

380 AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING



MISSION

LINEAGE

380 Bombardment Group (Heavy) established, 28 Oct 1942
Activated, 3 Nov 1942
Redesignated 380 Bombardment Group, Heavy, 26 Aug 1944
Inactivated, 20 Feb 1946
Redesignated 380 Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, 13 May 1947
Activated in the Reserve, 16 Jun 1947
Redesignated 380 Bombardment Group, Medium, 26 Jun 1949
Ordered to Active Service, 1 May 1951
Inactivated, 16 May 1951

380 Bombardment Wing, Medium established, 23 Mar 1953
Activated, 11 Jul 1955
Redesignated 380 Strategic Aerospace Wing, 15 Sep 1964
Redesignated 380 Bombardment Wing, Medium, 1 Jul 1972

380 Bombardment Group, Medium and 380 Bombardment Wing, Medium consolidated, 31 Jan 1984. Consolidated organization designated 380 Bombardment Wing, Medium.

Redesignated 380 Air Refueling Wing, 1 Jul 1991
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1995
Redesignated 380 Air Expeditionary Wing and converted to provisional status, 4 Dec 2001

STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 3 Nov 1942
Biggs Field, TX, 2 Dec 1942
Lowry Field, CO, 4 Mar-Apr 1943

Fenton Field, Australia, May 1943 (air echelon), 24 Jun 1943 (ground echelon)
Darwin, Australia, 9 Aug 1944
San Jose, Mindoro, 20 Feb 1945
Yontan Airfield, Okinawa, 9 Aug 1945
Fort William McKinley, Luzon, 28 Nov 1945-20 Feb 1946
MacDill Field (later, AFB), FL, 16 Jun 1947-16 May 1951
Plattsburgh AFB, NY, 11 Jul 1955-30 Sep 1995

ASSIGNMENTS

16 Bombardment (later, 16 Bombardment Training) Wing, 3 Nov 1942
V Bomber Command, 28 Apr 1943
310 Bombardment Wing, 24 Mar 1945
V Bomber Command, 9 Aug 1945
VII Bomber Command, 9 Oct 1945
Far East Air Forces, 28 Nov 1945-20 Feb 1946
49 Bombardment Wing (later, 49 Air Division), 16 Jun 1947
Fifteenth Air Force (attached to 307 Bombardment Group), 26 Jun 1949
Second Air Force, 1 Apr 1950-16 May 1951
Eighth Air Force, 11 Jul 1955
820 Air (later, 820 Strategic Aerospace) Division, 1 Feb 1956
817 Air Division, 25 Jun 1965
45 Air Division, 1 Jul 1968
817 Air Division, 2 Jul 1969
45 Air Division, 30 Jun 1971
Eighth Air Force, 29 Mar 1989
Fifteenth Air Force, 1 Sep 1991
Twenty-First Air Force, 1 Jul 1993-30 Sep 1995
Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 4 Dec 2001

ATTACHMENTS

Northwest Area Command, Royal Australian Air Force, 1 Jun 1943-Jan 1945
7 Air Division, 3 Apr-3 Jul 1957

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1942-1945
Unkn, 1947-1948
B-29 1949-1950
Unkn, 1951
B-47E, 1955
KC-97G, 1956
EB-47, 1963-1964
Atlas, 1964-1965
KC-135A, 1964
KC-135Q

B-52G, 1966-1971
FB-111A, 1971-1991
KC-10A, 1993-1994

COMMANDERS

None (not manned), 3-26 Nov 1942
Col William A. Miller, 27 Nov 1942
Lt Col Forrest L. Brissey Jr., 10 Feb 1944
Lt Col John M. Henschke, 4 Sep 1944 (acting)
Col Forrest L. Brissey Jr., 23 Oct 1944
Lt Col Gayle S. Cox, 30 Aug 1945
Col David A. Tate, 8 Sep 1945-unkn
Lt Col Charles W. Dean, 16 Jun 1947-unkn
Col Alvan N. Moore, 11 Jul 1955
Col Alvan C. Gillem II, 20 Dec 1957
Col Harold J. Whiteman, 1 Apr 1961
Col Robert G. Moll, 25 Jun 1965
Col Wallace Wall Jr., 10 Jul 1965
Col Warren D. Johnson, 1 Jul 1966
Col Howard P. McClain, 1 Jul 1967
Col Wesley L. Pendergraft, 7 Apr 1969
Col Gerhard R. Abendhoff, 20 Feb 1970
Col John M. Parker, 14 Jun 1972
Col Donald R. Nicholas, 19 Apr 1973
Col Robert E. Chapman, 8 Mar 1974
Col Earl T. O'Loughlin, 12 Apr 1974
Col John R. Shipe, 18 Jul 1975
Col Harold J. M. Williams, 26 Jul 1977
Brig Gen Thomas G. Tobin, 17 May 1979
Col Charles J. Searock Jr., 23 Jun 1981
Col George W. Larson Jr., 16 Jun 1983
Col Raymund E. O'Mara, 10 Mar 1984 (temporary)
Col George W. Larson Jr., 15 Apr 1984
Col Raymund E. O'Mara, 10 Jun 1985
Col C. Jerome Jones, 20 Jun 1986
Col Richard N. Goddard, 19 Jan 1988
Col J. Paul Malandrino Jr., 6 Jun 1989
Col Larry J. Leturmy, 29 Aug 1991
Col James E. Andrews, 26 Aug 1992
Col Robert E. Dawson, 1 Oct 1993-unkn
Brig Gen Kevin Schneider
Brig Gen John Quintas

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Bismarck Archipelago
New Guinea
Luzon
Southern Philippines
Western Pacific
Air Offensive, Japan
China Defensive
China Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers
Grenada, 1983

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Borneo, 13, 15, and 17 Aug 1943
New Guinea, 20 Apr-17 May 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1974-30 Jun 1975
1 Jul 1979-30 Jun 1981
1 Jul 1983-30 Jun 1985

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

EMBLEM

380 Bombardment Wing emblem: On a shield azure, two cloud formations argent, fesswise, one issuing from dexter enhanced, one from sinister abased surmounted by a sword in pale, point to base or, hilt, grip and pommel gules, entwined with an olive branch vert. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The blue shield of our shield with the white clouds symbolizes the primary theater of concern to our Strategic Air Command. The golden bladed sword, with red hilt and pommel is emblematic of military honor and strength. These qualities are engendered in every member of our Bombardment Wing. The sword is entwined with an olive branch, the badge of peace. Our emblem is symbolical of the truth that peace can be realized by maintaining strength in the air. (Approved, 29 Nov 1955)

380 Air Expeditionary Wing emblem: Azure, two cloud formations Argent, fesswise, one issuing from dexter enhanced, one from sinister abased surmounted by a sword in pale, point to base Or, hilt, grip and pommel Gules, entwined with an olive branch Vert, all within a diminutive bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "380 AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force

yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The clouds within a field symbolize the "wild blue yonder." The sword signifies military honor and strength, qualities which are engendered in every member of the unit. The entwined olive branch symbolizes peace maintained through strength in the sky. (Approved, 26 Nov 1956)

MOTTO

STRENGTH AND CONFIDENCE
THE FLYING CIRCUS

OPERATIONS

The 380 Bombardment Group was established on 21 November 1942. Initial personnel were drawn from the 39th Bomb Group stationed at Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona.

They started 5 months of extensive training prior to moving to the South West Pacific area. They started to acquire B-24 Liberators and personnel to form the Bomb Group. During this time they had two fatal crashes. A B-24 flown by Lt. Willeg of the 528th Squadron crashed with only one person surviving. On 19 February 1943 the aircraft flown by Lt. Oscar Cantrell of the 530th Squadron had a cockpit fire. Eight of his crew were able to bail out. Unfortunately Cantrell and his navigator Lt. John N. Gessenger were both killed when the B-24 crashed about 20 miles north of Biggs Field.

On 1 March 1943, the air echelon of the 380 Bomb Group relocated to Lowry Field, Denver, Colorado. Here they engaged in long cross country flights. While at Lowry Field Capt. Zed S. Smith took over as CO of 528th Bomb Squadron and Capt. Fred Miller became CO of the 530th Bomb Squadron.

The air echelon of the 380 Bomb Group relocated to Topeka, Kansas on 4th and 5th April 1943 where they picked up their aircraft to take to Australia. The ground echelon moved to Camp Stoneman, California.

On 14 April 1943, Operations Order #273 issued through the 11th Ferrying Group, ATC, at Hamilton Field, California approved the immediate deployment of the 380 Bombardment Group to V Bomber Command in the 5th Air Force. The first of thirty eight B-24 Liberators left for Australia the following day. They arrived at Amberley airfield west of Brisbane between 22 and 30 April 1943.

The 380 Bomb Group was assigned to Fenton airfield in the Northern Territory in the RAAF's North West Area of operation. They were temporarily diverted to Charters Towers airfield in north Queensland where they received in-theater modifications. The 528th Squadron were the first to leave Amberley airfield on 28 April 1943. While at Fenton airfield the 380 made some of the longest bombing missions of World War 2 such as their raids on the oil refineries at Balikpapan in Java. They bombed airfields in the East Indies and Japanese shipping. Fifty two Australians crews and ground personnel were trained by the 380 Bomb Group.

Moved to Australia, May-Jun 1943. Group Headquarters and two squadrons operated from Fenton Field while the other two squadrons were located 100 miles away at Long Strip. Attached to the Royal Australian Air Force, the 380 assisted in securing Australia's Darwin area in the Northern Territory against the threatened Japanese invasion by flying armed reconnaissance patrols that began in May 1943. Received a Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) for a series of long-range attacks on oil refineries, shipping, and dock facilities in Balikpapan, Borneo, in Aug 1943. Repeatedly bombed enemy airfields in western New Guinea during Apr and May 1944 in support of American landings in the Hollandia area, for which it received its second DUC. Trained Australian crews to operate B-24s, May-Dec 1944. Moved to Darwin in Aug 1944 and to Mindoro in Feb-Mar 1945 where it flew air strikes against ground forces on Luzon, industries on Formosa, oil refineries in Borneo, railways and shipping in French Indochina, and ground installations on the China coast. Following cessation of hostilities, moved to Okinawa in Aug 1945; flew armed reconnaissance patrols over Japanese islands and ferried former prisoners of war from Japan to Manila. Reassigned to Seventh Air Force in Oct 1945 and participated in the Sunset Project – the return of B-24s and their crews to the United States. Reduced to a paper unit in Nov 1945, moved to Manila and inactivated on 20 Feb 1946.

Active briefly in the Reserve, Jun 1947-May 1951. Trained in strategic bombardment, Aug 1955-Dec 1965. Conducted combat training through a wing detachment at Pinecastle AFB, FL, 10 Jan-25 Jun 1956, while Plattsburgh AFB facilities were completed. The first B-47 to be permanently assigned at Plattsburgh arrived on 1 Jun 1956. Received KC-97s in 1956 and flew worldwide air refueling missions, Sep 1956-Apr 1961 and again following receipt of KC-135s in Sep 1964.

Deployed at Brize Norton RAF Station, England, 3 Apr-3 Jul 1957. Conducted overseas alert in England, Jan 1959-Mar 1965. Service tested a "super wing" concept (70 B-47s and 40 KC-97s), Jul 1959-Jun 1960. Flew EB-47 post attack command control missions, Jul 1962-Nov 1964. Briefly controlled Atlas ICBM operations, Sep 1964-Apr 1965. Commenced global strategic bombardment training with B-52s in Jun 1966 and continued through Jan 1971. Converted to FB-111 1971. Served as the single FB-111 combat crew training organization, 1971-1990. Flew air refueling support to aircraft participating in restoration of democracy in Grenada, Oct-Nov 1983.

Beginning Oct 1990, personnel deployed to several locations during the buildup to the war in Southwest Asia. Tankers provided aerial refueling and airlift services to the Kuwaiti Theater. Replaced another wing as "lead wing" forming the 1703rd Air Refueling Wing, Provisional, at King Khalid Intl Aprt (Riyadh), Saudi Arabia, from late Oct 1990 to Mar 1991.

Lost last FB-111 in Jul 1991 and redesignated to Air Refueling Wing. Gained three geographically separated air refueling squadrons (KC-135s) in Jun 1992 and the 458th Operations Group (flying KC-135s and KC-10s) in Jul 1993. Prepared to close Plattsburgh AFB from late 1993. All refueling operations had ceased by 1 Oct 1994.

USAF Unit Histories
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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.