

ROBINS AFB and 78 ABW Heritage Pamphlet

PART 2: LINEAGE & HONORS OF 78 AIR BASE WING



78 Air Base Wing Lineage:

Established as 78th Fighter Wing on 24 Sep 1948. Activated on 16 Nov 1948. Redesignated 78th Fighter-Interceptor Wing on 20 Jan 1950. Inactivated on 6 Feb 1952. Redesignated 78th Fighter Wing (Air Defense) on 14 Sep 1956. Activated on 18 Oct 1956. Inactivated on 31 Dec 1969. Redesignated 78th Flying Training Wing on 14 Apr 1972. Activated on 1 Dec 1972. Inactivated on 30 Sep 1977. Redesignated 78th Air Base Wing on 16 Sep 1994. Activated on 1 Oct 1994.

Assignments: Fourth Air Force, 16 Nov 1948 (attached to Western Air Defense Force, 10 Nov 1949–31 Jul 1950); Western Air Defense Force, 1 Aug 1950–6 Feb 1952. 28th Air Division, 18 Oct 1956; San Francisco Air Defense Sector, 1 Jul 1960; 28th Air Division, 1 Aug 1963; 26th Air Division, 1 Apr 1966; 27th Air Division, 15 Sep 1969; Tenth Air Force, 19 Nov–31 Dec 1969. Air Training Command, 1 Dec 1972–30 Sep 1977. Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, 1 Oct 1994–17 Jul 2013. Air Force Sustainment Center, 17 Jul 2013--.

Components: Group. 78th: 16 Nov 1948–6 Feb 1952; 18 Oct 1956–1 Feb 1961. Squadrons. 82d: 1 Dec 1972–15 Jun 1976. 83d: 1 Feb 1961–1 Jul 1963; 1 Dec 1972–30 Sep 1977. 84th: 1 Feb 1961–31 Dec 1969. 498th: 30 Sep 1968. 3389th: 1 Jan 1974–30 Sep 1977.

Stations: Hamilton AFB, CA, 16 Nov 1948–6 Feb 1952. Hamilton AFB, CA, 18 Oct 1956–31 Dec 1969. Webb AFB, TX, 1 Dec 1972–30 Sep 1977. Robins AFB, GA, 1 Oct 1994--.

Fighter Wing Commanders: Col George L. Usher, 16 Nov 1948; Col George H. Steel, 1 Apr 1950; Col Brian O'Neill, 12 Mar 1951; Col James W. Andrew, 1 Jul 1951–6 Feb 1952. Col Wilton H. Earle, 18 Oct 1956; Col George F. Ceuleers, 27 Jul 1957; Col Benjamin B. Cassidy, Jr., 16 Jul 1960; Col Harvey E. Henderson, 28 Jul 1960; Col William F. Barns, 12 May 1962; Col William S. Harrell, 1 Jul 1962; Col William C. Miller, 15 Jul 1964; Col Charles D. Chitty, Jr., 30 Jul 1964; Col Harry W. Shoup, 23 Jun 1965; Col Donald H. Lynch, 17 Jun 1968–1969. Brig Gen Stanley M. Umstead, Jr., 1 Dec 1972; Col Robert G. Liotta, 21 Aug 1973; Col Robert A. Owens, 19 Jul 1974; Col Harry A. Spannaus, 8 Jun 1976–30 Sep 1977.

78th Air Base Wing Commanders:

Col Jack D. Ward, 1 Jun 94 -12 Jul 96
Col William J. Evans Jr., 12 Jul 1996 – 30 Jun 98;
Col James J. Meccics, 30 Jun 98 – 24 Feb 00
Col Jay E. Seward II, 24 Feb 00 – 1 Mar 02
Col Bonnie C. Cirrincione, 1 Mar 02 – 27 Jan 03
Col Marvin T. Smoot, 27 Jan 03 – 2 Jul 04
Col Greg F. Patterson, 2 Jul 2004 to 12 Jan 06
Col Theresa C. Carter, 12 Jan 06 to 11 Jan 08
Col. Warren Berry, 11 Jan 08 to 1 Jul 09
Col. Carl A. Buhler, 8 Jul 09 to 30 June 11
Col. Mitchel H. Butikofer, 1 July 11 to 4 July 13
Col. Christopher D. Hill, 5 July 13 to June 15
Col Jeffrey N. King, June 15 to July 17
Col. Lyle K. Drew, July 17 to July 19
Col. Brian R. Moore, July 19 to present

Aircraft: F-51, 1949–1952; F-84, 1949–1952; F-89, 1951–1952. F-86, 1956–1958; F-89, 1956–1959; F-102, 1957–1960; F-104, 1958–1960; F-101, 1959– 1960, 1960–1968; F-106, 1959–1960, 1968–1969. T-37, 1972–1977; T-38, 1972–1977; T-41, 1972–1973.

Operations: Air defense of the Pacific coastal area, 1949–1952, and again in 1956–1969. Pilot training for both USAF and allied officers, 1972–1977.

Honors:

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. None.

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers. None.

Decorations. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: 1 Jul 1968–30 Jun 1969.

Bestowed Honors. Authorized to display the honors earned by the 78th Fighter Group prior to 16 Nov 1948.

Service Streamers. None.

Campaign Streamers. World War II: Air Offensive, Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace; Central Europe; Air Combat EAME Theater.

Decorations. Distinguished Unit Citations: Holland, 17–23 Sep 1944; Czechoslovakia, 16 Apr 1945.

Decorations: Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: 1 Jul 1968-30 Jun 1969; [1 Oct]-31 Dec 1994

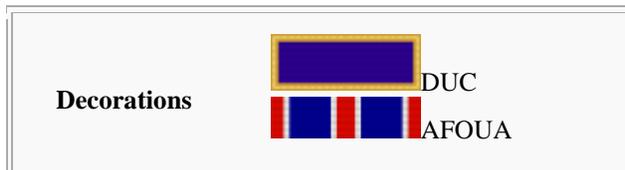
Emblem: Per pale indented Azure and Gules in chief five chain lengths fess wise conjoined in fess (jagged middle line), all within a diminished bordure of the like. Red the blood we shed to protect and defend our fellow airmen and our nation. Motto: ABOVE THE FOE. Approved for 78th Group on 26 Sep 1942 and for 78th Wing on 19 Mar 1958 (K 10210).

78 ABW Emblem approved on 26 Dec 1995.

78th Fighter Group/Wing History



Active from February 1942 to 1969. Motto "Above the Foe," approved on 26 February 1942.



Units: 78th Civil Engineer Group (78 CEG)
Communications Directorate (78ABW/SC)
Operations Division (78ABW/SCO)
Special Missions Division (78ABW/SCP)
Resource and Planning Division (78ABW/SCX)
78th Mission Support Group (78 MSG)
78th Logistics Readiness Squadron (78 LRS)
78th Force Support Squadron (78 FSS)
78th Security Forces Squadron (78 SFS)
78th Medical Group (78 MDG)
78th Operations Support Squadron (78 OSS)
78th Contracting and Comptroller Squadron (78 CCS)

History: 78th Fighter Group 1942-1961 Active

The **78th Fighter Group (78 FG)** is an inactive USAF unit. It was last assigned to the 78 FW, being assigned to Hamilton AFB, California. It was inactivated on 1 February 1961.

During World War II the group was an 8th AF fighter unit stationed primarily at RAF Duxford. It claimed 338 air and 358 ground aircraft destroyed. It flew its last mission on 13 April 1945.

World War II



Republic P-47C-2-RE Thunderbolts of the 82d Fighter Squadron



North American P-51D-20-NA Mustang Serial 44-63279 of the 83rd Fighter Squadron

The **78th Fighter Group** was activated in 1942. It initially trained for combat with P-38's and served as part of the west coast air defense organization. Moved to England in November 1942 and was assigned to 8th AF. The group lost its P-38's and most of its pilots in February 1943 when they were assigned to 12th AF for service in the North African campaign.

The group was reassigned to Duxford Airfield in April 1943 and reequipped with P-47s. Aircraft of the group were identified by a black/white checkerboard pattern. The group consisted of the following squadrons: 82d Fighter Squadron (MX), 83d Fighter Squadron (HL) and 84 FS (WZ)

From Duxford, the 78th flew many missions to escort B-17 and B-24 Bombers that attacked industries, submarine yards and docks, V-weapons sites, and other targets on the Continent. The unit also engaged in counter-air activities and on numerous occasions strafed and dive-bombed airfields, trains, vehicles, barges, tugs, canal locks, barracks, and troops. In addition to other operations, the 78th participated in the intensive campaign against the Luftwaffe and aircraft industry during Big Week and helped to prepare the way for the Normandy invasion. The group supported the landings in France on 6 June 1944 and contributed to the breakthrough at St. Lo in July.

The group converted to P-51Ds in December 1944 and participated in the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944 – January 1945 and supported the airborne assault across the Rhine in March. The 78th Fighter Group received a Distinguished Unit Citation for activities connected with the airborne attack on the Netherlands in September 1944 when the group covered troop carrier and bombardment operations as well as strafing and dive-bombing missions. The group received a second DUC for destroying numerous aircraft on five airfields near Prague and Pilsen on 16 April 1945. They returned to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and October 1945 and was inactivated in place on 18 October.

Post World War II



78th Fighter-Interceptor Group Republic F-84B Thunderjets 1949 Aircraft are (bottom to top) Republic F-84D-10-RE Thunderjet 48-678, 667, 680, 657



Lockheed F-94C-1-LO Starfire 59-641 of the 84th Fighter Interceptor Squadron



The 83d FIS showing off their brand-new Starfighters in 1958. Lockheed F-104A-15-LO Starfighters



Convair F-106A-90-CO Delta Dart Serial 57-2504 of the 84th FIS.

The 78th FG was reactivated in Germany on 20 August 1946, replacing the 368th Fighter Group, which was allotted to the National Guard, at Straubing, Germany. The group was reactivated due to the Air Force's policy of retaining only low-numbered groups on active duty after the war. In Germany the group was assigned to the USAFE XII Tactical Air Command for duty with the occupation force. The group was assigned to AAF Station Straubing, and flew the former 368th's P-47 Thunderbolts from the airfield. The group was transferred, without personnel and equipment, to Mitchel Field, New York in June 1947. At Mitchel, the group remained in active duty status and was assigned to Air Defense Command. The group was manned with a small cadre of personnel, being equipped with a few P-51D Mustangs. On 16 November 1948, the 78th was reassigned to Hamilton AFB, California where it was assigned of ADC's 4 AF. At that time the 78 Fighter Wing was established by the Hobson reorganization plan, with the 78th Fighter Group becoming a component of the wing, controlling its flying resources.

In February 1949, the 78th Fighter Group received the first of the new production F-84 Thunderjets, with these aircraft going to the assigned 82d, 83d and 84th Fighter Squadrons. The F-84s became problematic with cracks appearing in wing spars or skin beginning in September. The group lost four jets in accidents by the end of the year. On 1 July 1949, Air Defense Command was inactivated as a major command, the 78th Fighter Wing being assigned to CONAC. On 1 September 1949 CONAC created the Western Air Defense Force, to which the 78th Fighter Wing was assigned. They were re-designated the 78th Fighter-Interceptor Group in January 1950. With the breakout of the Korean War in June 1950, the 78th Fighter Group was the only remaining CONAC F-84 unit with an air defense commitment, the group lost many personnel which were reassigned to Far East Air Force units engaging in combat with deployed units. The personnel losses were replaced with less-experienced federalized Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard personnel. At the same time, CONAC placed the 78th Fighter Group on 24/7 air defense alert status, with the three squadrons rotating among themselves for one day on and two days off alert periods. Throughout this period, the F-84s remained problematic with wing integrity, the group having only 50 of its authorized 70 aircraft operational, as a third of its aircraft had been sent to Republic Aircraft or Air Materiel Command depots for repairs. This led to excess hours being put on the remaining aircraft, reducing their designed operational life. By the first quarter of 1951, the number of operational aircraft on station was reduced to 44, with only 34 actually being combat ready. The manpower shortage was worse, with only seven of the forty combat-rated pilots being available, the remainder being assigned Europe or combat duty in Korea.

In June 1951, the 78th Fighter Group received the first four of the F-89B Scorpions, as a replacement for the F-84 Thunderjets. The Scorpions were assigned to the 83d and 84th Fighter Squadrons, while the 82d retained the best of the groups remaining F-84s, while the remainder

were either shipped as replacement aircraft to South Korea or sent to Republic for refurbishing. By the end of 1951, the 82d Fighter Squadron stood alert during daylight hours while the other two squadrons rotated night and foul weather duties. The F-89s, however, were rushed into service too rapidly. There were not enough trained pilots and radar operators, and there were not enough maintenance personnel who knew the intricacies of the complex and troublesome Hughes E-1 fire control system. The in-service rate of the F-89B was appallingly low, and crashes were all too frequently.

The 78th Fighter Group was inactivated on 6 February 1952 along with its parent wing as part of an ADC reorganization, being replaced by the 4702d Defense Wing when Hamilton was placed under the ADC 28th Air Division. Two of the inactivated 78th's squadrons were transferred. The 82d was transferred to Larson AFB, Washington, and reassigned to the 4703d Defense Wing; the 83d FIS to Paine AFB, Washington and transferred to the 4704th Defense Wing. The 84th remained at Hamilton AFB.

The unit was reactivated in 1955 by replacing the 566th Air Defense Group at Hamilton AFB. The 566th Air Base Group was activated as the host unit at Hamilton AFB in February 1952, when the 78th Fighter-Interceptor Wing was inactivated. On 16 February 1953, the 566th was re-designated as an Air Defense Group and assumed operational control of the 84th FIS, and later the 325 FIS and 496 FIS. The 566th was replaced by the 78th Fighter Group (Air Defense) as result of ADC "Project Arrow" notable unit re-designation program on 18 August 1955 and the 84th FIS was assigned to it. Its 83d Fighter-Interceptor Squadron returned without personnel or equipment to Hamilton and was reassigned to the group, taking over the personnel and equipment of the 325 FIS, which moved without personnel or equipment to Truax Field, Wisconsin. On 18 October 1956, the 78th Fighter Wing was once again activated and the group transferred its maintenance and support functions to other groups. The group flew numerous interceptors for West Coast air defense until its inactivation on 1 February 1961 when group components were assigned directly to the 78th Fighter Wing as the 78th converted to the tri-deputate system.

Lineage

Constituted as 78th Pursuit Group (Interceptor) on 13 January 1942

Activated on 9 February 1942

Redesignated 78th Fighter Group in May 1942.

Inactivated on 18 October 1945.

Activated in Germany on 20 August 1946, replacing the 368 FG*

Redesignated 78 Fighter-Interceptor Group on 20 January 1950

Inactivated on 6 February 1952

Redesignated 78th Fighter Group (Air Defense), and activated 18 August 1955

Inactivated on 1 February 1961

*Note: Became subordinate unit of the 78 FW on 24 September 1948

Assignments

IV Fighter Command, 9 February 1942

VIII Fighter Command, 29 November 1942.

4th Air Defense Wing, 30 June 1943

65th Fighter Wing, 7 August 1943.

66th Fighter Wing, 18 August 1943.

Attached to: 3d Bombardment (later Air) Division, 5 September 1944 – 10 October 1945
USAFE, 20 August 1946 – 15 June 1947
ADC, 30 June 1947
78 FW (later 78th Fighter-Interceptor Wing, 16 November 1948 – 6 February 1952
28 AD, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78 FW (Air Defense), 18 October 1956 – 1 February 1961

Components

82nd Pursuit (later Fighter, Fighter-Interceptor, Fighter) Squadron: 9 February 1942 – 18 October 1945; 20 August 1946-6 February 1952; attached 9 January 1957 – 1 July 1960
83 Pursuit (later Fighter, Fighter-Interceptor, Fighter) Squadron: 9 February 1942 – 18 October 1945; 20 August 1946—6 February 1952; 18 August 1955 - 1 February 1961
84th Pursuit (later Fighter, Fighter-Interceptor, Fighter) Squadron: 9 February 1942 – 18 October 1945; 20 August 1946 - 6 February 1952; 18 August 1955 - 1 February 1961
78th USAF Hospital, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Air Base Squadron 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Air Police Squadron, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Food Service Squadron, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Field Maintenance Squadron, 18 August 1955 -19 October 1956
78th Installations Squadron, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Motor Vehicle Squadron, 18 August 1955
78th Operations Squadron, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956
78th Supply Squadron, 18 August 1955 - 18 October 1956

Stations

Baer Field, Indiana 9 February 1942
Muroc AAF, California 30 April 1942
Hamilton Field, California May–November 1942
RAF Goxhill (USAAF Station 345), England December 1942
RAF Duxford (USAAF Station 357), England April 1943 – October 1945
Camp Kilmer, New Jersey 16–18 October 1945
AAF Station Straubing, Germany, 20 August 1946 – June 1947
Tenant unit, station (Mansfield Kaserne) under U.S. Army control
Mitchel Field, New York June 1947
Hamilton AFB, California November 1948 - 6 February 1952; 18 August 1955 - 1 February 1961

Aircraft assigned:

P-38 Lighting (1942-3), P-47 Thunderbolt (1943-4), P-51 Mustang (1944-5, 1949-52), F-84 Thunderjet (1949-52), F-89 Scorpion 1951-52, 1956-9), F-86 Sabre (1956-58), F-102 Delta Dagger (1957-1958), F-104 Starfighter (1958-60), F-101 Voodoo (1959-61), F-106 Delta Dart (1959-1961).



84th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron Hamilton Air Force Base, California May 1968 McDonnell F-101B-95-MC Voodoo 57-370 identifiable



84th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron Northrop F-89C-5-NO Scorpion 50-746 Preparing for takeoff on a training mission in 1952

Current as of January 8, 2020