

354th OPERATIONS GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

354th Fighter Group established, 12 Nov 1942
Activated on 15 Nov 1942
Redesignated 354th Fighter Group, Single-Engine, 20 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 31 Mar 1946
Redesignated 354th Fighter-Day Group, 28 Sep 1956
Activated, 19 Nov 1956
Inactivated, 25 Sep 1957
Redesignated 354th Tactical Fighter Group, 31 Jul 1985
Redesignated 354th Operations Group, 1 Aug 1993
Activated, 20 Aug 1993

STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 15 Nov 1942
Tonapah, NV, 19 Jan 1943
Santa Rosa AAFld, CA, 2 Mar 1943
Portland AAB, OR, 2 Jun-5 Oct 1943
Greenham Common, England, 4 Nov 1943
Boxted, England, 13 Nov 1943
Lashenden, England, 17 Apr 1944
Criqueville, France, c. 22 Jun 1944
Gael, France, 13 Aug 1944
Orconte, France, 17 Sep 1944
Rosieres en Haye, France, 1 Dec 1944
Ober Olm, Germany, 8 Apr 1945

Ansbach, Germany, 30 Apr 1945
Herzogenaurach, Germany, 18 May 1945-15 Feb 1946
Bolling Field, DC, 15 Feb-31 Mar 1946
Myrtle Beach AFB, SC, 19 Nov 1956-25 Sep 1957
Eielson AFB, AK, 20 Aug 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

IV Fighter Command, 15 Nov 1942
Ninth Air Force, 3 Nov 1943
IX Fighter Command, Nov 1943
100th Fighter Wing, 27 Nov 1943
70th Fighter Wing, 2 Dec 1943
100th Fighter Wing, 15 Apr 1944 (under operational control of 70 Fighter Wing, 22 Jun-19 Aug 1944)
XII Tactical Air Command, 4 Jul 1945
Continental Air Forces, 15 Feb 1946
Strategic Air Command, 21-31 Mar 1946
354th Fighter Day Wing, 19 Nov 1956-25 Sep 1957
354th Fighter Wing, 20 Aug 1993

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-39, 1943
P-51, 1943-1944, 1945-1946
P-47, 1944-1945
F-100, 1957
F-16, 1993
OA-10, 1993
A-10, 1994

COMMANDERS

Col Kenneth R. Martin, 26 Nov 1942
Col James H. Howard, 12 Feb 1944
Col George R. Bickell, 14 Apr 1944
LTC Jack T. Bradley (temporary), 29 Feb 1945
Col George R. Bickell, 13 Apr 1945
LTC Jack T. Bradley, 27 May 1945
Maj Robert A. Ackerly, Nov 1945
LTC David L. Lewis, Dec 1945-1946



Col James F. Hackler Jr. (USAF photo)

Col James F. Hackler Jr., 19 Nov 1956-25 Sep 1957

Col Donald L. Sexton, 20 Aug 1993

Col R. Mike Worden, 12 Jun 1995

Col Michael W. Palmer, 14 Apr 1997

Col Thomas W. Hyde, 30 Apr 1999

Col George J. Duda Jr., 16 Feb 2001

Col Gary R. Woltering, 10 Jul 2002

Col Paul T. Johnson, 19 Jul 2004

Col David Skalicky

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

ETO, [Dec] 1943-15 May 1944

France, 25 Aug 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
11 Sep 2000-10 Sep 2002

French Croix de Guerre with Palm
1 Dec 1943-31 Dec 1944

EMBLEM

Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Activated in the US in Nov 1942, the 354th Fighter Group received P-39s in early 1943. While training for combat, it served as part of the air defense force on the West Coast. It moved to England, Oct-Nov 1943, where it was equipped with P-51 Mustangs and assigned to Ninth Air Force. The Group flew its first combat mission on 1 Dec 1943. It received a Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) for its activities up to mid-May 1944, a period in which the 354th was instrumental in the development and execution of long-range missions to escort heavy bombers on raids deep into enemy territory. In addition to its escort work, the group began fighter-bomber operations, strafing and dive-bombing enemy airfields, gun positions, marshalling yards, and vehicles in France, Belgium, and Holland. It supported the Normandy invasion in Jun 1944 by escorting gliders on D-Day and dive-bombing and strafing bridges and railways near the front lines for the next few days.

Moving to the Continent in Jun, it assisted the Allied drive across France by flying close support, armed reconnaissance, fighter sweep, dive bombing, strafing, and escort missions, receiving a second DUC for a series of fighter sweeps in which the group destroyed a large number of enemy aircraft in the air and on the ground on 25 Aug 1944. In Sep 1944, it supported the airborne attack on Holland, attacking and destroying many enemy barges, locomotives, vehicles, buildings, and troops to assist the Allied assault on the Siegfried Line.

In Nov 1944, the group transitioned to P-47 aircraft, and from Dec 1944-Jan 1945, participated in the Battle of the Bulge, by supporting ground forces and conducting armed reconnaissance operations to destroy enemy troops, tanks, artillery, and rail lines. Reequipping with P-51s in Feb 1945, it assisted ground forces in the advance to and across the Rhine, Feb-May 1945. After the conclusion of the war in Europe, it served with the army of occupation.

The group was active for a brief period as part of the 354th Fighter-Day Wing, 19 Nov 1956-25 Sep 1957, training in fighter operations.

On 20 Aug 1993, it became part of the 354th Fighter Wing under the objective wing structure and trained for close air support, battlefield air interdiction, and anti-maritime operations. In addition, it operated Alaskan training ranges and coordinated Cope Thunder exercises.

Air Force Order of Battle

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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. *Myrtle Beach AFB, SC, 354 Fighter-Day Wing, 1957*. Army and Navy Publishing Co, Inc. Baton Rouge, LA. 1957.