

474th FIGHTER BOMBER GROUP



LINEAGE

474th Fighter Group constituted, 26 May 1943

Activated, 1 Aug 1943

Inactivated, 8 Dec 1945

Redesignated 474th Fighter Bomber Group

Activated, 10 Jul 1952

STATIONS

Glendale, CA, 1 Aug 1943

Van Nuys Metropolitan Aprt, CA, 11 Oct 1943

Oxnard Flight Strip, CA, 5 Jan-6 Feb 1944

Moreton, England, 12 Mar 1944

Neully, France, 6 Aug 1944

St Marceau, France, 29 Aug 1944

Peronne, France, 6 Sep 1944

Florennes, Belgium, 1 Oct 1944

Strassfeld, Germany, 22 Mar 1945

Langen-salza, Germany, 22 Apr 1945

Schweinfurt, Germany, 16 Jun 1945

Stuttgart, Germany, 25 Oct-21 Nov 1945

Camp Kilmer, NJ, 6-8 Dec 1945
Misawa, Japan, 10 Jul 1952
Kunsan, Korea, 10 Jul 1952
Taegu, Korea, 1 Apr 1953-22 Nov 1954
Clovis AFB, NM, 13 Dec 1954-8 Oct 1957

ASSIGNMENTS

Ninth AF
Tactical Air Command

ATTACHMENTS

Far East Air Force

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-38
F-84
F-86

COMMANDERS

Col Clinton C. Wasem, 1 Aug 1943
LTC Earl C. Hedlund, 17 Feb 1945
LTC David L. Lewis, Apr 1945-unkn
LTC William L. Jacobsen, 10 Jul 1952
LTC Francis J. Vetort, 29 Aug 1952
Col Joseph Davis, Jr., 16 Dec 1952
Col Richard N. Ellis, 1953
Col John S. Loisel, May 1953-unkn
Col Franklin H. Scott, May 1954

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Korean War
Korea Summer-Fall, 1952
Third Korean Winter
Korea Summer-Fall, 1953

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

France, 23 Aug 1944

Korea, 1 Dec 1952-30 Apr 1953

Cited in the Order of the Day, Belgian Army

6 Jun-30 Sep 1944

16 Dec 1944-25 Jan 1945

Belgian Fourragere

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

10 Jul 1952-30 Mar 1953

EMBLEM

Shield: Per bend azure and or, in bend a lightning bolt throughout bend-wise gules, fimbriated or, between a sphere argent, grid lines sable, and a stylized jet tail pipe vert, emitting eight fire blasts gules, the pipe charged with an annulet of the first, fimbriated or, a semee of stars of the fourth on the azure field. (Approved, 22 Jun 1955)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Flew first combat mission, an area patrol along the coast of France, on 25 Apr 1944. Attacked bridges and railroads in France in preparation for the Normandy invasion. Provided cover for the invasion force that was crossing the Channel on the night of 5/6 Jun and flew bombing missions to support the landings on the following day. Began armed reconnaissance missions after D-Day to assist ground forces, and attacked highways and troops to aid the Allied breakthrough at St Lo, 25 Jul.

Moved to the Continent in Aug 1944 for continued operations in support of ground forces.. Bombed and strafed such targets as airfields, hangars, railroads, bridges, highways, barges, fuel dumps, ammunition depots, gun emplacements, and troop concentrations until the end of the war; also escorted bombers that struck marshalling yards, factories, cities, and other objectives. Received a DUG for a mission in France on 23 Aug 1944: participating in a joint air-ground attack against retreating enemy forces in the Falaise-Argentan area, the group discovered an immense quantity of enemy equipment massed along the Seine River; despite severe fire from small arms and from anti-aircraft guns that the Germans had placed at two bridges to protect the materiel and cover the retreat, the group repeatedly bombed and strafed the enemy, knocking out motor transports, barges, bridges, and other objectives, thereby disrupting the evacuation and enabling Allied ground forces to capture German troops and equipment. Other operations included bombardment of flak positions near Eindhoven in advance of British i Airborne Division during the attack on Holland in

Sep 1944; participation in the Battle of the Bulge, Dec 1944~Jan 1945; and patrols along the route of the airborne assault across the Rhine in Mar 1945. Continued operations until V-E

Served in combat from Aug 1952 until the armistice in Jul 1953, operating from Korea. Bombed and strafed such targets as bunkers, troops, artillery positions, bridges, vehicles, airfields, and power plants, and sometimes escorted bombers that attacked munitions factories and other objectives.

The 474th Fighter-Bomber Group entered combat on August 1, 1952, joining the Fifth Air Force campaign against communist supply centers, transportation targets, and troop concentrations. During its first few weeks, the group's F 84s shredded a large troop concentration near the capital city of Pyongyang, broke up a MiG attack, hit a munitions factory ten miles south of the Yalu River, and destroyed a political military instruction center. In November the 474th FBG started flying night interdiction missions to interfere with the enemy's movement of supplies. Its Thunderjets escorted B 26 Marauders on bombing operations in MiG Alley; flew flak suppression missions for strikes on heavily defended targets: conducted armed reconnaissance of the communist rear to gain intelligence information; and ranged over the front lines to strafe and bomb trenches, bunkers, troop shelters, and heavy weapons positions. In January 1953 the group's attention shifted to communications centers, training complexes, and strategic targets rebuilt after earlier raids. Over the next three months the F 84s struck the Sinanju rail facility on a major supply artery between the North Korean capital and the Manchurian border, an industrial area around Kyomipo located southwest of the capital, and the North Korean Tank and Infantry School west of Pyongyang. Effective April 1, 1953, in a name change only, the 474th and 49th Fighter-Bomber Groups switched places, with the 474th assuming the personnel and equipment of the 49th FBG at Taegu AB. Only the 430th FBS physically moved to Taegu. After April 1, the 474th FBG came under the operational control of the 58th FEW in a test of the "reinforced wing." On the day before the armistice went into effect, Thunderjets of the 474th Group bombed the Chunggangjin Airfield to prevent the buildup of enemy aircraft in the last hours of the war.

Components.

428th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952
429th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952 .
430th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-.

Stations.

MisawaAB, Japan, July 10, 1952; Kunsan AB, South Korea, July 10, 1952;
Taegu AB, South Korea, April 1, 1953

Commanders.

Lt. Col. William L. Jacobsen, July 10, 1952; Lt. Col. Francis J. Vetort, August 29, 1952; Col. Joseph Davis, Jr., December 16, 1952; Col. Richard N. Ellis, April 1953; Col. John S. Loisel, May 1953

Campaign Streamers.

Korea, Summer-Fall 1952; Third Korean Winter; Korea, Summer 1953.

Decorations.

Distinguished Unit Citation for actions December 1, 1952 April 30, 1953.

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation for period July 10, 1952 March 30, 1953.

The 474th Fighter Bomber Group arrived at Clovis AFB directly from Taegu, Korea, where it was an integral part of the 58th Fighter Bomber Wing.

Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, the 474th was a fighter bomber wing based at Misawa, Japan, and under the operational control of Fifth Air Force. At this time Fifth Air Force was a major component of the Japan Air Defense Force.

On the invasion of South Korea, tactical air units in the theater were promptly deployed to meet the emergency and the 474th Wing was redeployed to Kunsan, Korea.

In July 1952, aircraft of the 474th participated in the great raids on the hydro-electric power plants along the Yalu river and numerous attacks were made on supplies, facilities and equipment.

The biggest raid of August 1952, was against the city of Pyongyang. In September the attacks were continued against targets in close support of United Nations ground forces.

During October, in accordance with a Far East Air Force directive, the 474th Wing stepped up the tempo of its offensive air effort with intensified air attacks designed to produce a definite psychological impact upon the enemy.

The intensified air effort was ended the latter part of October and offensive attacks returned to a normal level of operation.

In November and December 1952, 474th "Thunderjets" continued attacks on enemy front line troop positions, supply routes and buildings.

Besides every day support of the United Nations ground forces, the 474th teamed up with elements from every Fifth Air Force combat unit in January 1953, for round-the-clock raids against key rail and bridge networks northwest of Sinanju.

During February and March 1953, raids were limited due to weather conditions which impeded air strikes. On days the weather permitted flying, the 474th attacks were directed against enemy positions all over North Korea. Specified raids were on an enemy munitions processing plant near Sunchon, and enemy troop concentrations near Wonsan.

On April 1, 1953, the 474th Wing was redeployed from Kunsan to Taegu, where it became an element of the 58th Fighter Bomber Wing, as a fighter bomber group. This made the 58th the largest fighter bomber wing in Korea as it had two tactical groups, the 58th and 474th Fighter Bomber Groups.

Redeployment did not hamper the 474th's combat effectiveness. With the coming of spring and melting snows, "Operation Spring Thaw" was thrown into high gear with the Group participating heavily. "Spring Thaw" was a Fifth Air Force wide program designed for the purpose of disrupting the communist's efforts to move supplies to the front under the protective cloak of unoperational weather.

Not only were supply lines knocked out by the 474th's pilots participating in the raids, but under the flood conditions, the communist's ability to repair the extensive damage was greatly impaired. The 474th Groups' effort was by no means confined to "Operation Spring Thaw." They continued to strike deep into enemy territory.

Weather permitting, the F-84s shuttled back and forth from K-2 to the knobby hills of the battle line, racing against darkness and constantly changing weather conditions. During the peak periods, pilots of the 474th often flew as many as four and five missions in a single day.

On 1 July 1953, the mission of the 474th Fighter Bomber Group was almost totally concerned with the objectives of a limited war.

In an attempt to halt the communists aggressive ground tactic, the 474th Fighter Bomber Group participated in a total of 2207 close support attacks.

The specific object of the 474th Group was the destruction of North Korean airfields to prevent a last minute influx of enemy planes and material.

On 22 July 1953, in one mission led by Lt. Col. Douglas Montgomery, who was then executive officer of the 474th Group, 30 out of a total of 40 bombs were placed along the entire length of a runway at the Suncheon Airfield.

On the 27th of July, four and one-half hours after the signing of the truce, pilots of the 474th were dropping their bombs on an airfield adjacent to the Yalu river. This was one of the last and one of the deepest penetrations of the entire war. Shortly after the last flight returned and touched down, the shooting war was over.

When the hostilities stopped, there was the job of rehabilitating the South Korean refugees.

The Armed Forces Assistance to Korea program was launched and the men of the 474th found a small village in the vicinity of the airbase where school children were sitting out on the ground. They had no pencils or paper, and only one book which the teacher used to give oral lessons. There was a small building on the grounds, but it was not big enough for all the school aged children of the village. The roof of the building leaked and there were no windows.

AFAK material for rebuilding and enlarging the school was delivered to the village and the men of the 474th volunteered their off-duty time to work with the villagers in constructing a new building. On Easter Sunday, 1954, the village held a completion ceremony in honor of the 474th Fighter Bomber Group personnel. As they stepped out of their vehicles and walked to tables prepared for

them, the people applauded and cheered.

Air Force recognition for supreme war achievements during Korean action came to the 474th Fighter Bomber groups, August 27, 1954. A formal review and retreat ceremony was held at the Taegu Air Base, in honor of the group while Lt. Gen. Roger M. Ramey, Fifth Air Force Commander, presented them with the Distinguished Unit Citation.

The 474th Fighter Bomber Group has returned to the United States as a unit. The men assigned to the organization now and those who were with it during the fighting can be proud of its record. They helped to make it. At Clovis Air Force Base, the men of the 474th are training in the new F-86H. They are glad to be back in the United States, but ready to go anywhere they are needed to fulfill the Group's portion of the Air Force Mission.

Formed as the 474th Fighter Group on 26 May 1943 and activated on 1 August 1943, the group began training with P-38 Lightnings before moving to England in early 1944, being assigned to the Ninth Air Force. The Group operated from England for about five months before moving to bases on the continent, chiefly in France and Belgium. The group was mainly used in the ground support role. The P-38 served with the 474th throughout the Second World War. The group returned to the United States in November of 1945 and was deactivated at Camp Kilner, New Jersey on 8 December 1945.

The 474th Fighter Bomber Group, as it was redesignated, was next to see action in Korea. Activated in Japan on 10 July 1952, it was assigned to Tactical Air Command and equipped with the F-84 Thunderjet. It was attached to the Far East Air Forces and saw combat in Korea from 10 July 1952 to 1 April 1953. After its tour of duty in Korea, the unit returned to the United States and was deactivated in November of 1954.

1943 - October, U.S. Army established 474th Fighter Group, Metropolitan Airport, Van Nuys, flying Lockheed P-38 Lightnings.

1 October 1943 to 4 January 1944

428th Fighter Squadron (Code F5) P-38 Lightning

429th Fighter Squadron (Code 7Y) P-38 Lightning

430th Fighter Squadron (Code K6) P-38 Lightning

The silver Super Sabers at the south end of Cannon's ramp represent the fourth generation of aircraft which have armed the proud men of the 474th Tactical Fighter Wing. The first generation was P-38s which equipped the original 474th Fighter Group after its activation on Aug. 1, 1943. In February and March 1944, they moved to Moreton, England and flew into action along the coast of France. Once France was secured, the 474th moved in for operation from Neuilly, France. They moved throughout France, Belgium and Germany to keep their P-38s in the thick of the action until V-E Day. In November and December 1945, they returned to the United States, and on Dec. 8, 1945, the 474th was inactivated. On July 10, 1952, the 474th was reactivated, armed with F-84s, and assigned to the Tactical Air Command and attached to the Far East Forces for duty in the Korean War. F-86s

were phased into the 474th inventory and in November and December 1954, they appeared in the skies over Eastern New Mexico. The 474th Fighter-Bomber Group had come to Clovis Air Force Base.

474th Tactical Fighter Wing

Formed as the 474th Fighter Group on 26 May 1943 and activated on 1 August 1943, the group began training with P-38 before moving to England in early 1944, being assigned to the Ninth Air Force. The Group operated from England for about five months before moving to bases on the continent, chiefly in France and Belgium. The group was mainly used in the ground support role. The P-38 served with the 474th throughout the Second World War. The group returned to the United States in November of 1945 and was deactivated at Camp Kilner, New Jersey on 8 December 1945.

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On 8 October 1957, the 474th Fighter Bomber Group was reactivated and assigned to Tactical Air Command, being based at Cannon AFB, New Mexico. Equipped with the F-100D, the group was made up of four squadrons: the 428th (Blue), 429th (Yellow), 430th (Red) and the 478th (Green). The unit markings consisted of a chevron design on the fin in the individual squadron color. Markings around the aircraft's nose were not usually carried but there were one or two exceptions, such as the commander's F-100D (56-3176) which carried multi-colored tail chevrons and corresponding nose bands representing the squadrons under his command.

Another aircraft, 56-3101 of the 429th Fighter Squadron, carried the usual Yellow and Black tail chevrons and also a broad Yellow nose band with a Black border. Bands of Red, Yellow and Medium Blue were carried around the fuselage and drop tanks (these markings may have been adopted for a Gunnery Meet or other special purpose).

Some aircraft also carried the 832nd Air Division insignia below the windscreen after the wing was assigned to this Air Division. During 1960, the squadron markings were removed and replaced by the TAC badge. The F-100s served with the wing until late 1965, during which time the 429th Squadron saw action in Southeast Asia.

Known Aircraft:

428th TFS: 56-3068 and 56-3176 (Commander's aircraft)

429th TFS: 56-3101

430th TFS: 56-3172, 56-3908(F) and 56-3124

478th TFS: 56-2935 and 56-3068

The 474th FBG was attached to the 312th FBW on 22 December 1954. The group came from the Far East Air Force (FEAF) and its pilots were combat veterans. Its pilots were divided between itself and the 312th FBG and the vacancies within each group were filled with 312th pilots who didn't have combat experience. Thus, experience was spread through the two groups and the inexperienced pilots got the benefit of lessons learned from veterans, no matter which group they were assigned to.

The nose gear door problem continued on 1 March when a 474th FBG F-86H lost yet another door in flight, damaging the leading edge of the left wing and hitting connections to the left wing external fuel tank. Post accident examination revealed the door hinge had been cracked on an earlier flight. Over-tight door actuator linkage were found on some aircraft and adjustments made. Landing gear cycling speed was reduced once again, this time to a maximum of 200 knots.

On 30 April, a 474th FBG Sabre caught fire during engine start. Flames poured from the air intake and engine exhaust and the best effort of base fire fighters couldn't bring the fire under control. The plane was nearly completely destroyed. Preliminary investigation pointed to a possible starter disintegration. The problems with the engine starters caused a two-day lapse in flying, during May, while the wing's Sabres were inspected. A shortage of replacement starters created a multitude of problems as planes were put out of commission. Engine buildup (preparing newly arrived engines for installation in the aircraft) couldn't be completed. Engine flameouts and starter problems continued to plague the wing during the month.

Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 4 Jan 2011
Updated:

Sources
Unit History. 312th Fighter Bomber Wing. Clovis AFB, NM, 1955.