oct 1932
Barksdale Field, Louisiana	31 Oct 1932	15 Nov 1939
Moffett Field, California	19 Nov 1939	9 Sep 1940
Hamilton Field, California	9 Sep 1940	c. Feb 1942
Wilmington, North Carolina	2 Feb 1942	18 Apr 1942
Morris Field, North Carolina	18 Apr 1942	7 Aug 1942
Drew Field, Florida	7 Aug 1942	30 Sep 1942
Paine Field, Washington	30 Sep 1942	1 Jan 1943
March Field, California	2 Jan 1943	11 Aug 1943
Kings Cliffe, England	26 Aug 1943	11 Oct 1945
Camp Kilmer, New Jersey	16 Oct 1945	18 Oct 1945
Biggs Field, Texas	29 Jul 1946	19 Oct 1946
Shaw Field (later AFB), South Carolina	20 Oct 1946	19 Nov 1951
Langley AFB, Virginia	19 Nov 1951	22 May 1952
RAF Wethersfield, England	1 Jun 1952	8 Feb 1955
RAF Upper Heyford, England	31 Mar 1992	1 Jan 1994
Shaw AFB, South Carolina	1 Jan 1994	

Group Aircraft History

BOEING P-12, B, E	Nov 1930	Oct 1935
DH-4	1931	1931
BOEING P-26A *PEASHOOTER*	Oct 1934	Sep 1938
CURTIS P-36A *MOHAWK*	Sep 1938	Sep 1940
CURTIS P-40, C, E *WARHAWK*	Sep 1940	Feb 1942
BELL P-39D *AIRACOBRA*	Feb 1942	Jan 1943
REPUBLIC P-43A *LANCER*	~Feb 1942	~Sep 1942
LOCKHEED P-38F, H, J *LIGHTNING*	Jan 1943	Jul 1944
NORTH AMERICAN P-51B, C, D, K *MUSTANG*	Jul 1944	Oct 1945
NORTH AMERICAN P-51D, K MUSTANG	Jul 1946	Aug 1947
REPUBLIC P-84B (F-84B, D, F, G) *THUNDERJET*, *THUNDERSTREAK*	1948	1952
NO AIRCRAFT	1953	1955
GENERAL DYNAMICS F-111E *AARDVARK*	1992	1993
GRUMMAN EF-111A *RAVEN*	1992	1992
FAIRCHILD REPUBLIC A/OA-10 *THUNDERBOLT II*	1994	1996
GENERAL DYNAMICS F-16C, D, E, F *FALCON*	1994	

Group & Bestowed* Battle Honors

American Theatre	WDGO 85 1945
Air offensive, Europe	WDGO 102 1945
Normandy	WDGO 103 1945
Northern France	WDGO 114 1945
Ardennes Alsace	WDGO 114 & 24 1945
Central Europe	WDGO 116 1945
Rhineland	WDGO 118 1945
Group Distinguished Unit Citation For Action Over Central Germany 8 April 1944	WDGO 34 1945

*Wartime honors of the 20th Group were temporarily bestowed on the 20th Wing, Nov 1954, consequent to the Air Force's adoption of a wing base plan which established wings (vice groups) as the primary combat element of operational organizations. The bestowal has remained in effect ever since.

20th Pursuit Group accomplishments during World War II

20th Aircraft Employed	**P-38**	**P-51**	**Total**
Enemy Aircraft Destroyed Air	89	122	211
Enemy Aircraft Destroyed Gnd	31	201	232
Enemy Aircraft Damaged Air	42	39	81
Enemy Aircraft Damaged Gnd	26	107	133
Enemy Aircraft Probables	6	5	11
Aircraft Dispatched	6,847	9,015	15,862
Flying Hours	27,177	43,935	69,112
Rounds Expended	405,910	581,708	987,618
Bombs Expended (lbs)	600,180	83,500	683,680

Individual Awards

Individual Awards	**HQ***	**55th**	**77th**	**79th**
Distinguished Service Cross	3			
Silver Star	14			
Distinguished Flying Cross	15	79	94	78
Air Medal	62	584	564	558
Purple Heart	2	4	15	13
Croix De Guerre	2			
Legion of Merit	1			
Soldiers Medal	6	5	1	
Bronze Star	16	11	15	15
Certificate Of Merit	4			

***Also includes decorations to subordinate group units.**

20th GROUP COMMANDERS

Major Clarence L Tinker
15 Nov 1930 - 13 Oct 1932

Captain Thomas Boland
14 Oct 1932 - 30 Oct 1932

Major Millard P Harmon
31 Oct 1932 - 6 Oct 1936

Major Armin F Herold
7 Oct 1936 - 13 Sep 1937

Lt Colonel Ross G Hoyt
14 Sep 1937 - 15 Jan 1941

Lt Colonel Ira C Eaker
16 Jan 1941 - 9 Sep 1941

Major Jesse Auton
9 Sep 1941 - 6 Jan 1942

Major Homer A Boushey, Jr
7 Jan 1942 - 8 Mar 1942

Lt Colonel Edward W Anderson
9 Mar 1942 - 20 Aug 1942

Colonel Jesse Auton
21 Aug 1942 - 15 Jan 1943

Colonel Barton H Russell
16 Jan 1943 - 1 Mar 1944

Lt Colonel Mark E Hubbard
2 Mar 1944 - 18 Mar 1944

Major Herbert E Johnson, Jr
19 Mar 1944 - 20 Mar 1944

Lt Colonel Harold J Rau
20 Mar 1944 - 24 Jun 1944

Lt Colonel Cy Wilson
25 Jun 1944 - 26 Aug 1944

Colonel Harold J Rau
27 Aug 1944 - 17 Dec 1944

Colonel Robert P Montgomery
18 Dec 1944 - 2 Oct 1945

Major Jack C Price
3 Oct 1945 - 17 Oct 1945

Colonel Joseph L Laughlin
29 Jul 1946 - 23 Feb 1947

Colonel Archie J Knight
24 Feb 1947 - 20 Jul 1947

Colonel William J Cummings, Jr
21 Jul 1947 - 1 Aug 1948

Colonel George R Bickell
2 Aug 1948 - 3 Oct 1949

Colonel John A Dunning
4 Oct 1949 - 26 Jun 1950

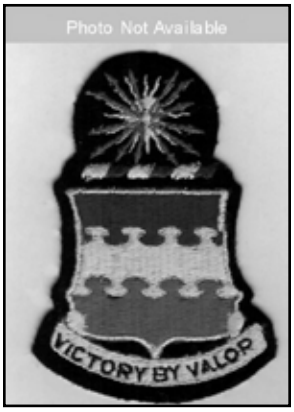
Lt Colonel Dean Davenport
26 Jun 1950 - c. Mar 1951

Lt Colonel Jack R Brown
22 Oct 1951 - 28 Apr 1952

Colonel William D Ritchie
29 Apr 1952 - 7 Feb 1955

20th
Fighter Group
Inactivated

8 Feb 1955
–
31 March 1992



Colonel Richard H Meeboer
31 Mar 1992 - 15 Jul 1993

Colonel Daniel C. Clark
15 Jul 1993 - 1 Jan 1994

Colonel Kees W Rietsema
1 Jan 1994 - 19 Aug 1994

Colonel Robert M Hylton
19 Aug 1994 - 9 Nov 1995

Colonel William H Camp
9 Nov 1995 - 9 Jul 1996

Colonel James M Corrigan
9 Jul 1996 - 17 Dec 1997

Colonel James A Whitmore
17 Dec 1997 - 1 Jul 1999

Colonel Michael V Ely
1 July 1999 - 24 Aug 2001

Colonel Noel T Jones
24 Aug 2001 - 23 Jan 2003

Colonel Robert J Beletic
23 Jan 2003 - 27 May 2004

Colonel Joel E Malone
24 May 2004 - 29 Mar 2006

Colonel John C. Colombo
27 Apr 2006 - 6 Jun 2008

Col David G. Van Der Veer JR.
6 Jun 2008 - 18 Aug 2010

Col James R. Sears, Jr.
18 Aug 2010 - _____

HISTORY OF THE 20th FIGHTER WING

Today's 20th Fighter Wing (FW) can trace its lineage to the initial creation, on 28 July 1947, of the 20th Fighter Wing, organized (manned) on 15 August of the same year at Shaw Field, South Carolina, as a Ninth Air Force unit. Components of the new fighter wing included the 20th Maintenance and Supply Group, the 20th Airdrome Group, and the 20th Station Medical Group (later Tactical Hospital). At the same time, the 20 FG with its 55, 77, and 79 FSs and P-51 *Mustangs* formed the combat element of the 20 FW. The group exchanged its P-51s in February 1948 for P-84B (later D) *Thunderjets*.

On 24 August 1948, a reorganization of the 20th Maintenance and Supply Group featured the activation of the 20th Supply Squadron, Fighter, Jet (later simplified to 20th Supply Squadron) and the 20th Maintenance Squadron, Fighter, Jet (renamed 20th Maintenance Squadron in 1950, 20th Field Maintenance Squadron in 1954, and 20th Equipment Maintenance Squadron in 1981).

Two days later, on 26 August 1948, the wing's 20th Airdrome Group was discontinued and its security police (now the 20th Security Police Squadron), installations, food service and air base elements became realigned under the 20th Air Base Group. The creation of the new group fostered the activation of the 20th Finance Disbursing Unit (today's 20th Comptroller Squadron), the 20th Motor Vehicle Squadron (predecessor of the 20th Transportation Squadron), the 20th Installations Squadron (redesignated 20th Civil Engineering Squadron fourteen years later), the 20th Food Service Squadron (antecedent of the 20th Services Squadron), and the 20th Communications Squadron (no relation to the communications organizations serving the wing today).

20th Becomes Fighter Bomber Wing

Control over the wing changed hands on 1 February 1949 with its assignment to the Fourteenth Air Force. Eleven months later, on 20 January 1950, the wing was redesignated as the 20th Fighter Bomber Wing (FBW). Similar redesignations altered the titles of the 20th Group and its three flying squadrons.

Front Row L-R: Capt. Tom Ross (USMC exchange officer), Maj. Delynn E. Anderson (CO 79 FS), May Jacobson, Maj. Alan Armstrong (USMC exchange officer), Col Dunning (CO 20 FG), Col Cy Wilson (ex 20 FG CO WW II on loan from Pentagon for Fox Able deployment). 2nd row: Billy Mitchell (CO 55 FS). Briefing for deployment to RAF Manston in Shaw Base Theater. Many in this picture became important leaders for developing jet fighter operations, and for Korean and Vietnam combat. The future was here!

The Korean War had just begun. USAF plans had been to send the SAC 12 FW to England to bolster the forces in Europe. But the Cold War got hot before the 12th's F-84s were ready to go. The 20th D.O. was called from a Saturday night party at the club to take a message that the 20th was going to England. The 20th had about seven days to get ready. Getting ready included receiving a set of two-230 gallon tip tanks for each airplane to replace the two-185 gallon tanks we had been provided with our F-84Ds. On 19 July 1950 the 20th Fighter Bomber Group (FBG) under the command of Colonel John Dunning executed the first movement of a full jet fighter group to Europe. The 20th flew their F-84Ds from Shaw AFB to Dow AFB Maine. At Dow AFB a message was received to remove personal baggage from the .50 cal. ammunition compartments so that live ammunition could be loaded. Headquarters felt there was a strong possibility that the Soviets would try to interfere with the movement of the unit to England. The 20th would then continue on its movement without Soviet action via Goose Bay Labrador, Bluie West One, Greenland, Keflavik, Iceland, Kinross, Scotland and finally to Manston, England. Half way between Greenland and Iceland one of the F-84s had an

F-84D of the 55th Fighter Bomber Squadron at RAF Manston 1950. Photo by William Preble

engine flame out. The pilot bailed out but died from exposure before the rescue vessel could reach him. On the return trip all pilots wore their anti-exposure suits. One of the primary reasons for this move was to discourage the Soviets from taking any action in Europe while we were preoccupied with the Korean War. The 20th returned to Shaw in December 1950 after a five month stay at RAF Manston.

Subordinancy to the Fourteenth Air Force was short lived. On 1 August 1950 the wing was reassigned directly under Tactical Air Command. Ninth Air Force resumed control over the 20th on 22 January 1951. Control was swapped back to Tactical Air Command on 1 December 1951, just after the wing's relocation from Shaw to Langley AFB, Virginia. At Langley, the wing began flying new Republic F-84Gs in addition to F-84Ds. An internal change during the wing's short stay at Shaw Field featured the 3 November 1949 inactivation of the 20th Finance Disbursing Unit.

The 20th Goes Nuclear

The 20 FBW moved to Langley AFB, Virginia on 19 November 1951. Earlier a cadre of seven members of the 20th had spent time at Langley secretly learning the ins and outs of nuclear weapons delivery. There they worked out procedures for accomplishing this using their soon to be assigned F-84Gs. One big hurdle would be to develop procedures for navigation to the target, on average 700 miles, without navigation aids of any kind with the exception of the compass. With the 20th's move to Langley the procedures developed by the initial cadre would be passed on to the rest of the wing. As told by Col. George M. Lunsford USAF (Ret), Col. Dunning said we would be the world's first atomic fighter outfit. We'd move up to Langley in the autumn of '51, pick up more than a hundred new airplanes, and reorganize completely. We'd learn to drop that damned bomb and get away. And we would do it all by the spring of '52 because we were going back to England again. In true 20th tradition they became fully trained in this new mission and the 20th moved to England to add to the growing deterrent of Soviet aggression.

Nuclear capable F-84G of the 55th Fighter Bomber Squadron at RAF Wethersfield, England.

Move to Wethersfield May 1952

The 20 FBW made its second move, this time overseas to RAF Wethersfield in Essex, England, on 1 June 1952. Its fighter bomber group set up headquarters, along with the 55 and 77 FBSs, at Wethersfield a day later. Restricted space there compelled the 79 FBS to move into RAF Bentwaters in Suffolk, England, on the same day. (The squadron moved to RAF Woodbridge, three miles southeast of Bentwaters, on 1 October 1954.) On 5 June, Tactical Air Command relinquished control over the wing to the Third Air Force and the United States Air Forces in Europe.

On 15 November 1952, the wing and group merged their headquarters through internal reorganization, thus unofficially dissolving the group and placing the flying squadrons directly under the wing's operational and administrative control. The group remained on the Air Force's active list however, until 8 February 1955 when the three fighter bomber squadrons were officially realigned under the wing.

Wing Bestowed With Group's Heritage

The Department of the Air Force temporarily bestowed the history and honors of the 20th Group on the 20th Wing in November 1954. That action was accomplished to facilitate the Air Force's adoption of a wing base plan, making the wing the primary combat element of operational organizations. Consequent to the action of temporary bestowal, the 20th TFW laid claim to the history and honors of the 20th FG. That bestowal has remained in effect ever since. The 20th has been very fortunate to have kept its original squadrons throughout its history since the 79th joined the 55th and 77th in 1933. As far as this historian has been able to determine the 20th is the only unit to still have its original squadrons.

F-84F of the 77 FBS at RAF Wethersfield. Photo by R. L. Ward

In June 1955, the wing began flying F-84F *Thunderstreaks* in addition to its F-84Ds and F-84Gs. The F-84G was phased out by June 1955 and the F-84F remained in the inventory until December 1957.

The F-100 Arrives

Prior to the departure of the F-84 fleet, the 20th began conversion to North American F-100D and F-100F Super Sabres on 16 June 1957.

F-100D of the 55 FBS c.1957 at RAF Wethersfield. Photo by B. Robertson

Meanwhile, on 26 January 1956 the wing underwent a major internal reorganization with the inactivation of the 20th Maintenance and Supply Group and the realignment of its 20th Field Maintenance and 20th Supply Squadrons under the air base group which was then redesignated as the 20th Support Group. At the same time, the 20th Installations Squadron and 20th Food Service Squadron were also inactivated (they reemerged as the 20th Civil Engineering Squadron and 20th Services Squadron on 16 January 1962 and 1 February 1982, respectively), the 20th Air Base Squadron was activated, and the 20th Communications Squadron was redesignated as the 20th Operations Squadron (this squadron remained with the wing until its inactivation on 1 July 1958). The wing initiated air to air gunnery training in August, 1956, in the F-84F at Nouasseur (near Casablanca), Morocco.

Wheelus Operation Begins

The 20 FBW established an operational detachment at Wheelus AB, Libya in February 1958. On 8 February 1958, the 20th Field Maintenance Squadron was realigned again, this time directly under the wing. Three months later, on 8 May 1958, the wing took on the designation of the 20th Tactical Fighter Wing. The 55th, 77th and 79th Squadrons were also re-labeled as Tactical Fighter Squadrons at that time. Two additional maintenance squadrons were added to the wing on the same day with the activation of the 20th Armament and Electronic Maintenance Squadron (renamed 20th Avionics Maintenance Squadron in 1981) and the 20th Periodic Maintenance Squadron (which became the 20th Organizational Maintenance Squadron in 1964 and the 20th Aircraft Generation Squadron in 1981). The flying squadrons dispersed on a monthly rotational basis to RAF Alconbury, RAF Woodbridge, and Nouasseur AB, Morocco, due to a RAF Wethersfield runway closure from May to August 1958.

The 20th Goes on Full Time Nuclear Alert

Although the 20th had nuclear strike capability since 1952 it would only stand alert if specific world events called for it. In July of 1958 the wing established its Blast Off (later named Victor Alert) capability and would maintain this capability until 7 February 1986. The first Mobility Plan was initiated on 1 January 1959. A year round weapons training detachment was established at Wheelus AB, Libya, for monthly squadron rotations, January 1959 to September 1969. Pilot survival and ski training began in Norway in February 1959. The 20th Tactical Fighter Wing represented USAFE in the William Tell exercise held at Nellis AFB, Nevada in October 1960.

1961 First NATO Tiger Meet. 79 TFS gets a new Tiger head.

The first NATO Tiger meet was sponsored by the 79 TFS Tiger Squadron at RAF Woodbridge in June 1961 (established by Captains Michael T Dugan and Merrill A McPeak, each of whom went on to become Air Force Chief of Staff).

Maintenance Structural Reorganization -- The First of Many

Intermediate command over the 20th changed hands between Third Air Force and 16th Air Force from 1 July 1961 to 1 September 1963. In the meantime, internal changes again altered the structure of the wing. 16 January marked the activation of the 20th Civil Engineering Squadron, a unit that had been dormant for six years. On 15 June, 1962, the 20th Support Group was redesignated as the 20th Combat Support Group and the 20th Supply Squadron was realigned under the wing and its newly appointed office of Deputy Commander for Materiel (DCM). On the same day, the 20th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron came into being, along with the inactivation of the 20th Field Maintenance, Periodic Maintenance, and Armament and Electronic Maintenance Squadrons, and the consolidation of their assets under the new squadron. The CAMS Squadron fell under the DCM. Direction and control over the wing's three flying squadrons went to another newly formed office -- Deputy Commander for Operations (DCO) -- on the same day.

20 TFW F-100Ds lined up on Wheelus flight line around 1962. Photo by Harv Segrest

Maintenance consolidation lasted only two years, and on 8 July 1964, the wing dissolved the Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Two months earlier, on 14 May 1964, the 20th Armament and Electronics Maintenance Squadron and the 20th Field Maintenance Squadron reemerged and the wing activated the 20th Organizational Maintenance Squadron (formerly Periodic). On 8 July 1964, two new maintenance squadrons joined the wing organization -- the 320th Munitions Maintenance Squadron and the 20th Flight line Maintenance Squadron. The latter was stationed at RAF Woodbridge with the 79th TFS for less than two years. It was inactivated on 15 December 1965, when the 79 TFS absorbed its personnel and equipment. The complexion of the 20th's maintenance community changed again on 1 January 1966 with the inactivation of the 20th Organizational Maintenance Squadron. The wing parceled out the personnel and equipment of that squadron to maintenance components of the 55 and 77 TFS.

Rotations to Turkey Begin

Monthly rotations to Cigli AB, Turkey were conducted from July 1966 to June 1970 and to Aviano AB, Italy from December 1966 to June 1970. Political closures of US bases in France forced opening of RAF Greenham Common under 20 TFW management to handle personnel overflow in January 1967.

The General Dynamics F-111 was demonstrated for the first time in England at RAF Wethersfield.

On 1 July 1967, the administrative sections of the wing and combat support group merged to form the 20th Base Headquarters Squadron. Though it never achieved formal squadron status by definition, that organization retained its unofficial designation until its demise on 1 June 1989 when it was functionally replaced by the 20th Mission Support Squadron. A final, though minor, organizational revision during the decade of the '60s featured the redesignation of the 20th Armament and Electronics Squadron as the 20th Avionics Maintenance Squadron on 1 January 1969.

Wheelus Closes

A military coup in Libya forced the closure of Wheelus AB in September 1969 and initiation of 20 TFW weapons training detachment operations at Torrejon AB, Spain in November 1969.

Detachment 1, 20 TFW was established at RAF Upper Heyford on 10 December 1969.

All three flying squadrons rotated to Zaragoza, Spain for weapons training from January to March 1970.

Relocation to Upper Heyford F-111 Era Begins

Headquarters, 20 TFW relocated from RAF Wethersfield to RAF Upper Heyford on 1 June 1970. For the first time since it left Virginia in 1952, all three of its flying squadrons were united on one home base. Less than three months later, the wing began converting to a new aircraft, the General Dynamics F-111E Aardvark (unofficially). On 12 September 1970, the first two F-111Es arrived at RAF Upper Heyford. The last of the 20th's F-100s transferred to the Air National Guard on 12 February 1971 and in November of that year the wing's F-111s were declared operationally ready.

Reorganization of the wing's maintenance community continued and, on 1 February 1972, the 20th Organizational Maintenance Squadron was activated for a second time, shifting maintenance personnel and equipment back out of the flying squadrons. Eight months later, on 1 September 1972, the 320th Munitions Maintenance Squadron was redesignated as the 20th Munitions Maintenance Squadron.

The 20 TFW participated in F-111 NATO and US unilateral operations Shabaz, Display Determination, Cold Fire, Ocean Safari, Datex, Priory, Reforger, Dawn Patrol, Highwood, Hammer, and others from January 1972 to October 1993.

Half a year later, on 5 March 1973, the 20 TFW became one of only two wings in the Air Force to participate in the tri-deputy wing organization system. The Deputy Commander for Materiel organization split apart to form the Deputy Commander for Logistics (renamed Deputy Commander for Resources in 1974 and Deputy Commander for Resource Management in 1975) and the Deputy Commander for Maintenance organizations. Under this test the Organizational, Field, Avionics, and Munitions Maintenance Squadrons became prime components of the

Deputy Commander for Maintenance organization. The procurement and comptroller offices, along with the 20th Supply and 20th Transportation Squadrons (moved under the Combat Support Group) constituted the Deputy Commander for Logistics organization. The tri-deputy system was formally approved in the following year and the 20th Transportation Squadron was officially realigned from the Combat Support Group to the Deputy Commander for Resource on 24 July 1974.

Operations moved to RAF Greenham Common May to August 1976, during runway work at Upper Heyford.

Maintenance Reorganizes -- Again

Another major maintenance organizational restructuring occurred on 31 October 1981. HQ USAFE redesignated the 20th Avionics Maintenance Squadron as the 20th Component Repair Squadron, renamed the 20th Organizational Maintenance Squadron as the 20th Generation Squadron, and the 20th Field Maintenance as the 20th Equipment Maintenance Squadron. At the same time, it activated the 520th Aircraft Generation Squadron and inactivated the 20th Munitions Maintenance Squadron.

On 1 February 1982 HQ USAFE activated the 20th Services Squadron of the 20th Combat Support Group. A former component of the 20 TFW, this squadron traced its roots back to June 1948 when it was first constituted as the 20th Food Service Squadron.

The EF-111A Ravens Arrive -- A Squadron Gained

The wing gained a fourth flying squadron on 1 July 1983, with the activation of the 42nd Electronic Combat Squadron. In February 1984, the first EF-111A Ravens of that squadron arrived at Upper Heyford. Parental responsibility over the 42nd by the 20 TFW was short lived, however, and on 1 June 1985, operational control of the squadron shifted to the 66th Electronic Combat Wing at Sembach AB, West Germany.

EF-111A of the 42 ECS at RAF Upper Heyford.

Summer 1985 featured two organizational changes. First, on 1 July HQ USAFE activated the 20th Comptroller Squadron 35 years after its disbandment as the 20th Finance Disbursing Unit (Fighter Jet), Shaw AFB, NC. The second change involved the activation of the 7320th Security Police Group and the 7320th Security Police Squadron. Control over the 20th Security Police Squadron, already serving the wing, shifted from the 20th Combat Support Group to the new Security Police Group. The commander's title changed to Deputy Commander for Security Police in March 1986.

Ghost Rider and El Dorado Canyon

During the early hours of 16 October 1985 the 20 TFW received a no notice tasking to bomb a target 2,400 miles away in Goose Bay, Labrador within 46 hours. At the time this was the longest tactical air mission ever attempted. This exercise was code named Ghost Rider and was a complete success. It demonstrated the F-111's ability to project its capabilities over great distances. Although not known at the time, this mission was the dress rehearsal for the retaliatory strike on Libya on 14 April 1986 in response to its State Sponsored Terrorism.

In March 1986, the 66th Electronic Combat Wing detached the 42 ECS to the 20 TFW to take part in El Dorado Canyon, the raid on Libya. On 14 April 1986, five EF-111As and 20 F-111As took off from RAF Upper Heyford as part of the attack force. They were used as an airborne reserve for the F-111Fs of the 48 TFW, RAF Lakenheath. Three EF-111s (two were spares and turned back) formed up with the 48th's F-111Fs and provided electronic defense during the attack on Tripoli.

USAFE initiated the Project Power Hunter intelligence network in December 1987. The wing first tested the Durandal runway buster bombs during Exercise Red Flag, January to February 1988.

The lifelines of the 7320th Security Police Group and Squadron were terminated on 21 October, 1988, when they were inactivated and functionally replaced by the 20th Security Police Group and the 620th Security Police Squadron. The 20th Security Police Squadron was realigned under the new group.

WTD in Turkey

All three fighter squadrons deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey for Weapons Training Deployment (WTD) on Konya Range from March to May 1989.

On 1 June 1989, HQ USAFE dissolved the 20th Base Headquarters Squadron and activated the 20th Mission Support Squadron under the 20th Combat Support Group. The new organization provided squadron level control over various base administrative agencies formerly regulated by the combat support group directly. Among these were Military Personnel, Civilian Personnel, Base Administration (renamed Information Management), Education Services, Social Actions, Family Support, Dependent Schools Office, and the NCO Preparatory School.

F-111E of the 79 TFS during a typical sunny RAF Upper Heyford day.

The first F-111E modified under the Aircraft Modernization Program (AMP) arrived in February 1990.

The 79 TFS sent aircrews to participate in Cold Fire ‘90 events from 11 to 26 January 1990.

From 2 through 20 March 1990, aircrews of the 20 TFW participated in Red Flag 90-3.

The 79 TFS participated in a Mallet Blow exercise from 26 to 29 March 1990. These exercises tested the United Kingdom’s air defenses.

On 15 April, 20 TFW air and ground crews undertook Weapons System Evaluation Program (WSEP) training during Combat Hammer 90-7 at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.

Aircrews of the 79 TFS participated in a United Kingdom exercise called Elder Forest.

From 2 to 16 May, the 77 TFS deployed to Aviano AB, Italy, to participate in a Southern Region exercise called Dragon Hammer ‘90.

Aircrews of the 79 TFS flew in a Baltic maritime exercise called Brazen Deed on 12 June 1990.

The 870th Contingency Hospital, located at RAF Little Rissington, was assigned to the 20th TFW on 1 July 1990.

The 79 TFS hosted the 1990 NATO Tiger meet from 12 to 17 September 1990.

On 25 September the 2168th Communications Squadron, RAF Croughton, was assigned to the 20 TFW.

Iraq Invasion of Kuwait -- Desert Storm Begins

The 20 TFW had aircraft deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey for a Weapons Training Deployment in August 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and Desert Shield began. As the start of the air campaign neared, the wing reinforced its presence as all US aircraft at Incirlik were incorporated into the 7440th Wing (Provisional), Operation Proven Force, for the duration of the war. The wing also deployed four 42 ECS EF-111As and 80 personnel to Taif, Saudi Arabia, to support Operation Desert Storm.

First Kill

On 25 January 1991 the wing was once again up to four flying squadrons when the 42 ECS was reassigned to the 20th from the 66th Electronic Combat Wing.

On 16 January 1991 a 42 ECS EF-111A, operating from Taif, was credited with the first aerial kill of the war. It was attacked by an Iraqi Mirage fighter while flying a night mission near the Saudi-Iraq border. To defeat the Iraqi fighter, the EF-111A descended to minimum altitude on its Terrain Following Radar (TFR). The Mirage slammed into the ground while trying to follow the EF-111A.

On 17 January 1991, 20 TFW aircraft launched combat missions from both Turkey and Saudi Arabia and continued flying combat missions until the cease fire. The F-111s flying from Turkey flew night missions throughout the war, using the TFR to penetrate the dense anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) environment at altitudes around 200 feet for the first few nights. Crews who flew those first few terrifying nights said that the illumination from the AAA was so bright that they didn't need the TFR to avoid the ground. After the missile threat was suppressed, crews flew their attacks at altitudes around 20,000 feet, above the range of most Iraqi AAA systems.

After midnight 18 January, 20 TFW F-111Es raced into Iraq at low level to destroy four EW radar sites in northern Iraq and open an electronic gate. The sky was overcast at 3,000 feet with visibility at three miles with fog. Despite the poor weather, the 20th crews found the targets and delivered their ordnance, encountering little Iraqi resistance. These, and subsequent missions forced Iraqi commanders to contend with attacks from all directions and to respond to a second air front as well as a potential second ground front.

SrA David Herdick inspects the exhaust nozzles on the afterburners duct segment of a 20 TFW F-111E. USAF Photo

During the war, the F-111s attacked a range of targets, including power plants, petroleum refineries, airfield, nuclear, biological, chemical processing and storage facilities, and electronics sites throughout northern Iraq using 500 and 2,000 pound conventional bombs, and CBU 87/89 cluster bombs. Wing EF-111As flew both day and night missions, providing direct and stand off jamming for all coalition air forces. The skill and conspicuous bravery of wing aircrews was recognized in the award of numerous Silver Stars, Distinguished Flying Crosses, and Air Medals.

By the end of the conflict, Saudi based EF-111As had flown 219 combat missions, totaling 1,155 flying hours. The wing's six EF-111As based in Turkey flew 252 combat missions, totaling 704 hours, while the 23 F-111Es at Incirlik flew 456 combat missions, a total of 1,327 combat hours.

When Desert Storm ended, the wing had deployed 458 personnel, flown 1,798 combat sorties without a loss, and dropped 4,714 tons of ordnance.

Upper Heyford Becomes Desert Storm Evacuation Center

During this period, RAF Upper Heyford was designated as the Regional Evacuation Control Center. To accomplish this mission, the 20th activated the contingency hospital complex to support Desert Storm. The wing accomplished major facility upgrades at RAF Bicester, RAF Little Rissington, and RAF Croughton in record time. The wing provided food, transportation and lodging requirements, as well as personnel, recreational, legal, and financial services to support 5,000 augmenting personnel and an anticipated 2,000 patients.

EF-111A of the 42nd ECS prior to takeoff for deployment to Turkey in support of Operation Provide Comfort 23 September 1991. USAF Photo

In the first 6 months of 1991, Transient Alert personnel, in support of Desert Storm, serviced and launched the largest number of transient aircraft in the history of RAF Upper Heyford -- 1,408 aircraft.

On 9 March 1991, 27 of the 28 deployed F-111Es and EF-111As, along with the support personnel, returned home from Incirlik AB, Turkey.

The 42 ECS redeployed to Incirlik in support of Operation Provide Comfort on 6 April 1991.

In May, 42 ECS Avionics Maintenance Unit personnel -- deployed to Saudi Arabia since December 1990 -- returned to Upper Heyford. Other 42 ECS/AMU personnel rotated into Saudi in the same month.

Eight months after it was assigned to the 20 TFW, the 2168th Communications Squadron was redesignated the 620th Communications Squadron on 1 May 1991.

20th Wing Organizational Growth

On 16 July, three units were attached to the 20 TFW, the 850th Munitions Maintenance Squadron at RAF Welford, the 7501st Air Base Squadron at RAF Greenham Common, and Detachment 1, 7501st Air Base Squadron at RAF Welford.

Returning to normal operations, 20 TFW aircrews participated in the NATO Central Enterprise 91 exercise from 10 to 14 June 1991. On 19 July 1991, the 79 TFS took top honors at the International Air Tattoo held at RAF Fairford.

The wing held a homecoming celebration for 42 ECS aircrews and support personnel returning from Operation Provide Comfort deployment on 14 August 1991.

Wing aircrews flew in support of Elder Joust from 10 to 12 September 1991.

On 31 September 1991, another rotation of 42 ECS personnel to Saudi Arabia took place.

The 20th Fighter Wing Name Returns

The 20th Tactical Fighter Wing, along with the associated 55th, 77th, and 79th Tactical Fighter Squadrons were officially redesignated the 20th Fighter Wing and 55th, 77th, and 79th Fighter Squadrons on 1 October 1991. Also on that date, Detachment 17, 28th Weather Squadron was inactivated from the Air Weather Service and reactivated as the Weather Flight of the 20 FW.

During October 1991, wing air and ground crews competed in Gunsmoke 91 at Nellis AFB, Nevada. On 23 October, the Gunsmoke team returned home with top honors and the F-111 Bombing trophy.

Finally, the 2130th Communications Group, RAF Croughton, and the 2118th Communications Squadron, RAF Uxbridge, were realigned from direct reporting units of HQ Third Air Force to become units assigned to the 20th Fighter Wing on 1 November 1991.

20th Fighter Wing aircrews participated in Green Flag 92 from 27 February to 13 April. This gave most of the wing's aircrew the opportunity to deliver GBU-12 laser guided bombs in a near combat environment.

Last photo of the four squadrons together. USAF Photo

In May 1992, the 55th Fighter Squadron deployed to Aviano, Italy for Dragon Hammer 92.

Wing aircrews competed in Excalibur 92, with the 55 FS finishing eighth out of 23 squadrons entered.

Approximately a year and a half after regaining the 42 ECS, the wing lost it again when the 42nd was inactivated on 10 July 1992. The last EF-111A departed Upper Heyford in August 1992.

75th Anniversaries

The wing celebrated the 75th anniversary of the 55th Fighter Squadron from 7 to 9 August, 1992. Then, from 4 to 7 February, additional celebrations were held for the 79th Fighter Squadron and, in early March, for the 77th Fighter Squadron.

The wing team deployed to Green Flag 93 at Nellis AFB, Nevada from 2 March, 1993 to 2 April 1993. The first day night Green Flag incorporated night low level operations and live weapons delivery.

The 79th Fighter Squadron inactivated on 23 April 1993, with the last aircraft departing RAF Upper Heyford on 10 May.

On 4 June 1993, the 77th Fighter Squadron participated in Excalibur 93 taking first place by beating all other USAFE units, including F-15Es and F-16s.

The 55th Fighter Squadron participated in the Aalborg Air show, Netherlands, from 4 to 7 June 1993.

On 9 July, 1993, the 77th Fighter Squadron inactivated. The last aircraft departed in August.

The 55th Fighter Squadron deployed six aircraft to Incirlik AB, Turkey, for Dynamic Guard 93, from 20 September to 8 October 1993. This was the last operational deployment for the 20th Fighter Wing while at RAF Upper Heyford.

The last of the fighter squadrons, the 55th, inactivated on 15 October 1993.

Final Departure The AARDVARK Goes to Various Burial Grounds

On 19 October 1993, aircraft 68-120 went to the Imperial War Museum in Duxford where it is now on display. (68-120 is painted as The Chief; it was the wing's alternate flagship).

Last three F-111Es to leave marking the end of 20 FW's flight operations at RAF Upper Heyford.

The last of the wing's three aircraft departed Upper Heyford on 7 December 1993. The flagship of the 55th Fighter Squadron, aircraft 68-055 Heartbreaker, departed first. It went to Robbins AFB, Georgia, where it is now on display. The next aircraft, 68-061 The Last Roll of the Dice, departed for the Davis Monthan AFB "boneyard". Finally, aircraft 68-020 The Chief, flew to Hill AFB, Utah, where it is now on display at the Hill AFB Aerospace Museum.

In its last years at Upper Heyford, the F-111 finally showed that it was a mature system. The 20th's F-111Es had their best maintenance statistics in 13 years in 1992, and the best maintenance statistics in F-111 history in 1993. The fully mission capable (FMC) rate surged to 88.8%, while cost per flying hour dropped from $1,136 to just over $700. Also the wing scored an Excellent on its Nuclear Surety Inspections for 1991 and 1993, again showing ability and determination despite the draw down and closure of Upper Heyford.

Rebirth Begins at Shaw AFB

On 15 December 1993, the flight line at RAF Upper Heyford was closed. On 1 January 1994, the 20th Fighter Wing inactivated at RAF Upper Heyford and reactivated without personnel or equipment at Shaw AFB, South Carolina. (The 363rd Fighter Wing was inactivated at Shaw AFB on 31 December 1993.) The 55th, 77th, and 79th Fighter Squadrons reactivated on the same day. The 20th's forty-one years in England had slipped quietly into history. The 78 FS was reactivated on 1 January 1994.

55 FS A-10 during live fire training. USAF Photo

The 55 FS flew the A/OA-10 *THUNDERBOLT II and* 77th, 78 and 79 FSs flew the F-16CJ *Fighting Falcon*. On 3 January the 55 FS lost its A/OA-10 aircraft and personnel and would remain unmanned until 7 July 1996 when they received the F-16CJ. The 78 FS was deactivated on 30 June 2003. Initially the 55 FS was to be deactivated, but after some discussion it was decided to retain the 55 FS for several reasons. The 55 had been with the 20 FW since 1930 and is the oldest of the four squadrons. The Bushmasters were redesignated the 78 Reconnaissance Squadron on 19 May 2006 at Nellis AFB, NV.

Today's 20 FW

The 20th Operations Group (20 OG) employs approximately 80 F-16CJ fighter aircraft in conventional and anti-radiation suppression of enemy air defenses, strategic attack, counter air, air interdiction, joint maritime operations and combat search-and-rescue missions. The 20 OG has personnel assigned to the **20th Operations Support Squadron** "Mustangs," the **55th Fighter Squadron** "Fighting Fifty-Fifth," the **77th Fighter Squadron** "Gamblers," and the **79th Fighter Squadron** "Tigers." The 20th Operations Support Squadron (20 OSS) "Mustangs" are responsible for all airfield activities and associated support of the 20th Fighter Wing's many fighter missions. The 20 OSS is a diverse squadron, consisting of five unique flights: Airfield Operations, Weapons and Training, Current Operations, Intelligence and Weather.

20th Maintenance Group (MXG)

The 20th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (20 AMXS) is responsible for flightline maintenance of the wing's aircraft. The 20th AMXS prepares aircraft for combat operations worldwide to support Air Combat Command and warfighting commanders' taskings in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and flag, joint and combined exercises for the suppression of enemy air defenses. The squadron is also responsible for more than 1,000 people, a $1.1 million budget and more than 24,000 flight hours annually.

The 20th Component Maintenance Squadron (20 CMS) supports a combat-ready wing of aircraft and equipment. It maintains jet engines, accessory and avionics components and systems, and test, measurement and diagnostic equipment in support of three fighter squadrons and as a regional TMDE lab. The squadron is ready to respond to any no-notice, quick-reaction contingency tasking.

The 20th Equipment Maintenance Squadron (20 EMS) focuses efforts of approximately 500 assigned personnel in 15 Air Force Specialty Codes to support three combat-ready F-16CJ squadrons. It maintains aerospace ground equipment, armament systems and munitions for worldwide deployment. The 20th EMS performs aircraft phase inspections, corrosion control, engine oil analysis, nondestructive inspections and munitions storage and accountability, in addition to fabricating parts and tools.

The 20th Maintenance Operations Squadron (20 MOS) coordinates flying and maintenance schedules and tracks current status of the wing's aircraft. It establishes priorities for shared resources and provides weapons load, maintenance and safety training for more than 2,600 personnel in 35 Air Force Specialty Codes. The 20 MOS evaluates maintenance records, practices and personnel to gauge compliance with directives as well as the overall health of the fleet.

20th Mission Support Group (20 MSG)

Shaw AFB is a self-contained town, administered and maintained by the 20 FW through the Mission Support Group. In addition to supporting more than 5,400 military and civilian employees and 11,000 family members, the 20th MSG is also responsible for thousands of acres of land, including the 24-acre outdoor recreation area located 37 miles northwest on Lake Wateree, and the approximately 12,000-acre Poinsett Electronic Combat Range located about 10 miles southwest of the base.

The 20th Force Support Squadron consists of Five flights: Airmen and Family Services, Force Development Sustainment Services, Community Services and Manpower/Personnel Each flight is dedicated to supporting commanders and providing quality service. The squadron also provides a wide array of services to the Airmen their families, Civil Sevice Employees and military retirees. Responsibilities include childcare, before- and after-school youth programs, family daycare, an enlisted dining facility, lodging, outdoor recreation, a collocated club, golf, library services, bowling, base honor guard, mortuary affairs, equipment rental, private animal care clinic, rod and gun club, fitness center and skills development centers. Lake Wateree Outdoor Recreation complex, located 34 miles north of Shaw near Camden, SC, features rental cabins, boat and pontoon rentals and fishing facilities offering a full variety of water sporting events. The squadron's Prime Readiness in Base Services deployment teams maintain their worldwide mobility commitment to sustain deployed wing forces under any condition, providing food, lodging, fitness and recreation services.

The 20th Civil Engineer Squadron maintains and operates a 15,855-acre complex (dual runway, tactical bombing range and remote recreation area), supporting F-16CJ operations and Headquarters, Ninth Air Force at Shaw AFB. Its flights administer the resources, environmental, housing, fire protection, explosive ordnance disposal, disaster preparedness, engineering and operations programs. The base engineer emergency force, known as Prime BEEF, supports aircraft operations during wartime with runway repair, force bed-down capability, facility and utility maintenance support, air base recovery, construction management, crash rescue and fire suppression.

The 20th Communications Squadron provides network services, telephone systems, information management, airfield systems maintenance and visual information support to Shaw AFB units. Its four flights plan, manage, operate and maintain a wide variety of communications equipment supporting command and control, flying operations and daily administrative business practices for all base customers. The squadron also provides deployed communications support, identical to in-garrison communications services, for contingency operations.

The 20th Security Forces Squadron protects and defends Shaw AFB personnel and resources through the application of weapons systems security; police services; combat arms; information, industrial, and personnel security; military working dogs; air base defense; and antiterrorism operations 24 hours a day/seven days a week. The unit encompasses five installation entry points, a Visitor Control Center, law enforcement patrols, flight line security, an investigative branch, Combat Arms Training and the wing antiterrorism office. Members of the unit conduct law enforcement and community policing functions throughout the base and the Shaw Military Family Housing community. This includes enforcing all speed limits and rules of the road. The Pass and Registration office, located in the Support Center building, issues all school passes and flight line badges. The Combat Arms Flight administers all weapons training to wing personnel and the armory handles the storage of personally owned weapons.

The 20th Services Squadron provides essential human services to the community through a wide variety of activities, facilities and programs. These include childcare, before- and after-school youth programs, family daycare, an enlisted dining facility, lodging, outdoor recreation, a collocated club, golf, library services, bowling, base honor guard, mortuary affairs, equipment rental, private animal care clinic, rod and gun club, fitness center and skills development centers. Lake Wateree Outdoor Recreation complex, located 34 miles north of Shaw near Camden, SC, features rental cabins, boat and pontoon rentals and fishing facilities offering a full variety of water sporting events. The squadron's Prime Readiness in Base Services deployment teams maintain their worldwide mobility commitment to sustain deployed wing forces under any condition, providing food, lodging, fitness and recreation services.

The 20th Logistics Readiness Squadron provides integrated supply, transportation and logistics planning support to the 20 FW, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, and tenant units. The squadron consists of approximately 400 military and civilian personnel managing approximately 600 vehicles. For support of deployment operations, the squadron maintains the largest mobility equipment account in Air Combat Command, accounting for more than 275,000 units, and four air-transportable mobility-readiness spares packages for aircraft support. Additionally, the squadron orchestrates the timely deployment, employment and re-deployment of three F-16CJ fighter squadrons, support personnel and equipment.

The 20th Contracting Squadron is comprised of approximately 50 personnel -- enlisted, officer and civilian. Annually, they purchase $84 million worth of construction, services and supplies to support the missions of the 20 FW and Headquarters Ninth Air Force at Shaw AFB, as well as the United States Central Command Air Forces in Southwest Asia. They also manage the government purchase card and quality assurance programs. Military personnel are highly trained contingency contracting officers ready to deploy on a moment's notice and conduct contract operations in any peacetime or combat operation.

20th Medical Group (20 MDG)

The 20th Medical Group provides ambulatory medical and dental services to the 20 FW, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, Headquarters USAFCENT and Third Army Headquarters. It is an outpatient clinic with 24-hour ambulance transport service. Direct outpatient care is provided for pediatric to geriatric clients in an ambulatory setting. Patients represent all eligible beneficiaries: active duty and their family members, retirees and their family members and secretary designees.

The Medical Operations Squadron performs patient care-related activities. Personnel in this squadron collaborate with all members of the 20th Medical Group to perform or arrange for the full scope of patient care services for our beneficiary population. This squadron is divided into four flights: Pediatrics, Family Practice, Medical Services, and Mental Health Flight.

INSIGNIA

20 PG

1933-1934 Unofficial

20 PG/FG/FBG

1934 - 1955

20 FBW

1951 - 1958

20 TFW

1958 - 1991

20 FW

1991 - Present

20 OSS

? - Present

78 PS - RS

1933 - 2003

42 ECS

1984 - 1992

55 PS

c. 1930 - 1932

55 PS & FS

1932 - 1991

55 FBS

1952 -1958
(Unofficial)

55 TFS

1958 - 1991
(Unofficial)

55 FS

1991 - Present
(Approved 1991)

77 PS & FS

1931 - 1950

77 FBS

1950 - 1958

77 TFS

1958 - 1991

77 FS

1991 - Present

79 PS & FS

(1933 Unofficial)(1943 Approved) - c. 1952

79 FBS

c. 1952 - 1958

79 TFS

1958 - 1991

79 FS

1991 - Present

20th Maintenance Group

20th Mission Support Group

20th Medical Group

The Aerospace Medicine Squadron supports the operational mission by enhancing the medical health of its people, ensuring a fit force, preventing disease and injury, protecting the environment and anticipating medical contingencies. This squadron is divided into five flights: Flight Medicine, Public Health, Aerospace Physiology Training, Bioenvironmental Engineering and Health Promotion.

The Dental Squadron supports the operational mission by enhancing the dental health of active duty personnel, ensuring a fit force and preventing disease and injury. This squadron is divided into three flights: Clinical Dentistry, Dental Support and Dental Labratory.

The Medical Support Squadron provides diagnostic and therapeutic services, financial and manpower support, managed care services, medical logistics, medical information services and personnel and administrative services in support of the entire medical group. The squadron is comprised of six flights: Commander's Support Staff, Medical Information Services, Managed Care, Financial Services, Medical Logistics and Diagnostics and Therapeutics.

Missions Performed by the 20 FW

Suppression of Enemy Defenses (SEAD): This is the primary mission of the 20th. To accomplish its mission the 20th flies the Block 50 F-16 using the High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM) targeting system to suppress enemy air defenses in the form of Surface to Air Missile (SAM) and Anti-Aircraft Artillery (AAA).

F-16 of the 79 FS launches an AGM-65D Maverick missile During Exercise Combat Hammer, Hill AFB, UT 7 August 2002. USAF Photo

Destruction of Enemy Defenses (DEAD): To destroy enemy air defenses the 20th employs an assortment of weapons that include the Joint Direct Attack Munition (GBU-31, GBU-38), Joint Air to Surface Standoff Missile (AGM-158), Combined Effect Munition (CBU-87 / CBU-103), Sensor Fuzed Weapon (CBU-97 / CBU-105), Maverick missile (AGM-65) and laser guided bombs (GBU-10, GBU-12) to hard kill enemy SAM and AAA sites.

Counterair: The 20th performs Counterair very well and has been used to perform "Operation Noble Eagle" missions over locations including NY, Washington, DC, Crawford, Texas and Shuttle launches to name a few. To perform this mission the 20th utilizes the AIM-9 Sidewinder, and the AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-To-Air Missile (AMRAAM).

Close Air Support: To accomplish missions against ground based targets the 20th uses its entire arsenal of available systems that includes traditional "dumb" bombs in addition to all the advanced weapons used in SEAD and DEAD missions.

Systems

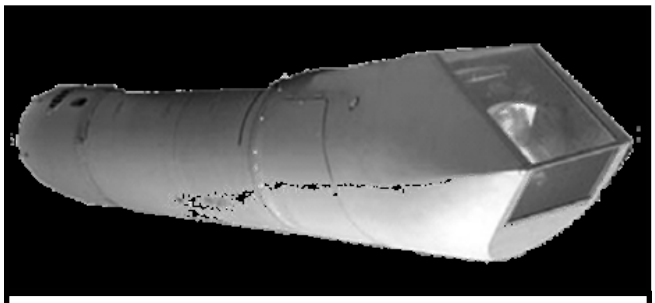
Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS) equips the aircrew helmet visor with a heads-up display data allowing the pilot to select a target without changing aircraft direction. By simply looking in the direction of the target, all of the aircraft's sensors and weapons can be brought to bear as long as the target is within the weapon's parameters.

Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System

Night Vision Goggles (NVG) allow the pilot to identify targets and terrain in the middle of the night. They give F-16CJ pilots a decisive edge during the heart of darkness by allowing them to fly day-time tactics. The system greatly increases the pilot's ability to provide close air support to ground forces during night operations.

The HARM Targeting System (HTS) pod allows the pilot to detect and radar emitting threat and geo-locate their position for targeting by the HARM or any of the F-16s other weapons.

The LINK-16 datalink system provides the ability to share targeting information within the flight and with other fighters and command and control platforms. This greatly increases situational awareness while significantly reducing the amount of voice radio communication required. This system is used to monitor the location of friendly aircraft and detect and engage enemy aircraft with air-to-air missiles. In addition to displaying the location of aircraft the pilot is provided information on activities of other friendly aircraft such as what they are targeting. With this information chances of accidentally targeting friendly forces is reduced and weapons are better allocated as multiple aircraft are prevented from targeting the same target.



Sniper Advanced Targeting Pod USAF Photo

The Sniper Advanced Targeting Pod has the ability to generate its own precision coordinates that enable the use of GPS and laser guided weapons. The system allows the pilot to zoom in on a target using video and then to employ weapons using coordinates generated by the Sniper Pod.

Deployment -- the Name of the Game

In the 21st Century the 20 FW is heavily involved in deployed operations. At times the 20th can have close to 1,000 of its personnel deployed. These deployments are more often than not non-flying Airmen of the wing. The Airmen are usually Expeditionary Combat Support personnel. These support personnel range from civil engineer, firefighting, security and transport personnel. Deployed transport personnel are now being used to augment Army convoy duty involving both driving of vehicles and providing protection for those convoys. The deployment of large portions of 20th manpower does not result in reduced operations of the wing. Despite deployments the 20th continues to maintain the highest level of preparedness to perform its primary mission.

20 FW Airmen performing convoy duty somewhere in the Middle East. USAF Photo

Exercises

Since moving to Shaw in 1994 the 20th has maintained its role at the forefront of protecting American interests at home and aboard. As it always has been, training is a big part of a flying unit. The 20th over the years since returning to CONUS has taken part and continues to take part in numerous exercises.

Air Warrior II held at Fort Polk, Louisiana is a joint and total force exercise designed to give deploying units a realistic training environment. The exercise incorporates air power with Army maneuvers to help Army and Air Force units work better together in the field. Training also incorporates simulated interaction with the population of the country where US forces are deployed. On the ground about 1,200 role players populate villages within the training area. The role players dress, speak and stay “in character” during the entire exercise. The entire environment is created to simulate as realistically as possible deployment conditions even including newspapers and electronic media with their associated propaganda. Units from the 20th routinely participate in this training.

Amalgam Arrow exercise is held at Peterson AFB, Colorado about once every month to allow North American Aerospace Defense Command personnel to hone their crisis response skills in a training exercise. The exercises look to simulate incidents such as an aircraft deviating from its flight path and stopping communication with the FAA. NORAD determines where the aircraft is headed and if fighter aircraft need to be sent to investigate.

If fighters are sent they then relay information about the aircraft and its occupants to allow NORAD to determine what actions should be taken. Actions taken may be just to provide assistance to the troubled aircraft or prevent hostile intentions. The exercises may involve computer based simulations or involve actual aircraft. 20th FW assets have been called upon from time to time to participate in these training exercises.

79 FS F-16 taxi after returning from a training mission during Exercise Eastern Falcon held at Ahmed Al Jaber AB Al Ahmadi Kuwait in March 2004. USAF Photo

Initial Link and Eastern Falcon were two exercises the 55 FS took part in during February and March of 2006. The exercises were carried out in the Middle East around the Arabian Gulf. Initial Link simulated air-to-air and air-to-ground combat and Eastern Falcon focused on basic fighter maneuvers, air combat training and large force employment sorties. Lt. Col. Hathaway commander of the 55 FS deployed F-16s on 12 February to Southwest Asia for Initial Link. Squadron aircraft then moved on to Eastern Falcon on 3 March. These exercises involved large force missions of various fighter types from coalition partners. Exercises like these allow the 20t FW to maintain the ability to quickly put forces on the ground in the Middle East to carry out its SEAD and DEAD mission whenever and wherever they need to.

F-16 of the 55 FS (still carries 78 FS's markings) flying over Tyndall AFB, FL in support of Exercise Combat Archer on 2 September 2003. USAF Photo

Combat Archer is an air-to-air Weapons System Evaluation Program (WSEP) that is conducted at Tyndall AFB, Florida run by the 53rd Weapons Evaluation Group. This program exercises and evaluates the complete air-to-air weapons capability of Air Force combat aircraft. One of the benefits of this program is that it gives aircrews one of the few if not the only opportunity to live fire their weapons in a training environment. In addition to the benefits gained by the aircrew the program also provides weapons system managers the ability to test system performance, capabilities and shortcomings. In June 2006 about 145 personnel from 55 FS spent two weeks taking part in Combat Archer. The 55th had their aircraft weapons systems, software, pilots, maintainer, loaders and ammo personnel evaluated by the 83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron. During this program the 55th flew almost 300 sorties. Nine missiles were fired by squadron aircraft and all hit their targets. This was a typical deployment for a 20th FW squadron deployment to this program.

Combat Hammer is an air-to-ground Munitions Evaluation Program that is conducted at Hill AFB, Utah. These exercises are held throughout the year. The program consists of one concentrated two-week period at the Utah range and three or four evaluations at Eglin AFB, FL's test range. In August of 2006, the 55 FS deployed to Combat Hammer at Hill AFB and employed nearly $9 million in weapons. They were the first operational F-16 unit to employ the AGM-158 Joint Air to Surface Standoff Missile. Additionally, they fired and dropped live HARM, JDAM, Maverick, CBU-103, CBU-105, MK-82, MK-84, GBU-10, and GBU-12. As with Combat Archer all aspects of weapons delivery are evaluated from target intelligence to delivery on the target. A typical deployment was by the

F-16 of the 55 FS on the flight line at Nellis AFB, NV during Exercise Combat Hammer. A1C Mike Heywood straps in 1st Lt. Matthew Garrison on 7 August 2002. USAF Photo

77th FS in May 2006 when 140 airmen and 15 F-16s deployed. Earlier in April eight people from the 20th EMS deployed to Hill to build bombs in preparation for the exercise.

Iron Falcon is a month long exercise held at the Emirate Air Defense Air Warfare Center in the United Arab Emirates. The exercise is used to provide upgrade training for mission commanders of US and Coalition forces. It provides an opportunity to build strong relationships with coalition nations. The mission commanders that are being trained will be the leaders of the future. In the future these attendees will be able benefit from the relationships they built with other coalition members to work together successfully when they are leaders of their respective air forces. In November and December 2006 the 79 FS deployed six F-16 aircraft and 140 pilots and maintainers to Iron Falcon. The squadron flew 143 sorties, day and night, for a total of 299 flying hours during the 24 day exercise.

The Falcon Air Meet is a three week exercise in Jordan where F-16s from all over the world come to compete in air-to-air and air-to-ground events. In May 2007 the 55th Fighter Squadron deployed to Jordan to participate as well as participants from Belgium and Turkey. Over 13 countries observed in 2007 for future participation as the air meet continues to grow.

The 20th also routinely deploys to Red Flag and Maple Flag (Canadian version of Red Flag) and other exercises too numerous and frequent to cover on these pages. But let it be clear the 20th continues to take every opportunity to hone its fighting edge to maintain its well earned position in today's Air Force.

Putting Training to Work

In September 1994 the 20 FW provided fighter cover for US operations in Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy. This operation restored democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide who had been ousted in September 1991 by military forces within Haiti. The 20th FW's support of this type of mission is typical of the tasking the 20 FW has been supporting since returning to CONUS in 1994. In the following paragraphs are more examples of the 20 FW's missions.

Operation Northern and Southern Watch

Throughout the 1990s the 20 FW routinely rotated squadrons to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq. Southern Watch began in August 1992 and ended with the invasion of Iraq in 2003. 20 FW squadrons rotated in and out of the Middle East to support enforcement of the no-fly zone.

77 & 78 FS F-16s on patrol 7 April 1998 near the Iraqi border as part of Operation Southern Watch. They are carying Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared for Night (LATNTIRN) systems and are fitted with AIM-9 Sidewinder, AGM-88 Harm (mid-wing) and AIM-120 AMRAAM Slammer missles on the wing tips. USAF Photo

55th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (EFS) F-16 preparing for its final mission of Northern Watch from Incirlik AB, Turkey on 12 April 2003. For 12 years the 20th FW had been rotating squadrons to Turkey in support of Northern Watch. With the success of Operation Iraqi Freedom the patrols enforcing the No-Fly Zone were no longer needed. USAF Photo

The 20 FW routinely sent squadrons to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey supporting the no-fly zone in northern Iraq between January 1997 and March 2003. The 55 FS under the command of Lt Col Jack Forsythe left Turkey on 7 April 2003 bringing to a close six and one half years of 20 FW squadron rotations to Turkey.

SSgt Rob Anson replaces the argon bottle in an AIM-9 missle on 19 April 1999. Anson is deployed with the 78 EFS to Aviano AB, Italy in support of Operation Allied Force. USAF Photo

Operation Allied Force

20 FW was called to send F-16s in support of NATO operations during the Kosovo crisis in April 1999. On 4 May 1999 an F-16 91-0353 from the 78th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron flying out of Aviano Air Base, Italy, shot down a Yugoslavian MiG-29 (aircraft number 109). On 10 June 1999 NATO air operations were suspended.

MiG-29 aircraft number 109 shot down by 78 FS F-16 on 4 May 1999.

Operation Noble Eagle

After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, the Defense Department developed Noble Eagle to protect US soil in the War on Terrorism. The 20 FW has been tasked with providing patrols over New York City, Washington, DC and any other location the wing is called upon to protect. In addition to Noble Eagle tasking the 20th provides fighter cover for the President (POTUS) when traveling and at Camp David.

20 FW F-16CJ wing flag ship performing NORAD Operation Noble Eagle mission over New York City, NY on 24 September 2003. Armed with AIM-120C (AMRAM) and AIM-9 Sidewinder missles, and equipped with 370-gal fuel tanks. Central Park is visible bellow the aircraft. USAF Photo

Lt Col. David R. Stillwell Commander of the 77 FS during an Operation Noble Eagle mission over New York City, NY 24 September 2003. USAF Photo

Operation Enduring Freedom

The 20th has been called to send both personnel and aircraft in support of operations in Afghanistan. One such deployment was in January 2007 when 150 Airmen deployed as part of Air Expeditionary Force. Personnel from the 20th Logistic Readiness and Civil Engineering Squadrons deployed for more than 180 days. The 20 LRS deploys personnel from logistics planning, fuel, parts, cargo and personnel movement, convoys, and vehicle maintenance to meet the needs of operations in Afghanistan. The 20 CES sends personnel to perform work in firefighting, utilities, readiness, power production, pest management, engineering and liquid fuels. These deployments often remove more than one third of a squadron's personnel to fulfill requirements. During the October 2009 to February 2010 the 79 FS deployed its aircraft and airmen along with maintainers from the 20 MXG to Bagram AB, Afganistan. This was only the second time an F-16 unit had deployed to Bagram AB

Operation Iraqi Freedom

In February 2003 the 20 FW deployed approximately 1,300 service members and 15 aircraft to the 363 AEW at Prince Sultan AB. This deployment was in support of US actions for the removal of Saddam Hussein from power. In May of 2008 the 77 FS deployed its aircraft and airmen along with maintainers from the 20 MXG to Joint Base Ballad in support of OIF where they conducted operations until relieved by the 55 FS in October of 2008. The 55th carried out operations in Iraq until January of 2009. During 2009 the three squadrons concentrated on regaining aircrew skill sets that atrophy during a combat deployment, in preparation for the next round of deployments. During 2010 the 55th and 77th were once again up to bat in Iraq. The 77 FS again was the lead 20th unit deploying to Joint Base Balad, Iraq in January 2010. The 77th carried out operations there until relieved by the 55 FS in May of 2010. The 55th finished its tour in iraq in October 2010.

F-16CJ aircraft of the 78 and 77 FS wait on a hot ramp while maintenance crews pull safety pins on their weapons stores prior to a mission during Operation Iraqi Freedom 21 March 2003.

USAF Photo

77tFS F-16 takes off for a mission at Prince Sultan AB, during a sand storm on 25 March 2003. USAF Photo

Korean Theater Security Package

The 79 FS deployed its aircraft and airmen including 20 MXG maintenance Airmen to Kunsan AB, Republic of Korea from January to April 2008. The purpose of the deployment was to provide an increase in combat readiness for US forces located on the Korean peninsula. The 79th arrived at Kunsan when the base was taking part in the January 2008, Peninsula-wide Combat Readiness Exercise. Within 48 hours of arriving the 79th began flying sorties in support of the exercise earning it the praise of Lt Gen Stephen G. Wood, commander of the Seventh Air Force. General Wood stated that the 79th's actions were "pure platinum" and "best seen to date."

20th FIGHTER WING STATISTICS

Wing Lineage

Designated 20th Fighter Wing	28 Jul 1947
Organized	15 Aug 1947
Redesignated 20th Fighter Bomber Wing	20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 20th Tactical Fighter Wing	8 July 1958
Redesignated 20th Fighter Wing	1 Oct 1991

Wing Components

Group. 20th Fighter (later, Fighter-Bomber; Operations)	Assigned	15 Aug 1947	8 Feb 1955
	Detached	26 Jul 1950	c. 17 Dec 1950
	Detached	25 Apr 1951	10 Oct 1951
	Assigned	31 Mar 1992	1 Jan 1994
	Assigned	1 Jan 1994	Present
42nd Electronic Combat	Assigned	1 Jul 1983	1 Jun 1985
	Attached	2 Jun 1985	24 Jan 1991
	Assigned	25 Jan 1991	1 Jul 1992
55th Fighter-Bomber (later, Tactical Fighter; Fighter):	Attached	15 Nov 1952	7 Feb 1955
	Assigned	8 Feb 1955	31 Mar 1992
77th Fighter-Bomber (later, Tactical Fighter; Fighter):	Attached	15 Nov 1952	7 Feb 1955
	Assigned	8 Feb 1955	31 Mar 1992
79th Fighter-Bomber (later, Tactical Fighter; Fighter):	Attached	15 Nov 1952	7 Feb 1955
	Assigned	8 Feb 1955	31 Mar 1992

Wing Station Listing

Base	From	To
Shaw Field, South Carolina	15 Aug 1947	19 Nov 1951
Langley AFB, Virginia	19 Nov 1951	22 May 1952
RAF Wethersfield, England	1 Jun 1952	30 Jun 1970
RAF Upper Heyford, England	30 Jun 1970	1 Jan 1994
Shaw AFB, South Carolina	1 Jan 1994	Present

Wing Assigned Aircraft

NORTH AMERICAN P-51	*MUSTANG*	Aug 1947	Feb 1948
REPUBLIC F-84D	*THUNDERJET*	Feb 1948	Dec 1957
REPUBLIC F-84G	*THUNDERJET*	Dec 1951	Dec 1957
REPUBLIC F-84F	*THUNDERSTREAK*	Jun 1955	Dec 1957
NORTH AMERICAN F-100D/F	*SUPER SABRE*	Jun 1957	Jan 1971
GENERAL DYNAMICS F-111E	*AARDVARK*	Sep 1970	Oct 1993
GRUMMAN EF-111A	*RAVEN*	Feb 1985	Jul 1985
REPUBLIC A-10	*THUNDERBOLT II*	Jan 1994	Jul 1996
LOCKHEED MARTIN F-16	*FIGHTING FALCON*	Jan 1994	Present

Assignments

Ninth Air Force		15 Aug 1947
Fourteenth Air Force		1 Feb 1949
Tactical Air Command		1 Aug 1950
Ninth Air Force	Attached to Tactical Air Division, Provisional, 25 Apr - 10 Oct 1951	22 Jan 1951
	Attached Tactical Air Command 6-30 Nov 1951	
Tactical Air Command	Attached to 49 Air Division, Operational, 12 Feb 1952-	1 Dec 1951
United States Air Forces in Europe	Remained attached to 49 Air Division, Operational	31 May 1952
Third Air Force	Remained attached to 49 Air Division, Operational [later, 49 Air Division (Operational)], to 1 Jul 1956	5 Jun 1952
Seventeenth Air Force		1 Jul 1961
Third Air Force		1 Sep 1963
Ninth Air Force		1 Jan 1994

Wing Decorations

AIR FORCE OUTSTANDING UNIT AWARDS

01 Jul 1956	30 Sep 1957
01 Mar 1963	31 Dec 1964
01 Jan 1965	31 Mar 1966
01 Jul 1968	31 Mar 1970
01 Sep 1970	30 Jun 1972
31 Mar 1973	30 Jun 1974
01 Jul 1977	30 Jun 1979
01 Jul 1981	30 Jun 1983
01 Jul 1987	30 Jun 1989
01 Jul 1990	30 Jun 1992
22 Jan 1991	12 Mar 1991
01 Oct 1992	30 Sep 1992
01 Jan 1994	31 Dec 1994
01 Jun 1997	31 May 1999
01 Jun 1999	31 May 2001
16 Jul 2007	31 May 2009

Campaign Streamers.

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Clockwise: Maj. Binge conducts the USAF Band (M. Binge), Scene from filming of 007 movie Octopussy at RAF Upper Heyford (A. Sevigny), US Ambassador's wife Mrs. Douglas shown F-84 during 20th FBW deployment to RAF Manston (W. Preble), 20th FBW Chorus (M. Bringe), 20th FW deployed for Operations Allied Force to Aviano, Italy (USAF), 20th TFW F-111E with full weapons load (USAF), Party by people of Essex England for the 20th TFW (R. Toliver), Wing Commander's F-100 (20th FWA), 20th FG P-51D Biggs Fld TX (20th FWA), Working on F-84 while deployed to RAF Manston (W. Preble). Center 20th FW F-16 Noble Eagle over Washington, DC (USAF)

20th WING COMMANDERS

Colonel Phineas K Morrill, Jr
15 Aug 1947 - 10 Oct 1951

Colonel Reginald F C Vance
11 Oct 1951 - 21 Oct 1951

Colonel John A Dunning
22 Oct 1951 - 5 Jun 1955

Colonel Arthur J Sailsbury
6 Jun 1955 - 3 Apr 1957

Colonel Ray F. Toliver
4 Apr 1957 - 20 Jun 1959

Colonel Jay T Robbins
21 Jun 1959 - 25 Jun 1961

No Photo Available

Colonel Wendell J Kelly
26 Jun 1961 - 8 Jul 1961

Colonel Royal N Baker
9 Jul 1961 - 8 Jun 1963

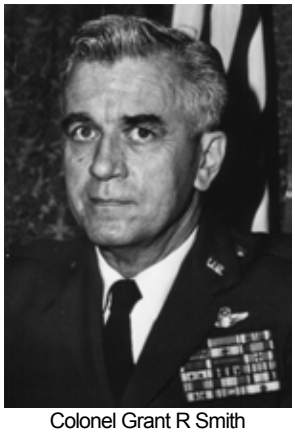
Brig General John W Baer
9 Jun 1963 - 25 Jun 1965

Colonel Ernest T Cragg
26 Jun 1965 - 9 Jul 1966

Colonel Paul C Watson
10 Jul 1966 - 11 Aug 1966

Colonel Edmund B Edwards
12 Aug 1966 - 10 Jul 1968

Colonel Joseph A Hagerman
11 Jul 1968 - 31 Mar 1970


Colonel Grant R Smith
1 Apr 1970 - 15 Jun 1971

Brig General Richard M Baughn
15 Jun 1971 - 1 Feb 1973

Brig General William C Norris
2 Feb 1973 - 11 Nov 1973

Colonel James H Ahmann
12 Nov 1973 - 16 Aug 1974

Colonel Kenneth D Burns
17 Aug 1974 - 22 Jun 1975

Colonel Robert D Anderson
23 Jun 1975 - 8 Jun 1977

Colonel Gerald D Larson
8 Jun 1977 - 29 Mar 1978

Colonel Jerry W Tietge
30 Mar 1978 - 24 Feb 1980

Colonel Merrill A McPeak
25 Feb 1980 - 26 May 1981

Brig General Fred R Nelson
27 May 1981 - 16 Feb 1984

Brig General Dale W Thompson Jr.
17 Feb 1984 - 30 Jun 1986

Colonel Graham E Shirley
30 Jun 1986 - 8 Jul 1988

Colonel Lee A Downer
8 Jul 1988 - 9 Feb 1990

Colonel Lawrence E Stellmon
9 Feb 1990 - 20 Jul 1992

Colonel Terry J Schwalier
20 Jul 1992 - 16 Jul 1993

Colonel Randall M Schmidt
16 Jul 1993 - 1 Jan 1994

Brig General John B Hall
1 Jan 1994 - 5 Aug 1994

Brig General James D Latham
5 Aug 1994 - 30 Aug 1995

Colonel John Rosa
30 Aug 1995 - 28 Jul 1997

Colonel Daniel P Leaf
28 Jul 1997 - 24 Nov 1998

Colonel Daniel J Darnell
24 Nov 1998 - Jan 2000

Colonel Dana T Atkins
14 Jan 2000 - 22 Jun 2001

Colonel William J Rew
22 Jun 2001 - 18 Feb 2003

Colonel Sam Angelella
18 Feb 2003 - 24 Jun 2004

Colonel Philp M Ruhlman
24 Jun 2004 - 25 Aug 2005

Colonel James W Hyatt
26 Aug 2005 - 28 Feb 2007

Colonel James N Post III
28 Feb 2007 - 29 Oct 2008

Colonel Joseph T. Guastella Jr.
29 Oct 2008 - 4 Jun 2010

Colonel Charles L. Moore
4 Jun Oct 2010 - _____

FIGHTER SQUADRON STATISTICS

55th FIGHTER SQUADRON

Lineage

Organized as 55th Aero Squadron	9 Aug 1917
Redesignated 55th Aero Construction Squadron	25 Aug 1917
Redesignated 467th Aero Construction Squadron	1 Feb 1918
Demobilized	16 Mar 1919
Reconstituted, and redesignated 55th Pursuit Squadron	24 Mar 1923
Activated	15 Nov 1930
Redesignated 55th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter)	6 Dec 1939
Redesignated 55th Pursuit Squadron (interceptor)	12 Mar 1941
55th Fighter Squadron	15 May 1942
Inactivated	18 Oct 1945
Activated	29 Jul 1946
Redesignated 55th Fighter Bomber Squadron	20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 55th Tactical Fighter Squadron	8 Jul 1958
Redesignated 55th Fighter Squadron	1 Oct 1991
Inactivated	30 Dec 1993
Reactivated	1 Jan 1994

Assignments

Unknown,	9 Aug 1917	c. Nov 1917
Third Aviation Instruction Center	c. Nov 1917	c. May 1918
Aerial Gunnery School	c. May 1918	c. Nov 1918
2nd Air Depot	c. Nov 1918	c. Feb 1919
Unknown	c. Feb 1919	16 Mar 1919
2nd Bombardment Wing (attached to 20th Pursuit Group)	15 Nov 1930	31 Mar 1931
8th Pursuit Group (attached to 20th Pursuit Group)	1 Apr 1931	14 Jun 1932
20th Pursuit (later Fighter) Group	15 Jun 1932	18 Oct 1945
20th Fighter (later Fighter Bomber) Group	29 Jul 1946	7 Feb 1955
20th Fighter Bomber (later Tactical Fighter) Wing	8 Feb 1955	30 Sep 1991
20th Fighter Wing	1 Oct 1991	30 Mar 1992
20th Operations Group	31 Mar 1992	30 Dec 1993
20th Operations Group	1 Jan 1994	Present

Stations

Kelly Field, Texas	9 Aug 1917	21 Sep 1917
Hazelhurst Field, New York	21 Sep 1917	13 Oct 1917
Issoudun, France	4 Nov 1917	16 May 1918
St Jean deMonts, France	16 May 1918	6 Nov 1918
Latrecey, France	6 Nov 1918	c. 8 Feb 1919
Garden City, New York	4 Mar 1919	16 Mar 1919
Mather Field, California	15 Nov 1930	4 Oct 1932
Barksdale Field, Louisiana	31 Oct 1932	19 Nov 1939
Moffett Field, California	19 Nov 1939	9 Sep 1940
Hamilton Field, California	9 Sep 1940	22 Feb 1942
Wilmington, North Carolina	22 Feb 1942	23 Apr 1942
Morris Field, North Carolina	23 Apr 1942	7 Aug 1942
Drew Field, Florida	7 Aug 1942	30 Sep 1942
Paine Field, Washington	30 Sep 1942	1 Jan 1943
March Field, California	1 Jan 1943	11 Aug 1943
Wittering, England	27 Aug 1943	c. Apr 1944
King's Cliffe, England	c. Apr 1944	11 Oct 1945
Camp Kilmer, New Jersey	16 Oct 1945	18 Oct 1945
Biggs Field, Texas	29 Jul 1946	25 Oct 1946
Shaw Field, South Carolina	25 Oct 1946	19 Nov 1951
Langley Air Force Base, Virginia	19 Nov 1951	22 May 1952
Wethersfield, England	1 Jun 1952	9 Aug 1955
Sculthorpe, England	9 Aug 1955	27 Apr 1956

Wethersfield, England	27 Apr 1956	1 Jun 1970
Upper Heyford, England	1 Jun 1970	30 Dec 1993
Shaw AFB, South Carolina	1 Jan 1994	Present

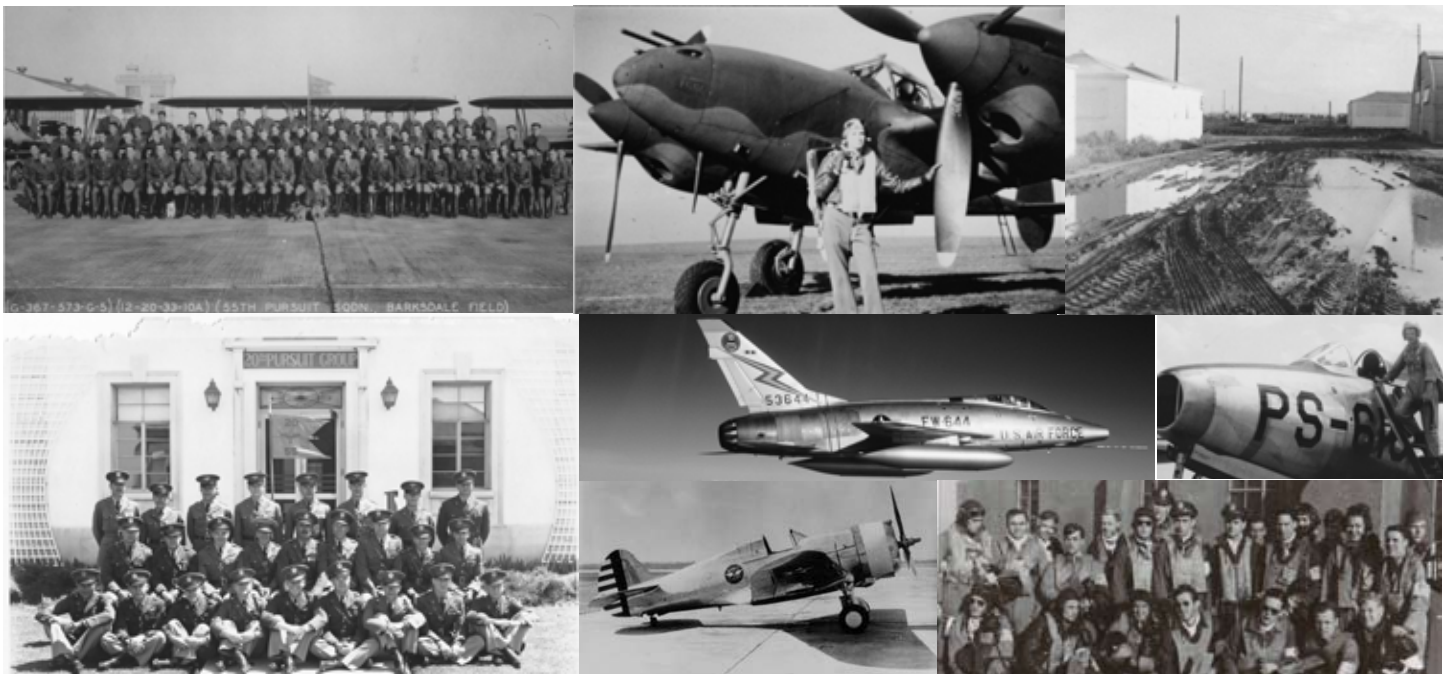
Assigned Aircraft

BOEING P-12		Nov 1993	Oct 1932
BOEING P-26	*PEASHOOTER*	Oct 1932	Sep 1935
CURTIS P-36	*MOHAWK*	Sept1935	Sep 1940
CURTIS P-40	*WARHAWK*	Sep 1940	Feb 1942
BELL P-39	*AIRACOBRA*	Feb 1942	May 1942
REPUBLIC P-43	*LANCER*	Feb 1942	Sep 1942
LOCKHEED P-38	*LIGHTNING*	May 1942	Jul 1944
NORTH AMERICAN P-51D	*MUSTANG*	Jul 1944	Feb 1948
REPUBLIC F-84D/F/G	*THUNDERJET, THUNDERSTREAK*	Feb 1948	Dec 1957
NORTH AMERICAN F-100D/F	*SUPER SABRE*	Jun 1957	Jan 1971
GENERAL DYNAMICS F-111E	*AARDVARK*	Sep 1970	15 Oct 1993
REPUBLIC A/OA-10	*THUNDERBOLT*	Jan 1994	3 Jul 1996
LOCKHEED MARTIN F-16	*FIGHTING FALCON*	7 Jul 1997	Present

Commanders

Captain Gev E Lovell	9 Aug 1917	c.8 Sep 1917
1st Lt. Arthur W Betts	c. 8 Sep 1917	24 Sep 1917
Capt Gustave G Baetcke	24 Sep 1917	16 Mar 1919
1st Lt Clarence E Crumine	15 Nov 1930	24 Aug 1934
1st Lt Earl W Barnes	24 Aug 1934	29 Mar 1935
Captain Armin F Herold	29 Mar 1935	7 Oct 1936
Captain Morris R Nelson	7 Oct 1936	1 Jun 1939
1st Lt Avelin P Tacon, Jr	1 Jun 1939	Unknown
Major Paul Lobingier	c. Oct 1942	12 Jan 1943
Major David R McGovern	12 Jan 1943	29 Dec 1943
Major Frank C Clark	29 Dec 43	8 Mar 1944
Major Donald H McAuley	8 Mar 1944	24 April 1944
Lieut Colonel Cy Wilson	24 Apr 1944	25 Jun 1944
Major Martin L Low	25 Jun 1944	6 Dec 1944
Captain Richard Gatterdam	6 Dec 1944	23 Mar 1945
Major Jack C Price	23 Mar 1945	4 Apr 1945
Major Maurice C Cristadoro, Jr	4 Apr 1995	22 Jul 1945
Major Robert H Riemensnider	22 Jul 1945	18 Oct 1945
Lieut Colonel Franklin A Nichols	29 Jul 1946	5 Sep 1946
Major John M Winkler	5 Sep 1946	30 Oct 1946
Lieut Colonel Alfred J Ball	30 Oct 1946	8 Jan 1947
Lieut Colonel Richard Cline	8 Jan 1947	30 Apr 1947
Lieut Colonel Francis S Gabreski	30 Apr 1947	4 Aug 1947
Major James C Hare	4 Aug 1947	2 Sep 1947
Lieut Colonel Melvin J Nelson	2 Sep 1947	5 May 1948
Major Harold A Lind	5 May 1948	21 Jun 1948
Lieut Colonel Elmer E McTaggart	21 Jun 1948	c. Oct 1948
Major Charles W Lasko	c. Oct 1948	c. Apr 1949
Lieut Colonel Gilbert O Waymond, Jr	c. Apr 1949	12 May 1949
Major Charles W Lasko	12 May 1949	c. Nov 1949
Lieut Colonel William A Mitchell, Jr	c. Nov 1949	24 Jul 1951
Major Joseph A Hageman	24 Jul 1951	6 Aug 1954
Major John S Bradley	6 Aug 1954	10 Mar 1955
Major John J Kropenick	10 Mar 1955	1 May 1956
Major Max T Beall	1 May 1956	15 Jun 1956
Lieut Colonel Michael C McCarthy	15 Jun 1956	15 Mar 1957
Lieut Colonel Charles L Miller	15 Mar 1957	2 Nov 1957
Lieut Colonel Raymond L Flint	2 Nov 1957	1 Jan 1959
Lieut Colonel Raymond R Stewart	1 Jan 1959	22 Jun 1961
Major Tony M Greget	22 Jun 1961	30 Jun 1963
Major Walter P Paluch, Jr	30 Jun 1963	22 Jul 1964

Colonel Ivan H Dethman	22 Jul 1964	8 Jul 1966
Lieut Colonel Robert L Jones	8 Jul 1966	10 May 1967
Lieut Colonel Richard B Davis	10 May 1967	13 Jun 1968
Major Lawrence W Whitford	13 Jun 1968	12 Sep 1968
Major Donald G Duff	12 Sep 1968	1 Nov 1968
Lieut Colonel George G Yeager	1 Nov 1968	30 Dec 1969
Lieut Colonel Elwood L Sanders	30 Dec 1969	c. Jan 1971
Lieut Colonel Kenneth T Blank	c. Jan 1971	27 Aug 1971
Lieut Colonel Harris J Taylor	27 Aug 1971	17 Sep 1972
Lieut Colonel Charles A Herning	17 Sep 1972	29 Nov 1972
Lieut Colonel George W Kronsbein, Jr	29 Nov 1972	c. Jul 1973
Lieut Colonel James S Walbridge	c. Jul 1973	1 Dec 1975
Lieut Colonel William K James	1 Dec 1975	29 Jun 1977
Lieut Colonel William E Pickens, III	29 Jun 1977	12 Jun 1979
Lieut Colonel Albert S Dodd, III	12 Jun 1979	26 May 1981
Lieut Colonel John H Wambaugh, Jr	26 May 1981	c. Oct 1981
Lieut Colonel Donald D Henry	c. Oct 1981	24 Feb 1983
Lieut Colonel Danny D Howard	24 Feb 1983	22 Feb 1985
Lieut Colonel Gary A Voellger	22 Feb 1985	15 Nov 1986
Lieut Colonel James W Savage	15 Nov 1986	30 Sep 1988
Lieut Colonel Robert D Balph, II	30 Sep 1988	25 Sep 1989
Lieut Colonel John W Dorough, Jr	25 Sep 1989	2 Nov 1990
Lieut Colonel Terry Simpson	2 Nov 1990	11 Sep 1992
Lieut Colonel Daniel C Clark	11 Sep 1992	15 Jul 1993
Lieut Colonel Kenneth D Holder	15 Jul 1993	15 Oct 1993
Lieut Colonel John A Neubauer	15 Oct 1993	c. Aug 1995
Lieut Colonel Timothy B Vigil	c. Aug 1995	3 Jul 1996
Squadron not manned from	3 Jul 1996	7 Jul 1997
Lieut Colonel Maurice H Forsyth	7 Jul 1997	10 Jul 1998
Lieut Colonel Robert D Harvey	10 Jul 1998	19 May 2000
Lieut Colonel James N Post III	19 May 2000	28 Jun 2002
Lieut Colonel John K Forsythe, Jr	28 Jun 2002	27 Jun 2003
Lieut Colonel John P Montgomery	27 Jun 2003	3 Jun 2005
Lieut Colonel David C Hathaway	3 Jun 2005	22 Jun 2007
Lieut Colonel Miles A DeMayo	22 Jun 2007	2 Mar 2009
Lieut Colonel Douglas D. DeMaio	2 Mar 2009	



Clockwise (all 55th): Group photo 1933 (USAF), Lt "Cactus" Jack Yelton with P-38 1943 (USAF), Mud RAF Wethersfield (P. Bonce), Lt Preble checks out in the P-84 (W. Preble), Pilots taking part in "Frantic" mission to USSR 9/11/44 (USAF), P-36A Moffett Field, CA (20th FWA), Pilots back from West Coast Maneuvers 1937 (USAF). Center 20th FW F-100D over Alps (H. Loitwood, Jr.)

77th FIGHTER SQUADRON

Lineage

Organized as 77th Aero Squadron	20 Feb 1918
Redesignated Squadron A, Barron Field, Texas	21 Jul 1918
Demobilized	Mar 1919
Reconstituted and consolidated (1936) with 77th Observation Squadron	18 Oct 1927
Redesignated 77th Pursuit Squadron	8 May 1929
Activated	15 Nov 1930
Redesignated 77th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter)	6 Dec 1939
Redesignated 77th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)	12 Mar 1941
Redesignated 77th Fighter Squadron	15 May 1942
Inactivated	18 Oct 1945
Activated	29 Jul 1946
Redesignated 77th Fighter Bomber Squadron	20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 77th Tactical Fighter Squadron	8 Jul 1958
Redesignated 77th Fighter Squadron	1 Oct 1991
Inactivated	30 Sep 1993
Reactivated	1 Jan 1994

Assignments

Unknown	1918	1919
20th Pursuit (later Fighter) Group	15 Nov 1930	18 Oct 1945
20th Fighter (later Fighter Bomber) Group	29 Jul 1946	7 Feb 1955
20th Fighter Bomber (later Tactical Fighter) Wing	8 Feb 1955	1 Oct 1991
20th Fighter Wing	1 Oct 1991	30 Mar 1992
20th Operations Group	31 Mar 1992	30 Sep 1993
20th Operations Group	1 Jan 1994	Present

Stations

Waco, Texas	20 Feb 1918	28 Feb 1918
Taliaferro Field, No. 1 (Later Hicks, Field), Texas	28 Feb 1918	1 Mar 1918
Taliaferro Field, No. 2 (Later Barron, Field), Texas	1 Mar 1918	Mar 1919
Mather Field, California	15 Nov 1930	14 Oct 1932
Barksdale Field, Louisiana,	31 Oct 1932	19 Nov 1939
Moffett Field, California	19 Nov 1939	9 Sep 1940
Hamilton Field, California	9 Sep 1940	21 Feb 1942
Wilmington, North Carolina	21 Feb 1942	24 Apr 1942
Spartanburg Field, South Carolina	24 Apr 1942	20 Aug 1942
Sarasota Field, Florida	20 Aug 1942	24 Sep 1942
Paine Field, Washington	30 Sep 1942	11 Feb 1943
March Field, California	11 Feb 1943	Aug 1943
King's Cliffe, England	27 Aug 1943	16 Oct 1945
Camp Kilmer, New Jersey	16 Oct 1945	18 Oct 1945
Biggs Field, Texas	29 Jul 1946	25 Oct 1946
Shaw Field, South Carolina	25 Oct 1946	19 Nov 1951
Langley Air Force Base, Virginia	19 Nov 1951	22 May 1952
Wethersfield, England	1 Jun 1952	9 Aug 1955
Shepherds Grove, England	9 August 1955	27 Apr 1956
Wethersfield, England,	27 Apr 1956	1 Jun 1970
Upper Heyford, England	1 Jun 1970	30 Sep 1993
Shaw AFB, South Carolina	1 Jan 1994	Present

Assigned Aircraft

BOEING P-12		Nov 1930	Oct 1932
BOEING P-26	*PEASHOOTER*	Oct 1932	Sep 1935
CURTIS P-36	*MOHAWK*	Sep 1935	Sep 1940
CURTIS P-40	*WARHAWK*	Sep 1940	Feb 1942
REPUBLIC P-43	*LANCER*	~Feb 1942	~Sep 1942

BELL P-39	*AIRACOBRA*	Feb 1942	May 1942
LOCKHEED P-38	*LIGHTNING*	May 1942	Jul 1942
NORTH AMERICAN P-51D	*MUSTANG*	Jul 1944	Feb 1948
REPUBLIC F-84D/F/G	*THUNDERJET/THUNDERSTREAK*	Feb 1948	Dec 1957
NORTH AMERICAN F-100D/F	*SUPER SABRE*	Jun 1957	Jan 1971
GENERAL DYNAMICS F-111E	*AARDVARK*	Sep 1970	Jul 1993
LOCKHEED MARTIN F-16E/F	*FIGHTING FALCON*	Jan 1994	Present

Commanders

2nd Lt George P Southworth	20 Feb 1918	~May 1918
2nd Lt John Mason Tilney	~May 1918	~Jul 1918
2nd Lt Edward S Winfree	?1918	?1919
2nd Lt Hugh C Downey	?1919	?1919
1st Lt Glen R Blackburn	?1919	~Feb 1919
2nd Lt Robert C McClenahan	~Feb 1919	1 Apr 1919
1st Lt Walter E Richards	15 Nov 1930	12 Jun 1931
Lt Hopkins	12 Jun 1931	19 Aug 1931
Lt Wittkop	19 Aug 1931	c. Dec 1932
Captain John M Clark	c. Dec 1932	c. Sep 1935
Major Oliver P Gothlin	c. Sep 1935	c. Aug 1936
Major Carlton F Bond	c. Aug 1936	c. Mar 1937
1st Lt Orrin L Grover	c. Mar 1937	c. Jun 1937
Lt Phineas K Morrill, Jr	c. Jun 1937	c. Jul 1937
Major Carlton F Bond	c. Jul 1937	10 Aug 1937
Captain Milo N Clark	10 Aug 1937	18 Jul 1938
Captain Orrin L Grover	18 Jul 1938	5 Sep 1939
Captain James W McCauley	5 Sep 1939	Unknown
Captain Barton M Russell	5 Dec 1941	1 Aug 1942
Major Robert P Montgomery	1 Aug 1942	11 Nov 1943
Major Herbert E Johnson Jr	12 Nov 1943	9 Mar 1944
Lieut Colonel Russell F Gustke	9 Mar 1944	18 Dec 1944
Captain Merle B Nichols	18 Dec 1944	30 Sep 1945
Major George S Wemyss	30 Sep 1945	c. Oct 1945
Lieut Colonel John J Hussey, Jr	29 Jul 1946	11 Sep 1946
Major Harry G Peterson	11 Sep 1946	5 Dec 1946
Lieut Colonel Niven K Cranfill	5 Dec 1946	28 April 1948
Major Delynn E Anderson	28 Apr 1948	13 Nov 1948
Lieut Colonel Robert A Barnum	13 Nov 1948	30 Apr 1949
Lieut Colonel Edward S E Newbury	30 Apr 1949	24 May 1950
Lieut Colonel Dean Davenport	24 May 1950	1 Feb 1951
Major William L Jacobsen	1 Feb 1951	30 Jun 1951
Lieut Colonel William J Payne	30 Jun 1951	Unknown
Major Harry H Moreland	Unknown	4 Sep 1951
Lieut Colonel John W Meador	4 Sep 1951	3 Dec 1951
Major John J Kropenick	3 Dec 1951	9 Feb 1952
Lieut Colonel Bruce L Morrison	9 Feb 1952	c. Jul 1953
Major George W Askew, Jr	c. Jul 1953	c. Oct 1953
Lieut Colonel Paul E Adams	c. Oct 1953	1 Jul 1955
Major George W Askew, Jr	1 Jul 1955	c. Nov 1955
Lieut Colonel William F Harris	c. Nov 1955	c. Dec 1956
Lieut Colonel Robert A Ackerly	c. Dec 1956	21 Apr 1958
Major Ray S White	21 Apr 1958	29 Jun 1960
Major Felix A Blanchard	29 Jun 1960	16 Jul 1961
Major Dwight N Hillis	16 Jul 1961	30 Jun 1963
Major Robert F Ronca	30 Jun 1963	c. Jul 1963
Lt Col Virgil K. Meroney	c. Jul 1963	24 Aug 1964
Lieut Colonel Robert C Laliberte	24 Aug 1964	25 Jul 1966
Lieut Colonel Stanley L Evers	25 Jul 1966	19 Apr 1968
Lieut Colonel Donald H Hooten	19 Apr 1968	20 Jun 1969
Lieut Colonel Robert L Burns	20 Jun 1969	6 Nov 1970
Lieut Colonel Jude R McNamara	6 Nov 1970	16 Dec 1971
Lieut Colonel Frank L Yow, Jr	16 Dec 1971	11 Jan 1972

Lieut Colonel William J Broomall, Jr	11 Jan 1972	10 Jun 1974
Lieut Colonel Charles A Herning	10 Jun 1974	1 Aug 1975
Lieut Colonel Ronald D McDonald, Jr	1 Aug 1975	16 Jul 1977
Lieut Colonel William W Hopkins, Jr	16 Jul 1977	18 Aug 1978
Lieut Colonel Frank B Pyne	18 Aug 1978	28 Jan 1980
Major Leo J Lemoine	28 Jan 1980	1 Apr 1980
Lieut Colonel Richard R Riddick	1 Apr 1980	12 Mar 1982
Lieut Colonel Raymond J Bartholomew	12 Mar 1982	6 Feb 1984
Lieut Colonel Wilson D Briley, Jr	6 Feb 1984	11 Feb 1985
Lieut Colonel John H Cain	11 Feb 1985	20 Nov 1986
Lieut Colonel Jon G Safley	20 Nov 1986	6 Jun 1988
Lieut Colonel David F Macghee	6 Jun 1988	11 Jun 1990
Lieut Colonel Harold H Barton, Jr	11 Jun 1990	20 Mar 1992
Lieut Colonel Wesley E Trevett	20 Mar 1992	9 Jul 1993
Lieut Colonel James D Matheny	9 Jul 1993	30 Sep 1994
Lieut Colonel Joseph Shirley	30 Sep 1994	May 1996
Lieut Colonel Michael R Cook	May 1996	31 Dec 1997
Lieut Colonel David G Minto	31 Dec 1997	3 Dec 1999
Lieut Colonel Michael H Geczy	3 Dec 1999	9 Nov 2001
Lieut Colonel Jon A Norman	9 Nov 2001	30 May 2003
Lieut Colonel David R Stillwell	30 May 2003	15 Jul 2005
Lieut Colonel Donavan E Godier	15 Jul 2005	28 Jun 2007
Lieut Colonel Craig S Leavitt	28 Jun 2007	23 Jul 2009
Lieut Colonel Lance A. Kildron	23 Jul 2009	

Clockwise (all 77th): 77th Aero Squadron WW I (20th FWA), Squadrons first aircraft (USAFM), P-36A Moffett Fld. CA (C. Tucker), Lt. Hoey P-40 Hamilton Fld. CA (A. Hoey), Pilots just before first D-Day missions (USAF), Capt Fiebelkorn 20th FG's top ace scores 4 in one mission 9/28/44 (USAF), F-84 tagged by Marines during PORTEX Maneuvers 1950 (H. Martin), F-84Gs RAF Wethersfield 1954 (20th FWA), Group photo F-100D c.1961 (C. Segrest), Lt Col Bartholomew (CC) final flight Mar 1984 (A. Sevigny), Group photo F-111E Distant Drum 83, Turkey (USAF). Center top to bottom: Commander's aircraft (USAF), Deployed to Middle East (20th FWA).

79th FIGHTER SQUADRON

Lineage

Organized as 79th Aero Squadron	22 Feb 1918
Redesignated Squadron B, Taliaferro Field, Texas	23 Jul 1918
Demobilized	15 Nov 1918
Reconstituted & consolidated (25 May 1933) with 79th Observation Squadron	18 Oct 1927
Redesignated 79th Pursuit Squadron	8 May 1929
Activated	1 Apr 1933
Redesignated 79th Pursuit Squadron (Fighter)	6 Dec 1939
79th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)	12 Mar 1941
79th Fighter Squadron	15 May 1942
Inactivated	18 Oct 1945
Activated	29 Jul 1946
Redesignated 79th Fighter Bomber Squadron	20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 79th Tactical Fighter Squadron	8 Jul 1958
Redesignated 79th Fighter Squadron	1 Oct 1991
Inactivated	30 Jun 1993
Reactivated	1 Jan 1994

Assignments

Unknown	1918	
20th Pursuit (later Fighter) Group	1 Apr 1933	18 Oct 1945
20th Fighter (later Fighter Bomber) Group	29 Jul 1946	8 Feb 1955
20th Fighter Bomber (later Tactical Fighter) Wing	8 Feb 1955	1 Oct 1991
20th Fighter Wing	1 Oct 1991	30 Mar 1992
20th Operations Group	31 Mar 1992	30 Jun 1993
20th Operations Group	1 Jan 1994	Present

Stations

Waco, Texas	22 Feb 1918	28 Feb 1918
Taliaferro Field, No. 1 (Later Hicks, Field), Texas	28 Feb 1918	15 Nov 1918
Barksdale Field, Louisiana	1 Apr 1933	19 Nov 1939
Moffett Field, California	19 Nov 1939	9 Sep 1940
Hamilton Field, California	9 Sep 1940	8 Dec 1941
Oakland, California	8 Dec 1941	8 Feb 1942
Wilmington, North Carolina	c. 21 Feb 1942	23 Apr 1942
Morris Field, North Carolina	23 Apr 1942	30 Sep 1942
Paine Field, Washington	30 Sep 1942	1 Jan 1943
March Field, California,	1 Jan 1943	11 Aug 1943
King's Cliffe, England	27 Aug 1943	11 Oct 1945
Camp Kilmer, New Jersey	16 Oct 1945	18 Oct 1945
Biggs Field, Texas	29 Jul 1946	25 Oct 1946
Shaw Field, South Carolina	25 Oct 1946	19 Nov 1951
Langley Air Force Base, Virginia	19 Nov 1951	22 May 1952
RAF Bentwaters, England	31 May 1952	1 Oct 1954
RAF Woodbridge, England	1 Oct 1954	15 Jan 1970
RAF Upper Heyford, England	15 Jan 1970	30 Jun 1993
Shaw AFB, South Carolina	1 Jan 1994	Present

Assigned Aircraft

BOEING P-12		Nov 1930	Oct 1932
BOEING P-26	*PEASHOOTER*	Oct 1932	Sep 1935
CURTIS P-36	*MOHAWK*	Sep 1935	Sep 1940
CURTIS P-40	*WARHAWK*	Sep 1940	Feb 1942
REPUBLIC P-43	*LANCER*	~Feb 1942	~Sep 1942
BELL P-39	*AIRACOBRA*	Feb 1942	May 1942
LOCKHEED P-38	*LIGHTNING*	May 1942	Jul 1944
NORTH AMERICAN P-51D	*MUSTANG*	Jul 1944	Feb 1948

REPUBLIC F-84B/D/F/G	*THUNDERJET/THUNDERSTREAK*	Feb 1948	Dec 1957
F-100D/F	*SUPER SABRE*	Jun 1957	Jan 1971
F-111E	*AARDVARK*	Sep 1970	Apr 1993
F-16E/F	*FIGHTING FALCON*	Jan 1993	Present

Commanders

1st Lt Joel I McGregor	22 Feb 1918	May 1918
2nd Lt Edward E Eyre	May 1918	15 Nov 1918
Captain Roy W Camblin	1 Apr 1933	15 Mar 1936
Captain Charles G Pearcy	15 Mar 1936	17 Nov 1936
Major Frank O D Hunter	17 Nov 1936	c. Sep 1937
Major Armin F Herold	c. Sep 1937	c. Jul 1938
Captain Thayer S Olds	c. Jul 1938	c. Feb 1941
Captain Jesse Auton	c. Feb 1941	c. May 1941
1st Lt James Ferguson	c. May 1941	c. Aug 1943
Major Nathaniel H Blanton	c. Aug 1943	14 Nov 1943
Major Richard L Oft	14 Nov 1943	30 Jan 1944
Captain Jesse O Yaryan	30 Jan 1944	31 Jan 1944
Captain Carl E Jackson	31 Jan 1944	20 Feb 1944
Captain Robert J Meyer	20 Feb 1944	22 Feb 1944
Major R C Franklin, Jr	22 Feb 1944	10 May 1944
Major Delynn E Anderson	10 May 1944	27 Sep 1944
Captain Jack M Ilfrey	27 Sep 1944	9 Dec 1944
Captain Robert J Meyer	9 Dec 1944	4 Apr 1945
Major Walter R Yarborough	4 Apr 1945	Unknown
Lieut Colonel Harry E McAfee	c. Aug 1946	c. Sep 1946
Major Walter J Overend	c. Sep 1946	c. Jan 1947
Lieut Colonel William P McBride	c. Jan 1947	c. Jul 1948
Major Walter J Overend	c. Jul 1948	c. Oct 1948
Major Walter G Benz	c. Oct 1948	Unknown
Lieut Colonel William P McBride	Unknown	1 May 1950
Captain Richard F Jones	1 May 1950	Unknown
Major Delynn E Anderson	Unknown	c. Jun 1951
Major George N Lunsford	c. Jun 1951	1 Nov 1951
Major Harry H Moreland	1 Nov 1951	18 Feb 1952
Lieut Colonel Cleo M Bishop	18 Feb 1952	1 Mar 1955
Lieut Colonel James E Hill	1 Mar 1955	30 Apr 1956
Major Alan S Harte, Jr	30 Apr 1956	c. Jul 1958
Lieut Colonel William S Holt	c. Jul 1958	30 Jun 1960
Lieut Colonel Edwin J Rackham	30 Jun 1960	6 Jul 1961
Lieut Colonel William F Georgi	6 Jul 1961	5 Jul 1963
Lieut Colonel John C Bartholf	5 Jul 1963	5 Jun 1965
Lieut Colonel John E Madison	5 Jun 1965	30 Jun 1966
Lieut Colonel John C Galgan, Jr	30 Jun 1966	9 May 1967
Lieut Colonel Robert L Jones	9 May 1967	29 Jul 1968
Lieut Colonel Robert H Darlington	29 Jul 1968	24 Jan 1970
Lieut Colonel Fred W Grey	24 Jan 1970	10 Dec 1971
Lieut Colonel David B Hubbard	10 Dec 1971	c. Mar 1973
Lieut Colonel John S Rumph	c. Mar 1973	1 Jun 1974
Lieut Colonel Harry Pawlik	1 June 1974	16 Jun 1975
Lieut Colonel George F Houck, Jr	16 Jun 1975	22 Jun 1976
Lieut Colonel John D Phillips	22 Jun 1976	26 Sep 1977
Lieut Colonel Howard W Nixon	26 Sep 1977	28 Aug 1979
Lieut Colonel Grady H Reed III	28 Aug 1979	28 Jan 1980
Lieut Colonel Frank B Pyne	28 Jan 1980	9 May 1980
Lieut Colonel John C Lorber	9 May 1980	17 Jun 1982
Lieut Colonel Joseph N Narsavage, Jr	17 Jun 1982	1 Jun 1984
Lieut Colonel Peter A Granger	1 Jun 1984	29 May 1987
Lieut Colonel Steven R Emory	29 May 1987	27 Feb 1988
Lieut Colonel Larry G Carter	27 Feb 1988	12 Jan 1990
Lieut Colonel Steven A Mires	12 Jan 1990	14 Sep 1991

Lieut Colonel Mark A Hyatt	14 Sep 1991	23 Apr 1993
Lieut Colonel Thomas A Gilkey	1 Jan 1994	3 Jun 1994
Lieut Colonel Jeffrey Eberhart	8 Jul 1994	Apr 1996
Lieut Colonel Timothy J Collins	Apr 1996	16 May 1997
Lieut Colonel James W Hyatt	16 May 1997	14 Jun 1999
Lieut Colonel James Dodson	14 Jun 1999	11 May 2001
Lieut Colonel James C Horton	11 May 2001	17 Mar 2003
Lieut Colonel Jerry D Harris	7 Mar 2003	25 Feb 2005
Lieut Colonel Scott E Manning	25 Feb 2005	3 Nov 2006
Lieut Colonel Donald E Butler	3 Nov 2006	25 Jul 2008
Lieut Colonel Kenneth P. Ekman	25 Jul 2008	26 Feb 2010
Lieut Colonel Benjamin L. Bradley	26 Feb 2010	

Clockwise (all 79th): P-36A Moffett Fld, CA (W. Larkins), P-40E during maneuvers 1941 (M. Pyles), Group photo Wilmington, NC, February 1942 (M. Pyles), Group photo P-38 Ontario Air Station, CA, 4/1/43, (E. Steiner), Cpt. Ilfrey after knocking an Me109 down with his wingtip 5/24/44 (J. Ilfrey), Squadron Bar (USAF), Group photo P-84B Shaw Fld, May 1949 (S. Bowlin), Ground crew working on F-84D c.1953 (USAF), F-100D on way to Wheelus AFB, Libya, c.1966 (W. May), F-111E air refueling 3/1/88 (USAF). Center top to bottom: F-16 (USAF), Past squadron commanders at 79th Anniversary celebration 5/11/97 (79th FS).