

107th ATTACK WING



MISSION

LINEAGE

339th Bombardment Group (Dive) constituted, 3 Aug 1942

Activated, 10 Aug 1942

Redesignated 339th Fighter-Bomber Group, Aug 1943

Redesignated 339th Fighter Group, May 1944

Inactivated, 18 Oct 1945

Redesignated 107th Fighter Group and allotted to ANG (NY), 24 May 1946

Extended federal recognition, 8 Dec 1948

Redesignated 107th Fighter-Interceptor Group, Sep 1952

Group reorganized and redesignated 107th Fighter Group (Air Defense), 1 May 1956

107th Fighter Interceptor Group

Redesignated 107th Tactical Fighter Group

STATIONS

Hunter Field, GA, 10 Aug 1942

Drew Field, FL, Feb 1943

Walterboro AAFld, SC, Jul 1943

Rice AAFld, CA, Sep 1943-Mar 1944

Fowlmere, England, 4 Apr 1944-Oct 1945

Camp Kilmer, NJ, 16-18 Oct 1945

Niagara Falls, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

Eighth AF

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-51B

P-51C

P-51D

P-51K

A-24

A-25

P-39

P-51

C-47, 1949-1971

T-6, 1948-1954

TB-25K, 1954-1957

T-29, 1972-1976

C-54, 1969-1972

T-33, 1954-1987

COMMANDERS

Lt Harold Garret, 18 Aug, 1942-unkn

LTC Marvin S. Zipp, Feb 1943

Maj Harry L. Galusha, 19 Feb 1943

Col John B. Henry, Jr., Aug 1943

LTC Harold W. Scrubs, 1 Oct 1944

LTC Carl T. Goldenberg, 24 Dec 1944

Col John B. Henry Jr., 29 Dec 1944

LTC William C. Clark, 14 Apr 1945-unkn

LTC Franklyn C McKee

Col James C. Cook

Col Douglas B. Routt, 1987

Col James C. Burdick

Col John E. Blewett,

LTC Laverne J. Donner

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

American Theater

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Germany, 10-11 Sep 1944.

EMBLEM





Per fess enhanced embattled light blue and azure (dark blue) fimbriated argent in sinister base a mailed fist proper grasping a lance bendwise or enfiling a cockatrice proper (light green) armed, combed, wattled, and seated or, all between two clouds of the third." **SIGNIFICANCE:** "The shield represents honor, integrity, and protection. The castellations (the embattled line) are symbolic of the obstructions and problems confronting the New York Air National Guard in the performance of its mission and also represent the castellated State Armory. The dark blue is the Air Force blue and the light blue represents the sky. The direction and control of the Wing Headquarters is represented by the human hand. It is strengthened and protected by the

gauntlet which symbolizes the assistance of the support groups. The lance represents the striking force and the clouds indicate the all-weather mission of the Wing; the lance being directed by the gauntleted hand has penetrated the clouds and impaled a mythical cockatrice, the bird of prey, symbolic of the winged aggressor enemies. The winged flying torch above the shield represents flying and tactical knowledge. The torch being upheld by a hand is also representative of the Statue of Liberty. The bird has been described simply as "a bird of prey" without naming the exact kind, thereby avoiding any possibility of conflict with a national affiliation of a foreign nation, and at the same time making it possible to illustrate the bird as a powerful opponent." (emblem approved, 19 Aug 1954)

MOTTO

STRENGTH THROUGH ALERTNESS

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The group provided fighter cover over the channel and the coast of Normandy during the invasion of France in June 1944. The 339th P-51s strafed and dive-bombed vehicles, locomotives, marshaling yards, antiaircraft batteries, and troops while Allied forces fought to break out of the beachhead in France. The group attacked transportation targets as Allied armies drove across France after the breakthrough at St. Lo in July and flew area patrols during the airborne attack on Holland in September. The 339th escorted bombers to Europe and flew patrols over the battle area during the German counter-attack in the Ardennes which took place December 1944-January 1945. The group provided area patrols during the assault across the Rhine in March 1945. A Distinguished Unit Citation was received for operations on 10 and 11 September 1944. On the first of those days, when 339th P-51s escorted bombers to a target in Germany and then attacked an airdrome near Erding. The fighters destroyed or damaged many enemy planes despite intense fire encountered from antiaircraft guns and small arms. The following day a bomber formation being escorted to Munich was attacked by enemy fighters; escort fighters of the 339th destroyed a number of the interceptors and drove off the others. At the same time, other members of the 339th were attacking an airdrome near Karlsruhe where they encountered heavy fire but were able to destroy or damage many of the aircraft parked on the field. Among all these varied activities, the outstanding feature of this group's combat record is the large number of enemy aircraft it destroyed in the air or on the ground during its one year of operations. The 339th Fighter Group returned to the US in October 1945 and was inactivated on 18 October 1945. The 339th Fighter Group was redesignated 107th Fighter Group and allotted to Air National Guard (New York) on 24 May 1946.

The 339th Fighter Group

First Mission, 30 Apr 1944

Last Mission, 21 Apr 1945

Total Missions: 264

Aircraft missing in action: 97

Enemy aircraft claims: 239.5 air; 440.5 ground

One day after the seventh anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor the 107th Fighter Group came into existence. On December 8th 1948, during formal ceremonies under the roof of the Naval Air Station the following units were activated: 136th Fighter Squadron, LtCol Robert J Kirsch, Commander; 107th Fighter Group, Lt Col Lawrence J. Dissette, Commander; 207th Air Service Group under the command of Col Myron Hyman.

1987 Niagara Falls International Airport, Niagara Falls The 107th Fighter Interceptor Group is part of the North American Defense Command. It is responsible for providing fighter interceptor defense forces around-the-clock to defend the air space of the northeastern United States from manned bomber attack. The Group fulfills this commitment by maintaining two of its F-4 along with aircrew and maintenance personnel at each of two locations: home station and a detachment at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina. In order to maintain the commitment at its deployed operating location, two aircraft and the normal personnel complement of six aircrew and eighteen maintenance crew are rotated periodically between Niagara IAP and Charleston AFB. The Group has been assigned to its Aerospace Defense Command mission since June 1971. Six of the Group's aircraft and 200 personnel deployed to Tyndall AFB, Florida, to participate in Exercise COMBAT ARCHER. During late May and early June, firefighter personnel deployed to Castle AFB, California, for training. Other firefighters deployed to Boise, Idaho, for training during the latter part of June. The Group flew 32 sorties in support of Exercise SENTRY YANKEE in early June and twelve sorties in support of an exercise held at Des Moines, Iowa, in mid-July. Security Police personnel augmented local police authorities during the Special Olympics held at the State University Amherst Campus in July. The Group also flew two F-4 sorties in support of a project sponsored by N A S A and the United States Air Force Flight Dynamics Laboratory. The Group deployed 100 personnel and five F-4 aircraft to Tyndall AFB , Florida, in support of Exercise COPPER FLAG during mid-September.

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Det 1,107 FIG, Charleston AFB, S.C. maintains two combat-ready, F-4D fighter interceptors on Air Defense Alert for the North American Aerospace Defense Command around the clock, year in and year out. These fighters can be air-borne in five minutes to intercept any unknown aircraft penetrating the Southern Air Defense Identification Zone. When "SCRAMBLED", the aircrew

visually identify the unknown aircraft and, if necessary, escort or lend assistance as required. Thus, Det 1, 107 FIG ensures the air sovereignty and air defense of the East Coast. Armed interceptors are on 24 hour alert at 30 locations around the North American Continent. NORAD alert fighters identify unknown aircraft, some of which are Soviet bombers probing North American air defenses or passing through air defense identification zones. The fighters help NORAD distinguish between civilian airliners and a hostile bomber or cruise missiles that may be attacking North America. Supporting the interceptors, the commander in chief can draw on a number of E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft for additional radar coverage of the North American continent. The detachment has 20 people permanently assigned, including aircraft crew chiefs, weapons and avionics specialists, administrative and ground support equipment maintenance personnel. The aircrew and airplanes are on temporary duty, rotating weekly. Beyond the alert commitment the Det supports a full flying schedule including participation in numerous training exercises such as 9th Air Force Quick Thrust Exercise, Combat Charleston DACT training and MAG EX joint exercise with Beaufort Marine Corps Air Station. LTC DENNIS J. SACKMAN Commander

In July 1985 FIG, DET1, Charleston AFB, South Carolina was established under the command of Major Dennis J. Sackman. Det 1 became an integral part of the Southeast sector Air Defense Alert force. From this time forward the 107th would be flying numerous active air defense scrambles against unknown and Russian Bear aircraft off the Southeast coast of the U.S. It was out with the old and in with the not-so-new Monday as the F-106 left Charleston Air Force Base for the last time. The job of defending Low country skies was turned over to Air National Guard crews flying F-4C Phantom II jets at 8 a.m. Air Force officers made the change official two hours later as pilots flying two F-106s made their last "scramble" takeoff from Charleston.

The newcomers to Charleston are all members of Detachment 1 of the 107th Fighter Interceptor Group at Niagara Falls International Airport, N.Y. Many, expect to make Charleston their home. "This is definitely a career move." said Maj. Dennis J. Sackman, commander of the newly activated unit. He and his 18-man maintenance crew joined the Air Guard specifically to serve in Charleston, even though their outfit's headquarters is in New York. They have the same responsibilities as others in the Air Force, but they work under renewable two-year employment contracts. "We can stay as long as we do our jobs," Sackman said, "or give two weeks' notice if we want to resign. Otherwise, we're no different from anyone else in the service." Only the aircrews, a pilot and a weapons systems officer for each plane, will fly between Charleston and Niagara Falls on a regular basis. Sackman's F-4s are different, if only a few years newer, than the F-106s they are replacing. Both planes can fly at twice the speed of sound, but the F-4s were built in the mid 1960s and carry improved radar and other systems. The F-4s are swept-wing, and often trail smoke from their engines. "The Air Force still hasn't come up with a smokeless F-4," Sackman said, but local residents shouldn't be concerned. Smoke trails are common to the plane.

And while some Guard units fly the newest in Air Force fighters, Sackman said he knew of no plans to replace his outfit's planes. Meanwhile, Maj. William Keeler, commander of the outgoing Detachment 1 of the 87th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, and his men will soon be leaving the Low country for assignments throughout the air Force. Keeler will train in the Air Force's F-15

fighter jet before he transfers to Iceland for a year. "They're still good planes," Keeler said as his F-106s flew over Charleston for the last time. He said the Air Force plans to convert the craft to unmanned target drones. He and other pilots may one day actually shoot the old planes down over a target range somewhere. The first NORAD Alert Force Evaluation of Det 1 in September 1985 returned an excellent rating. September also saw the ground breaking ceremony for the new 136th squadron operations building.

The 107th received the coveted Air Defense Command "A" award for sustained operational effectiveness during 1975,76, and 77. In Feb 1976 the 107th was awarded its 2nd Outstanding Unit Award. 1976 was a busy year for the unit; it was also a year of several significant accomplishments. During January the unit was a recipient of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for exceptional meritorious service in support of military operations from 1 July 1974 to 30 Jun 1975. The award was presented by order of the Department of the Air Force to Headquarters, 21st Air Division (ADC) and also included 17 other Air Force Units assigned to the division.

On 2-3 March, a severe ice storm hit the Western New York area; several communities were brought to a standstill, and the Village of Angola was especially hard hit. Angola, a community located 35 miles south of Buffalo, was without electrical power for two days and requested assistance through the Western Director of Civil Defense, Batavia, NY. The 107th responded to a request from the Deputy Director of Civil Defense for the ten Western New York counties and loaned a large 100 K.W. generator to the Village of Angola.

Said to be the worst storm in the history of the Niagara Frontier, the Blizzard of 77 stranded personnel from the 107th. Approximately 400 Civilians, Reservists, Guardsmen, and Technicians made a home at the Air Base during the period of 28 January through 1 February 1977. Most found accommodations at the base housing but due to the large numbers of personnel some slept at their duty stations.

Col Blewett learned from Major General Schoeneman, 21st NORAD Region/Air Division Commander, that the 107th had been selected, for the second year in a row to receive the Aerospace Defense Command "A" Award. In addition for the third consecutive year, the Equipment Management Office (EMO), Supply Sq, received an "Outstanding" rating from an Air Defense Equipment Management Team (CEMT).

107th F-4's scrambled from DET 1, Charleston AFB on the morning of April 17,1987 intercepted a Russian Bear F naval reconnaissance aircraft operating out of Cuba. The first Bear intercept by DET 1 F-4s. Three days later, on April 20, the Charleston F-4s scrambled again to intercept two more Bear bombers. The two phantoms scrambled for the first intercept were piloted by Major Lee White with Major Mike Murray and Lt Tim Grant with Lt. Kevin Brown as weapons systems officer. The second intercept aircraft was piloted by Major Conrad Cadman and Lt. Grant with Captain Richard Elliot and Lt Brown as the respective weapons systems officers.

1988 was a busy and rewarding year for the 107th. In February 1988 DET 1 Charleston passed a

UEI. In March the unit participated in another Copper Flag exercise at Tyndall AFB. Also in March Lt. Col Douglas B. Routt, 107th Group Commander and Lt. Col James C. Burdick, Vice Commander were promoted to the grade of Colonel..

Changes are in store for Air Force Reserve Command's C-130 tactical airlift units in New York and Georgia. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley announced Oct. 31 that Airmen in the New York Air National Guard will form an associate unit to partner with the Air Force Reserve's 914th Airlift Wing at Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y. And in Georgia, the general announced, the 94th AW at Dobbins Air Reserve Base will change from a C-130 formal training unit to a combat-coded unit. The change in status means the wing's C-130 aircraft, crews, maintenance professionals, etc., will deploy overseas on air expeditionary force rotations. "Because today's strategic landscape is dynamic and threatening, we have to ensure that, as a Total Air Force, we continuously search for and find innovative ways to leverage the limited resources we have available to increase our combat and homeland defense capabilities," General Moseley said.

"These initiatives will strengthen an already powerful partnership. I look forward to seeing the fruits of our collective efforts." The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission directed the realignment at Niagara Falls. Under that realignment, the 914th AW will remain responsible for its C-130H airlifters. The Air National Guard's 107th Wing will become an air reserve component associate unit, flying and maintaining aircraft with the Air Force Reserve unit. The ARC association at Niagara Falls will be the second of its kind in the Air Force. The first one involved an association between the Reserve's 507th Air Refueling Wing and the Guard's 137th AW, which converted from a C-130 Hercules to a KC-135 Stratotanker unit, at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.

The Air Force Reserve has formed unit associations with the regular Air Force for the past four decades. Associate units save money because they share resources and reduce duplication of effort. They provide contingency surge capability, preserve needed experience, and enhance retention and recruitment for the Total Force. The conversion at Dobbins ARB will increase the Air Force's in-theater airlift capability. At the same time, it will reduce the frequency of deployments for other Total Force C-130 airlift units. The regular Air Force's Tactical Airlift Center of Excellence at Little Rock AFB, Ark., will not only absorb the domestic training done by the 94th AW but will also expand its C-130J training responsibilities, to include training international partners on the C-130J. 2007

C-130 Swap Gives New York Unit Full Complement of Aircraft Sooner Air Force Reserve Command will swap C-130s to accelerate the consolidation of missions and equipment at Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station, N.Y. Beginning this spring, the 914th Airlift Wing at Niagara will exchange its eight C-130H3 airlifters for eight C-130H2 aircraft from the 934th AW at Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn. Another four C-130H2 aircraft will arrive at Niagara from the Air National Guard's 118th AW in Nashville, Tenn. When the transfers are complete sometime this summer, the 914th AW and Air National Guard's 107th Air Refueling Wing at Niagara will share 12 C-130H2s under an air reserve component associate structure. The 914th will own the aircraft, with the Guard providing aircrews and maintainers in the associate relationship. The swap will leave Niagara with an earlier version of the venerable C-130. However, the unit will get the planes two years ahead of schedule. Original plans were for the 914th AW to operate with

eight planes for the next two years. The swap will give the unit the full complement of 12 planes sooner than expected. Additionally, the base will operate with one type of cargo plane, instead of two, which Air Force officials said will reduce training and maintenance costs. The 107th ARW is in the process of transferring its KC-135 Stratotankers elsewhere and taking on the C-130 mission. The wing's first aircraft departed in January. 2008

Members of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing returned home to Scotia, concluding the unit's annual support of US scientific research on Antarctica, according to a wing release. Ski-equipped LC-130 Skibirds from the wing deployed to Antarctica in October and the last of the unit's airmen arrived back home on March 21, states the release. During their nearly five months of activity while operating from McMurdro Station on the barren continent, the airmen completed 310 missions, flying 2,219 hours, transporting 6.4 million pounds of cargo and fuel, and airlifting 3,602 passengers, states the release. "A great deal of hard work goes into planning and executing every deep field mission, but it pays off knowing we are supporting the [research]," said Maj. Joseph DeConno, an LC-130 navigator and chief of current operations. Since the wing began these activities in 1988, its airmen have helped establish more than 100 remote sites in Antarctica for exploration and research, according to the release. In addition to the LC-130s, Air Force C-17s support the Antarctica mission as part of the US military's Operation Deep Freeze. 2013

Air Force Reserve Command's 914th Airlift Wing and the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing officially joined together May 2 at Niagara Falls International Airport Air Reserve Station to form the first-ever C-130 association between units of the two organizations. Both the 914th and 107th will fly C-130H2 model Hercules aircraft while consolidating aircraft maintenance and other expeditionary combat support functions to form a lean, effective combat force. This "new look" will capitalize on and utilize the vast experience of both organizations while offering excess space to other federal and state agencies eager for the security an air reserve station has to offer.

This partnership, mandated by the last Base Realignment and Closure Commission, required the 914th AW to transfer its eight C-130H3 aircraft to other units while accepting 12 C-130H2 models. The 107th AW has begun converting from an air refueling wing to a tactical airlift wing while transferring its KC-135 Stratotankers to other bases. Seizing on an opportunity to save taxpayer money, both wings have formed a team to study ways to consolidate functions and eliminate unneeded infrastructure. When the dust settles, both units will fly and maintain the 12 C-130s, working side by side, both in and out of the cockpit, to form this historic team. Col. Reinhard L. Schmidt, Niagara Falls ARS installation commander and the 914th AW commander, along with Col. Patrick D. Ginavan, 107th AW commander, cemented the first-ever Reserve and Guard C-130 association May 2 with the arrival and acceptance of the first two C-130H2s. One aircraft was transferred from the 934th Airlift Wing at Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn., while the other one came from the ANG's 118th AW in Nashville, Tenn. In the end, the transfer of planes gives the base a full fleet of 12 C-130H2 aircraft two years ahead of schedule.

During the acceptance ceremony, attended by military and elected officials, Colonels Schmidt and Ginavan accepted the two aircraft from the arrival crews and unveiled a new tail flash and poster that illustrates this historic partnership. Charles Schumer, along with U.S. Reps. Louise

Slaughter and Tom Reynolds, all of New York, were instrumental in obtaining the aircraft earlier than originally planned. Additionally, Niagara's congressional delegation secured language in the fiscal year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act that provides funding for modernization of the base's infrastructure.

Representative Slaughter said she and her staff plan on working to make Niagara Falls ARS a "flagship" military installation and an example of efficiency to be emulated around the country. Echoing her sentiments, Maj. Gen. Robert A. Knauff, NY ANG commander, said the Guard is excited about the opportunities posed by this new association. "This is a new thing that no one has actually done before in the mobility community," General Knauff said. "For the C-130 world, both Reserve and Guard, this is the first time ever associating, so we're essentially making it up but doing it really well where each partner has an opportunity for their voices to be heard and maximizing whatever they can bring to this association.

It's a great opportunity." With money for operations being tight and the costs of training people and maintaining aircraft and infrastructure rising, consolidating functions, while sharing resources and expertise, is a sure way to increase the combat power of air units, the general said. Nothing is ever easy when old established ways of doing business are threatened, he said. "Although there may be initial challenges with the association, I see this as a great partnership, and I fully anticipate we will be associated ahead of the BRAC commission timeline scheduled for September 2010," Colonel Schmidt said.

"The benefits of an associate wing will be of value to both units by sharing resources and reducing duplication of effort," Colonel Ginavan said. Today, under the Total Force Initiative, regular Air Force, Reserve and Guard units deploy, work and fight side by side, often making it impossible to determine which organization a military member represents. At Niagara, the goal is for everybody to do things the same as they will when called upon to deploy overseas.

"There are huge gains with this association, creating a synergy for the nation in combining two maintenance groups that are both professional in maintaining 12 C-130H2s," said Col. Sharon Johnson, 914th Maintenance Group commander. "We are going to have incredible availability for aircraft after the transfer is complete this July."

Guardsmen, who once worked on KC-135 air refuelers, are now training with seasoned members of the 914th AW to learn how to maintain the C-130 fleet. It's an enormous job for both units. "Essentially what we've done is set up the largest field training team here at Niagara to help train personnel as soon as possible," said Col. Jim Atkinson, 107th MXG commander. The maintainers aren't the only ones who require training. Crews from the 914th are transitioning from the H-3 to the H-2 which has some mission-related differences. "Training is on track, and the majority of the 914th crews will be converted by the end of July," said Col. Terry Lawrence, 914th Operations Group commander.

"Our crews are aggressively getting checked out in the H-2 and looking forward to lending their expertise to members of the 107th as they learn not only a new aircraft but a completely new mission. "The first of the 107th pilots have returned from formal school training, and the 914th has lent instructors and various crewmembers to aid in their seasoning. We have worked closely with the 107th to help them make a safe and effective transition to the C-130 community." To foster the "Team Niagara" concept, Staff Sgt. Dan Lanphear, public affairs craftsman, designed the associate unit's new tail flash. The artist took his creativity to the next level by hand-sketching artwork that portrays the unity between the Reserve and Guard at

Niagara. The portrait reflects a Frontiersman on one side, representing the 914th AW, and a Minuteman on the other side, representing the 107th AW. Sergeant Lanphear said the two characters symbolize Citizen Airmen united in defense of the United States. A C-130 in the background represents the units' combined combat flying mission.

In addition to its federal mission, the 107th Airlift Wing has a state mission to provide equipment and personnel as directed by the Governor and Division of Military and Naval Affairs. Most recently, members were called out in October of 2006 to support Operation Empire Response, where guardsmen served alongside the Army National Guard assisting in clean-up efforts after a devastating storm hit Western New York. The unit also continues to support Operation Jump Start, securing our national borders, and Operation Empire Shield, guarding New York State's critical assets.

The Air Force's first-ever association between a Reserve and Air National Guard unit is no more. The Guard's 107th Airlift Wing and the Reserve's 914th Airlift Wing joined forces as a result of the 2005 BRAC decision, jointly flying and maintaining 12 aircraft at Niagara Falls ARS, N.Y. "We figured it out and went through all those battles; now we're pulling it apart," said Col. John Higgins, 107th AW commander. Though Higgins said "in a perfect world" he would have liked to have maintained the association for a few more years, he acknowledged he was excited for the wing to take on its new mission flying remotely piloted aircraft. "In the long term, this change will benefit the 107th [AW]," said Higgins. "We are moving into a newer mission. The 107th [AW] has converted missions every five years, it seems, and the RPA mission will stick with us for awhile." Although the partnership officially dissolved on Dec. 31, the two organizations signed an agreement allowing the Guardsmen to continue assisting the 914th AW on a limited basis through Dec. 31, 2014, according to a Jan. 8 release. Eventually, though, the 107th AW will lose 221 personnel and be downgraded from a wing to a group, said Higgins. 2014

The New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station is transitioning from flying C-130 transports to operating MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft. Already the wing has its first certified MQ-9 pilot in place, and a new manning document will take effect on April 1, according to a March 7 wing release. Under the changes, the wing will lose about 200 positions overall, and it will no longer have a maintenance group since no Reapers will actually be based at Niagara Falls, states the release. At the same time, the 107th Operations Group will grow from 90 personnel to more than 220, and Niagara Falls will get a new operations facility by 2017. Col. Robert Kilgore, 107th AW vice commander, said wing leadership realizes that wing personnel are "dealing with a lot of stress in the conversion to the new mission." 2014

Members of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station flew the unit's final mission at the controls of a C-130 transport before converting to their new mission: operating MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft. "We are transitioning from the C-130, which we've been flying since 2008 and have become comfortable with, having deployed with it to Iraq and Afghanistan," said Col. John Higgins, the wing's commander, in an Oct. 1 unit release. "We look to the future with excitement as we take on the MQ-9 mission," he said. The flight took place on Sept. 25. It ended the Air Guard unit's seven-year association operating the C-130s at

Niagara Falls together with Air Force Reserve Command's 914th Airlift Wing. Members of the 107th AW are now training as RPA pilots, sensor operators, intelligence coordinators, and communications specialists. The unit is expected to be fully operational in the RPA mission by 2017. The Reservists of the 914th AW will continue to fly the C-130s. Airmen give a C-130 a water salute to celebrate the final C-130 mission of the New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, Sept. 25, 2014.

The New York Air National Guard's 107th Airlift Wing flew its first unassisted MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft combat air patrol in support of overseas operations last month. Unit RPA pilots and sensor operators flew three CAPs from a ground control station at Ellsworth AFB, S.D., since the 107th AW's facilities at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station are still under construction, according to the unit. "We are 16 months into our three-year conversion and now doing combat operations," 107th AW Commander Col. Robert Kilgore. A total of 23 airmen deployed to Ellsworth for the three-day mission and "everyone hit the ground running, supporting coalition forces with zero degradation to mission execution," added 107th Operations Group Commander Lt. Col. Gary Charlton. The wing flew its final C-130 sortie last September and has logged some 2,000 RPA flying hours since then. The unit plans to reach initial operational capability and begin flying from Niagara, near Buffalo, in 2017. New York's 174th Attack Wing near Syracuse also operates the MQ-9. 2015

Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 29 Sep 2010

Updated:

Sources

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