

103rd AIRLIFT WING



MISSION

LNEAGE

324th Fighter Group constituted, 24 Jun 1942
Activated, 6 Jul 1942
Inactivated on 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 103rd Fighter Group
Allotted to ANG (Conn), 24 May 1946
Extended federal recognition, 7 Aug 1946
Redesignated 103rd Fighter Interceptor Group, Mar 1951
Inactivated, 6 Feb 1952
Returned to the control of ANG (Conn), 1 Dec 1952
Redesignated 103rd Tactical Fighter Group
Redesignated 103rd Fighter Group
Redesignated 103rd Fighter Wing
Redesignated 103rd Airlift Wing

STATIONS

Mitchel Field, NY, 6 Jul 1942
Baltimore Mun Aprt, MD, 6 Jul-28 Oct 1942
El Amiriya, Egypt, Dec 1942
El Kabrit, Egypt, 2 Feb 1943
Kairouan, Tunisia, 2 Jun 1943
El Haouaria, Tunisia, c. 18 Jun 1943
Menzel Heurr, Tunisia, 3 Oct 1943
Cercola, Italy, 25 Oct 1943
Pignataro Maggiore, Italy, 6 May 1944
Le Banca Airfield, Italy, 6 Jun 1944
Montalto Di Castro, Italy, 14 Jun 1944
Corsica, 19 Jul 1944

Le Luc, France, 25 Aug 1944
Istres, France, 2 Sep 1944
Amberieu, France, 6 Sep 1944
Tavaux, France, 20 Sep 1944
Luneville, France, 4 Jan 1945
Stuttgart, Germany, 8 May-20 Oct 1945
Camp Shanks, NY, 6-7 Nov 1945
Bradley Field, CT, 1 Mar 1951
Suffolk County Aprt, NY, 1 Jun 1951-6 Feb 1952
East Granby, CT

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

F-47, 1947
F-84D, 1953
F-94B, 1956
F-86H, 1957
F-100A, 1960
F-102, 1966
F-100, 1971
A-10, 1979
C-21

Support Aircraft

U-3A, 1970
T-29, 1972
C-12F

COMMANDERS

Col William K McNown, c. Jul 1942
Col Leonard C Lydon, 25 Dec 1943
LTC Franklin W Horton, 23 May
Col George R. Stanley, 7 Aug 1946
LTC Thomas L. Carroll, 28 Sep 50
Col Glenn T Eagleston, 1951-c. Feb 1952
Col Thomas L. Carroll, 1 Jan 1953
LTC John L. Hoar, 1 Jun 1955
Col Thomas L. Carroll, 1 May 1956
LTC John L. Hoar, 1 Sep 1958
LTC Randal Hathway, 1 Nov 1965
Col Edward Bonetti, 1 Aug 1968
Col Frank N. Detorie April 2006-July 2008

Col Stephen R. Gwinn

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Tunisia

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Anzio

Rome-Arno

Northern France

Southern France

Rhineland

Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

North Africa and Sicily, Mar-[Jul] 1943

Cassino, 12-14 May 1944

French Croix de Guerre with Palm

EMBLEM



Azure on a pile or triangular shaped figure between two crescents, from which red flames spring and a martlet gules, the figure of a swallow in red coloring. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The ultramarine blue represents the Air Forces, while the golden pile or triangular shaped wedge represents the wedge driven into enemy territory. The crescents symbolize the early crusades, the 324th fighting with the same valor and spirit, while the fire erupting from the crescents represents the zeal with which missions are undertaken and the deadly effect with which they are accomplished. Numerical designation is indicated by the three symbols, the two crescents, and

the martlet, the latter being the heraldic representation of cadency for the fourth son.

In mid-summer of 1943, the 324th Fighter Group became part of the 12th Air Force. The insignia in red, gold, white and azure was worn as a patch on the uniforms of members of the 324th Fighter Group, and, it should be added, on the apparel of numerous young ladies scattered throughout Italy, Corsica, France and Germany. The design for this insignia derives from the ancient art of heraldry. The shield of the 324th Fighter Group consists of azure on a pilor or triangular shape, which represents a wedge driven into enemy territory. The crescents symbolize the early crusades, which set the standards for valor and esprit. The fire erupting from the crescents represents the zeal with which missions are undertaken and the deadly effect with which they are accomplished. The three symbols, the two crescents and the martlet, a heraldic representation of cadency for the fourth son, provided the numerical designation, 324.



Or, a representation of a Connecticut colonial secretary running with the Colony's Charter in his left hand proper (hat, coat, and breeches—blue; hair, vest, tie, shoes, and stockings—black; face, hands, shirt collar, shoe buckles, and charter—white); all within a diminished bordure triparted black, white, and black, the white part separated to chief to form in code the letters FEA. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The Flying Yankee patch depicts the Connecticut Colonial Secretary running with

the Colony's charter in his left hand to secrete it in an oak tree to prevent seizure by the British.
(Approved, 1 May 1953)

MOTTO

AUDEO--I Dare

NICKNAME

Flying Yankees

OPERATIONS

Engaged primarily in escort and patrol missions between Tunisia and Sicily until Jul 1943. Received a DUC for action against the enemy from Mar 1943 to the invasion of Sicily. Trained during Jul-Oct 1943 for operations with Twelfth AF. Resumed combat on 30 Oct 1943 and directed most of its attacks against roads, bridges, motor transports, supply areas, rolling stock, gun positions, troop concentrations, and rail facilities in Italy until Aug 1944. Patrolled the beach and protected convoys during the assault on Anzio in Jan 1944. Aided the Allied offensive in Italy during May 1944, receiving another DUG for action from 12 to 14 May when the group bombed an enemy position on Monastery Hill (Cassino), attacked troops massing on the hill for a counterattack, and hit a nearby stronghold to force the surrender of an enemy garrison. Continued to give close support to ground forces until the fall of Rome in Jun 1944. Converted to P-47's in Jul and supported the assault on southern France in Aug by dive-bombing gun positions, bridges, and radar facilities, and by patrolling the combat zone. Attacked such targets as motor transports, rolling stock, rail lines, troops, bridges, gun emplacements, and supply depots after the invasion, giving tactical support to Allied forces advancing through France. Aided the reduction of the Colmar bridgehead, Jan-Feb 1945, and supported Seventh Army's drive through the Siegfried defenses in Mar. Received the French Croix de Guerre with Palm for supporting French forces during the campaigns for Italy and France, 1944-1945. Moved to the US, Oct-Nov 1945.

Headquarters would be at Bradley Field, Windsor Locks, a former Army Air Corps Base during WWII. On August 7, 1946 all air units of the 103rd Fighter Group in Connecticut were extended Federal recognition. That evening 35 officers and 60 enlisted men met in the hangar at Brainard Field, Hartford. These men already had met the Federal Inspection team and their eligibility for Air Guard Service already had been established. The units composing the Group were assigned for training to Headquarters, 1st Air Force, Continental Air Command, Mitchell Field, Long Island, New York. All that was required that night was for all to take the oath of service.

The units activated that night included the 103rd Fighter Group Headquarters, with 17 officers and 21 enlisted men; the 118th Fighter Squadron (Single Engine), with 10 officers and 18 enlisted men, under the command of Lt. Colonel Thomas L. Carroll, who had been a second lieutenant at Jacksonville; the 118th Utility Flight, with three officers and three enlisted men; and the 118th Weather station, with one officer and one enlisted man. And Detachment A, 203rd Air Service Group with 3 officers and 18 enlisted men with Maj Thomas J. Ciccalone, commanding.

These two squadrons formed the tactical element of the 103rd Fighter Group. Headquarters would be at Bradley Field, Windsor Locks, a former Army Air Corps Base during WWII. On August 7, 1946 all air units of the 103rd Fighter Group in Connecticut was extended Federal recognition. That evening 35 officers and 60 enlisted men met in the hangar at Brainard Field, Hartford. These men already had met the Federal Inspection team and their eligibility for Air Guard Service already had been established. The units composing the Group were assigned for training to Headquarters, 1st Air Force, Continental Air Command, Mitchell Field, Long Island, New York. All that was required that night was for all to take the oath of service. The Army Air Corps inspection team for this event included Colonel Richard H. Ballard, General Staff Corps; Colonel Thomas W. Stead, Air Corps; and Lt. Colonel Robert W. Robinson, Medical Corps, U.S.A.

The new commanding officer of the new Connecticut Air National Guard, appointed by General DeLacour a short time previously, was Colonel George R. Stanley.

Within hours on 9-11, the 103 FW 'Flying Yankees' had aircraft loaded with ordinance on alert status with crews standing by; while the 103 ACS 'Yankee Watch' surveyed a critical air picture from Cape Cod, Mass. to Atlantic City, N.J. Many 103 FW members were deployed to Middle East on 9-11 and returned to prosecute the war in Western Iraq in 2003 with the A-10's. The success of the Bradley Airmen earned the deployed unit the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor.

As the 1990s began the unit prepared for another aircraft changes, the F-16. But that change would never happen. During the Gulf War the A-10A, proved itself to be a viable airframe and the change to the F-16 was cancelled. All through the nineties as the aircraft were updated; the unit was tasked for combat missions in the post cold war world. Three times deploying to fly missions over Bosnia in '93, '95 and '96.

In late 2002 the Flying Yankees became part of the test modification of A-10s to employ LITENING II Targeting Pods. In February 2003 over 300 Flying Yankee personnel took seven specially modified A-10s from the 103rd to Southwest Asia for what became Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The pod equipped unit scoured Western Iraq denying Iraq tactical ballistic missile launch opportunities - a new mission successfully completed along with a multitude of CAS and CSAR missions that saved the lives of many coalition forces. In 2003 the unique skills of Yankee Watch were employed in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom, to provide command, control and communications for the coalition forces engaged in daily fighting.

While still maintaining A-10s, the Flying Yankees received C-21 transport aircraft in 2007 and began flying airlift missions October 1, 2007. At the same time, the wing supported these separate aircraft missions, it began operation of the Centralized Intermediate Repair Facility - TF-34 shipping its first engine November 3, 2007. The expansion of TF-34 engine maintenance at Bradley will ensure the current renowned expertise is not lost.

The wing formally became the 103rd Airlift Wing, April 1, 2008; new missions now include; a

bridge mission flying C-21 supporting JOSAC VIP airlift, counter drug operations in the U.S., Central America, South America and the Caribbean, A Centralized Intermediate Repair Facility (CIRF) for TF-34 engines used on A-10 and an Air Operations Center (AOC) responsible for Command and Control operations during wartime

Members of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing at Bradley ANG Base in East Granby in early March broke ground at the site where the unit's new centralized intermediate repair facility will be erected under an \$8.3 million construction project. This work will add 17,000 square feet of workspace—giving the wing roughly 30,000 square feet of room overall—to repair and overhaul TF-34 engines used on the A-10 ground-attack aircraft. The CIRF will employ about 80 technicians who will be responsible for the T-34s on 78 Air Guard A-10s and additional engines for A-10s in active duty units. 2010

Airmen of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing, the Flying Yankees, at Bradley ANG Base in East Granby left last month on a deployment to Southwest Asia, the unit's first overseas stint with its new C-21s. The Connecticut Air Guardsmen, all of whom volunteered for the two-month tour, relieved members of the North Dakota ANG's 119th Wing, who spent two months performing their own inaugural C-21 rotation in the combat theater. Just as the 119th Wing did, the 103rd AW dispatched its own mechanics with the C-21s from its 118th Airlift Squadron and is not relying on contractors in theater to keep these aircraft flying. "We've proven that we can effectively provide maintenance at home station and now have the opportunity to demonstrate our capabilities in a deployed location," said Lt. Col. Jerry McDonald, commander of the 103rd Maintenance Group

Members of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing have been meeting all their mission requirements and maintaining a 100 percent mission success rate during their first deployment to Southwest Asia with their C-21. Members of the wing—all volunteers—left for the combat theater in July. It was their first stint in the region in six years, and the first time they deployed with the C-21s since losing their A-10 courtesy of BRAC 2005. "The 103rd AW has definitely risen to the challenge," said Lt. Col. Brian Burger, 379th Expeditionary Operations Group C-21 detachment commander. Maj. Wayne Ferris of the 379th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron added, "Our numbers are off the charts. Our full mission-capable rate is 98.5 percent, and our fix rate is 100 percent with zero break rates."

Members of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing in East Granby launched the first locally generated sortie with one of the unit's newly assigned C-130H transports, according to a unit release. A local aircrew, augmented by New York Air Guardsmen and other airmen, took off on Dec. 19 from the wing's home at Bradley ANG Base on the historic mission, states the Jan. 4 release. "It was very exciting to be a part of the first local launch," said SMSgt. Bill Westling, a flight engineer assigned to Bradley's 118th Airlift Squadron. "From the preflight to takeoff without any hiccups is a testament to the team effort from maintenance and ops," he said. The wing received the first of its eight C-130Hs in October and is still building up to its full complement of airplanes and its airmen are still training for the new mission. The wing formerly operated C-21A jets. 2014

The last of eight C-130Hs arrived at Bradley ANGB in East Granby, Conn., last week, completing the Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing's conversion from the Learjet C-21, unit officials announced. "We are now inextricably tied to the tactical airlift mission and our conversion to the venerable Hercules points to a very bright future at Bradley," 103rd AW Commander Col. Frank Detorie said a release. The unit received its first C-130 in June 2013 and is slated to reach initial operational capability on the airlifter in 2016, states the release. "This milestone is incredibly important for the Flying Yankees because the longevity and proud history of the C-130 bodes so well for the future on the Connecticut ANG," Detorie added. 2014

Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 12 May 2020

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Unit yearbook. *Flying Yankees the First 50 Years, 1923-1973*. 1973.