

REFERENCE SERIES

Air Force Combat Wings

Lineage and Honors Histories

1947–1977

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Explanatory Notes (How to Use this Book)

The following notes explain how the information in this book is arranged, and the terms and format used in Air Force lineage and honors histories.

Heading. The heading comprises the numerical and functional designation of the wing as of 30 September 1977. Each combat wing appears in numerical order, and, when required, in alphabetical order under the number. (Three wings carry the number “1,” two are numbered “301,” and two are numbered “322.”)

Lineage. (See Appendix I.) The official USAF statement of lineage, or “genealogy,” forms the foundation of the wing’s history and governs the wing’s inheritance of emblem and honors. The Air Force lineage system, described in Air Force Pamphlet 210–2, applies to Reserve organizations and the regular Air Force. (As noted earlier, the Air Force can no longer determine with certainty the lineage, history, and honors of ANG combat wings, and thus the Guard wings are not included in this volume.)

One peculiarity will be noticed in the lineage of some wings that appear in this book. In August 1947, the Air Force began a service test of what was

called the “wing-base” plan. This test, conducted with 29 combat wings, proved the wing-base plan to the satisfaction of the Air Force. In 1948 the service discontinued all of the temporary service-test units and establishments and replaced them with new, permanent units and establishments with the same numerical and generally the same functional designations. Beginning in July 1948, the new wings replaced the discontinued wings; in most instances the permanent wings activated on the same day the temporary wings discontinued, but in a few cases the permanent wings activated a day or two before the discontinuance of the temporary wings. On the surface, these overlapping lineages appear erroneous; nevertheless, they conform to the orders of the time. Because the personnel, assignments, components, stations, facilities, equipment, and missions of the service-test wings passed completely to the new, permanent wings that replaced them, the Air Force has unofficially considered both variants of the wings to

be the same organization. But without an official consolidation directive, they remain separate establishments. In this book, the temporary and permanent wings are treated as single establishments.* The overlapping of dates in the lineage statement therefore carries over to other sections including assignments, components, stations, and commanders.

Assignments. Each of the wing's immediate higher "parent" organizations is listed chronologically. A single date indicates the date of assignment; where a double date appears, the second date indicates termination of assignment. A semicolon is used to show a change of assignment while the wing remained active; a period indicates the wing was disbanded, discontinued, or inactivated. If the wing was attached for operational control to another organization, the attachment appears in parentheses, with brackets used to set off parenthetical elements within parentheses. Each attachment contains double dates.

Components. Tactical components assigned, or attached for operational control, to the wing are listed in hierarchical and numerical order. Each list shows only those components at the first subordinate echelon; the lists do not show subordinate squadrons of an assigned or attached group because these squadrons were not directly assigned to the wing. Of the tactical components, only the numerical designation appears if the functional designations (e.g., fighter, bombardment) were

identical for both the component and wing. If the numerical designation of a component changed during its period(s) of assignment or attachment, the later designation is shown parenthetically. Example: 705th (later, 962d). Support-type components (medical units, an air base or combat support group, maintenance squadrons, and other support squadrons and flights) are excluded.

A semicolon separating dates indicates a break in assignment or attachment. A comma indicates a change with no break in wing control. A squadron attached for a time and then assigned (with no break in wing control), for example, would be shown: attached 1 Jan–29 Jul 1952, assigned 30 Jul 1952–12 Jul 1957. Interrupted, attached service in a series would read: attached 12 Jul–10 Aug 1956, 17 Nov 1956–3 Jan 1957, 10 Jul–19 Aug 1957, and so forth, with commas separating the series entries. This same procedure is used to show detached status of wing components, when such detached periods are frequent.

Periods of detached service, when components are detached from wing control for duty with another organization, appear in parentheses. Likewise, components not operational for specific periods are shown in parentheses. In some cases the exact dates for detached service, or dates for those periods when a component was not operational, could not be determined with certainty. A *circa* (c.) date is used in these instances.

*A more detailed explanation of the pivotal wing-base service test appears in the introduction to this book.

Stations. Permanent locations of the wing headquarters are listed chronologically. The name of each base is the one in use at the time the wing arrived, with any changes appearing in parentheses. Some foreign nations that hosted wings are identified by their “popular” name, rather than their official name. Thus, the Republic of Korea appears as South Korea, the Republic of Vietnam as South Vietnam, and the Republic of China as either Formosa or Taiwan, depending upon the period. Wings located in the Federal Republic of Germany, or in occupied Germany prior to 1 September 1949, are listed as being in West Germany. A single date indicates the arrival of the wing at a base. Semicolons separate the station-and-date entries while the wing remained active, but changed stations. If a wing moved from one theater of operations to another, a double date is provided for the station being vacated. A double date is also provided whenever a wing arrived at a base and was subsequently disbanded, discontinued, or inactivated. A period at the end of a second date indicates disbandment, discontinuance, or inactivation.

Commanders. Wing commanders are listed chronologically, along with the highest rank attained during the command tenure. Commanders are shown for all periods when the wing was active. Between 1959 and 1968 the Air Force required two organizational actions (activate and organize) to place personnel in a wing headquarters (and in other units). During the time a wing was activated but not yet organized, the entry shows “None (not manned),” together with double dates, followed by a semicolon and the actual list of com-

manders. Whenever active wings were not manned at other times, the “None (not manned)” statement and double dates also appear. If for some reason a wing commander was at first temporarily and then permanently appointed, the commander’s name may be followed by one date and a parenthetical “temporary,” followed by a second date and a parenthetical “permanent.”

Lists of commanders are as accurate as the sources permitted. Some wings kept excellent historical records; others kept poor records, or none at all. Commander lists, therefore, sometimes contain “unknown” as an entry, and in many of the commander lists, *circa* (c.), or some other indicator such as “by” this date, are to be found. A second date followed by a semicolon indicates a gap in the commander list. A second date followed by a period indicates the wing headquarters inactivated.

Aircraft/Missiles. The aircraft, aircraft and missiles, or missiles used by wing components assigned and attached for operational control appear in this section. In the missile category, only strategic or tactical surface-to-surface missiles are included. (Air-to-air, air-to-ground, or surface-to-air missiles are considered ordnance and are not included.) The section title accounts for the type(s) of weapon systems. Aircraft are listed by series and number (e.g., F-86 or EC-135), but not by model (e.g., B-52H or KC-135A). Missiles are listed by their popular names (e.g., Atlas, Titan I, Minuteman III). The years during which the wing possessed the weapon systems are also listed (e.g., RF-101, 1959–1965). Because many wings often possessed different

weapon systems simultaneously, these different systems, with the dates of possession, are separated by semicolons. The final entry is followed by a period. A wing may also have had the same weapon systems at different times. Example (for a wing activated in 1950, inactivated in 1961, activated again in 1963, and inactivated in 1967): Aircraft. B-47, 1950-1955; KC-97, 1953-1955; B-52, 1956-1961; KC-135, 1955-1961. B-52, 1963-1967; KC-135, 1963-1967; EC-135, 1966-1967.

A wing often lost possession on a temporary basis of one or more of its weapon systems. This occurred, for example, when its tactical components were detached with all of the aircraft for duty elsewhere. Such temporary absences of a weapon system are shown by a comma. Example: B-52, 1957-1960, 1960-1962, 1963-1965; KC-135, 1956-1958, 1958-1960, 1960-1961, 1961-1965. In other words, for a time in 1960 and in 1962-1963, the wing had no B-52 aircraft for its own use, all being under the control of another organization. Likewise, for short periods in 1958, 1960, and in 1961, the wing did not control KC-135 aircraft.

Operations. Information in this section, though abbreviated, includes all combat and other significant operations, often with a discussion of the particular aspects of combat. Oversea deployments of the wing are mentioned, together with changes in wing status and its mission. Speed or distance records are frequently cited. For reasons of security classification, numerous significant wing operations dur-

ing the decade 1967-1977 are excluded, or mentioned only briefly.

Readers who wish to know more about a wing's operations can visit the Historical Research Center to conduct research, or purchase through the mail microfilm copies of the unclassified wing histories.

Service Streamers. (See Appendix II.) Service streamers represent noncombat service in the various theaters of military operations. Those service streamers earned by a wing are listed here. (If a wing participated in combat operations in a theater, it earned a campaign streamer instead of a service streamer.)

Campaign Streamers. (See Appendix II.) The Historical Research Center evaluates and verifies unit combat credits. Verified combat credit entitles a unit to the appropriate campaign streamers representing the named campaigns in which a wing participated. Research often shows that a wing is entitled to campaign credits never awarded on orders, or has received improper campaign credit awarded in error. This official list of campaign streamers is based upon each wing's verified combat record.

Decorations. (See Appendix III.) Decorations include citations and awards recognizing distinguished or meritorious acts by the wing. In this list, the type of decoration is cited together with specific dates, if dates appeared in the award document. Erroneous dates were revised and corrected dates shown within brackets. For example, the dates stated in an order may cover a time before a wing was active or after it became inactive; indeed, an order may cite a date before

the wing even became engaged in the activity for which it received an award. Air Force Pamphlet 900-2, produced by the Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center, contains the official listing of unit decorations, including wing decorations. The decorations listed in this volume generally agree with those appearing in the pamphlet, but some revisions have been made based on research into actual wing operations.

Emblem. For those wings holding an official emblem approved by Headquarters USAF (and most do possess emblems), the wording of the “blazon” is provided in its official heraldic language. Many wings have had two or more emblems in the 30 years covered

by this book; the emblem in use on 30 September 1977 is the one included here. Headquarters USAF authorized a temporary history bestowal in 1954 that allowed combat wings to use, under certain circumstances, the history, honors, and emblem of the older combat group of the same number. Thus, many postwar combat wings use the same emblem that their like-numbered combat groups used in World War II.*

If the emblem included a crest, the crest is described. Any official motto is cited, and translated to English if necessary. Finally, the date Headquarters USAF approved the emblem is cited within parentheses. If a motto was approved separately, the date of approval is also shown.

*cf., Maurer Maurer (ed.), *Air Force Combat Units of World War II* (Washington: USGPO, 1983; New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1963; New York: Arno Press, 1979; Washington: Zenger, 1981).

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Air Force Combat Wings

1947–1977

Assignments. Air Proving Ground, 20 Jul 1949; Long Range Proving Ground Division, 1–30 Dec 1950.

Components. Squadrons. 1st Guided Missiles Squadron, Air-to-Surface Missile: attached 20 Jul 1949–31 Jul 1950, assigned 1 Aug–30 Dec 1950 (not operational, 11–30 Dec 1950). 2d Guided Missiles Squadron, Surface-to-Surface Missile: attached 20 Jul 1949–31 Jul 1950, assigned 1 Aug–30 Dec 1950 (not operational, 1 Jun–24 Oct 1950). 3d Guided Missiles Squadron, Interceptor: 1 Aug–30 Dec 1950. 3200th Drone: attached 26 Apr–30 Jun 1950, assigned 1 Jul–1 Dec 1950 (not operational, 20 Sep–1 Dec 1950).

Stations. Eglin AFB, Fla, 20 Jul 1949; Patrick AFB, Fla, 11–30 Dec 1950.

Commanders. Col Thomas J. Gent, Jr., 20 Jul 1949; Col George M. McNeese, 23 Oct–30 Dec 1950.

Aircraft. B–17, 1949–1950; B–29, 1949–1950; T–33, 1950; F–80, 1950; F–86, 1950.

Operations. Replaced 1st Experimental Guided Missiles Group in Jul 1949. Developed tactics and techniques for employment of USAF guided missiles and drone aircraft. Service tested radio-controlled B–17, B–29, and T–33 aircraft. Monitored research and development of several air-to-surface and surface-to-surface guided missiles, including Lark, Matador, GAPA, Falcon, Shrike, Rascal, Snark, and Boojum types. Replaced by 4800th Guided Missile Wing in Dec 1950.

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. None.

Decorations. None.

Emblem. None.

551st AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AND CONTROL WING



Lineage. Established as 551st Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing on 11 Oct 1954. Activated on 18 Dec 1954. Inactivated on 31 Dec 1969.

Assignments. 8th Air Division (Airborne Early Warning and Control), 18 Dec 1954; Eastern Air Defense Force, 1 Jul 1957; 26th Air Division (SAGE), 1 Jul 1959; First Air Force, 1 Apr 1966; 21st Air Division, 4–31 Dec 1969.

Components. Squadrons. 960th: 8 Mar 1955–31 Jul 1969. 961st: 18 Dec 1954–31 Dec 1969. 962d: 8 Jul 1955–31 Dec 1969. 966th: 1 Feb 1962–1 May 1963.

Stations. Otis AFB, Mass, 18 Dec 1954–31 Dec 1969.

Commanders. Col Oliver G. Cellini, 18 Dec 1954; Col Arthur A. McCartan, 20 Feb 1956; Col Richard W. DaVania, 17 Jul 1957; Col Ernest J. White, Jr., (by 28) Aug 1959; Col James A. Harwell, (by 30 Jun) 1962; Col Rudolph B. Walters, 31 Jul 1962; Col Raymond K. Gallagher, 10 Aug 1964; Col Wright J. Sherrard, 14 Feb 1966; Col James P. Lyle, 1 Aug 1966; Col John M. Konosky, (by 31) Mar 1967; Col Max W. Rogers, 10

Jun 1967; Lt Col Jesse M. Doyle, (by 30 Jun) 1968; Col Max W. Rogers, (by 31 Dec) 1968–31 Dec 1969.

Aircraft. C-121, 1955–1969; RC-121, 1955–1962; EC-121, 1963–1969.

Operations. Performed airborne early warning and control operations for air defense purposes.

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. None.

Decorations. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: 1 Jul 1957–31 Oct 1958.

Emblem. On a shield argent, two bends sable, on a chief wavy azure a symbol of three radar pulses of the first, the shield bordered with an edge or. *Motto:* VIDERE EST PARAI—To see is to be prepared. (Approved on 22 Dec 1955.)

552d AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL WING



Lineage. Established as 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing on 30 Mar 1955. Activated on 8 Jul 1955. Redesignated 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Group on 1 Jul 1974. Inactivated on 30 Apr 1976. Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and

Control Wing on 5 May 1976. Activated on 1 Jul 1976.

Assignments. 8th Air Division (Airborne Early Warning and Control), 8 Jul 1955; Western Air Defense Force, 1 Jul 1957; 28th Air Division (SAGE), 1 Jul 1960; Fourth Air Force, 1 Apr 1966; Tenth Air Force, 15 Sep 1969; Aerospace Defense Command, 15 Nov 1969–30 Apr 1976. Tactical Air Command, 1 Jul 1976–.

Components. *Squadrons.* 7th Airborne Command and Control: 1 Oct 1976–. 963d: 8 Jul 1955–30 Apr 1976; 1 Jul 1976–. 964th: 8 Jul 1955–30 Jun 1974; 1 Jul 1977–. 965th: 8 Aug 1955–30 Jun 1971. 966th: 1 May 1963–1 Jul 1969; 15 Nov–31 Dec 1969; 1 Jul 1976–.

Stations. McClellan AFB, Calif, 8 Jul 1955–30 Apr 1976. Tinker AFB, Okla, 1 Jul 1976–.

Commanders. Col Leeman J. Hipson, 8 Jul 1955; Col Richard W. DaVania, (by Dec) 1955; Col Septime S. Richard, Jr., (by Dec) 1956; Col Charles R. Heffner, 18 Oct 1957; Col Charles F. Knierim, 28 May 1959; Col Robert J. Loughry, 17 Oct 1960; Col James P. Lyle, 18 Oct 1963; Col Wright J. Sherard, 28 Aug 1964; Col William R. Nevitt, 2 Feb 1966; Col Olin E. Gilbert, 31 May 1968; Col Henry L. Timmermans, 1 Nov 1969; Col Robert P. Halpenny, 28 Apr 1972; Col Harold P. Knutty, 26 Jul 1974; Col Francis B. Henkel, 27 Jun 1975–30 Apr 1976. Brig Gen John L. Piotrowski, 1 Jul 1976–.

Aircraft. RC-121, 1955–c. 1959, c. 1961–1963; TC-121, 1959–c. 1961, 1967–1969; EC-121, 1963–1976; C-121, 1967–1976. EC-130, 1976–; WC-135, 1977–; E-3A, 1977–.

Operations. The 552d operated from McClellan AFB, Calif, 1955 until inactivated in 1976. Through its squadrons, detachments and operating locations, it extended air defense radar coverage and fighter control seaward beyond the range of shore-based stations. Late in 1958, the 552d assumed the additional mission of performing gap-filler duty for temporarily inoperative ground radar stations. Tracked ballistic missiles in the Pacific after 1957 and provided support for *Discoverer* and *Mercury* space flight projects. On 11 Aug 1960 wing aircraft vectored and controlled the aircraft that recovered the *Discoverer XIII* capsule. Deployed aircraft and crews to McCoy AFB, Fla, (19 Oct-5 Dec 1962) during the Cuban missile crisis. Operated extensively in Southeast Asia, 1965-1974, as part of the Big (later, College) Eye Task Force. During this time the 552d expanded operations to the eastern coast of the United States and to Iceland. Redesignated as a group on 1 Jul 1974 because of a reduction in components and a reduced mission; remained in this status until inactivated on 30 Apr 1976. Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing, and activated on 1 Jul 1976 at Tinker AFB, Okla, the wing provided worldwide operation of Airborne Warning and Control E-3A aircraft as directed by the Tactical Air Command.

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. None.

Decorations. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device: 1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970; 1 Jul 1971-31 Dec 1972. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: 1 Jul 1961-30 Jun 1963; 15 Apr 1965-1 Jul 1966; 2 Jul 1966-1 Jul 1968;

1 Jul 1970-30 Jun 1971; 1 Jul 1974-30 Jun 1975. Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm: 1 Apr 1966-28 Jan 1973.

Emblem. Per bend the sky proper and the base field per bend sinister of azure and of argent, a bendlet or between a compass of the third and sable and two lightning flashes issuing from the dexter, points to fess argent, and a silhouetted winged tower sable. *Motto:* ROBUR EX VIGILANTIA—In vigilance is strength. (Approved on 6 Feb 1956.)

553d RECONNAISSANCE WING



Lineage. Established as 553d Reconnaissance Wing, and activated, on 9 Feb 1967. Organized on 25 Feb 1967. Inactivated on 15 Dec 1970.

Assignments. Air Defense Command, 9 Feb 1967; First Air Force, 25 Feb 1967 (attached to Thirteenth Air Force, 19-30 Oct 1967); Thirteenth Air Force (attached to Seventh Air Force), 31 Oct 1967-15 Dec 1970.

Components. Squadrons. 553d: 25 Feb 1967-15 Dec 1970 (not operational, 25-28 Feb 1967). 554th: 25 Feb

1967–15 Dec 1970 (not operational, 25–28 Feb 1967).

Stations. Otis AFB, Mass, 25 Feb–Oct 1967; Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 31 Oct 1967–15 Dec 1970.

Commanders. None (not manned), 9–28 Feb 1967; Col Gus Weiser, 1 Mar 1967; Col Henry L. Timmermans, 8 Jul 1968; Col Ted H. Ostendorf, 1 Jul 1969; Col John W. Mitchell, 7 Dec 1969; Col Robert M. Slans, 11–15 Dec 1970.

Aircraft. EC-121, 1967–1970; YQU-22 (drone), 1968–1969; QU-22 (drone), 1970.

Operations. Electronic reconnaissance in Southeast Asia, 25 Nov 1967–15 Dec 1970. A wing detachment provided combat evaluation of YQU-22A drone aircraft and associated equipment from Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, Dec 1968–Aug 1969. Wing operated from U-Tapao, Thailand, 30 Jan–28 Feb 1969. Provided combat evaluation of QU-22B drone aircraft and associated equipment, Jul–Sep 1970.

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III; Vietnam Air/Ground; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV; TET 69/Counteroffensive; Vietnam Summer–Fall, 1969; Vietnam Winter–Spring, 1970; Sanctuary Counteroffensive; Southwest Monsoon; Commando Hunt V.

Decorations. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat “V” Device: 1 Apr 1967–31 May 1968; 1 Jul 1968–15 Apr 1969. Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm: 1 Apr 1967–15 Dec 1970.

Emblem. Or, in dexter chief a plate over three lightning bolts one in bend

and two in saltire celeste charged with the ancient sign for sulphur gules, issuant from base a demi-sphere argent rimmed and gridded sable and overall in pale a batcat proper (azure shaded sable, eyes, teeth, lower lip and claws argent, tongue gules), all within a diminished bordure or. (Approved on 19 Jun 1967.)

580th AIR RESUPPLY AND COMMUNICATIONS WING



Lineage. Established as 580th Air Resupply and Communications Wing on 15 Mar 1951. Activated on 16 Apr 1951. Inactivated on 8 Sep 1953.

Assignments. Air Resupply and Communications Service, 16 Apr 1951; United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Oct 1952–8 Sep 1953.

Components. *Group.* 580th: 16 Apr 1951–8 Sep 1953 (not operational, 8 Apr 1952–8 Sep 1953). *Squadron.* 580th: attached 8 Apr 1952–8 Sep 1953.

Stations. Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, 16 Apr 1951–17 Sep 1952; Wheelus Field, Libya, 22 Sep 1952–8 Sep 1953.

Commanders. Col William O. Earckson, 16 Apr 1951; Col John R. Kane, 12 Nov 1951; Col Frederick J. Knorre,