

## 509<sup>th</sup> WEAPONS SQUADRON



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

609<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 15 Feb 1943

Activated, 1 Mar 1943

Disbanded, 10 Apr 1944

509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, Medium constituted, 30 Jun 1948

Activated, 19 Jul 1948

Discontinued and inactivated, 25 Jun 1965

Redesignated 509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy, and activated, 8 Aug 1966

Organized, 2 Oct 1966

609<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) Reconstituted and consolidated with 509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, Medium, 19 Sep 1985. Consolidated organization designated 509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy

Redesignated 509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron, 1 Sep 1991

Inactivated, 1 Oct 1994

Redesignated 509<sup>th</sup> Weapons Squadron, 30 May 2003

Activated, 1 Jun 2003

#### STATIONS

Pyote AAB, TX, 1 Mar 1943

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 11 Apr 1943

Pueblo AAB, CO, c. 2 May 1943  
Smoky Hill AAFld, KS, 31 Jul 1943  
Alamogordo AAFld, NM, 19 Sep 1943  
Charleston AAFld, SC, 15 Dec 1943-10 Apr 1944  
Walker AFB, NM, 19 Jul 1948  
Pease AFB, NH, 5 Jan 1958-25 Jun 1965  
Pease AFB, NH, 2 Oct 1966  
Griffiss AFB, NY, 1 Jul 1990-1 Oct 1994  
Fairchild AFB, WA, 1 Jun 2003

### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Upper Heyford RAF Station, England, 4 Jun-3 Sep 1952  
Thule AB, Greenland, 17 Jun 1955-3 Aug 1955  
Lakenheath, England, 26 Jan-1 May 1956

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

400<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 1 Mar 1943-10 Apr 1944  
509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 19 Jul 1948  
509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1952  
817<sup>th</sup> Air Division, 5 Jan 1958  
509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 8 Jul 1958-25 Jun 1965  
509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 2 Oct 1966  
416<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 1 Jul 1990  
416<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991  
380<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 1 Jun 1992-1 Oct 1994  
USAF Mobility Weapons School, 1 Jun 2003

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-24, 1943-1944\B-24D  
B-24H  
KB-29M  
KB-29P, 1948-1954  
KC-97G, 1954-1965  
KC-135A, 1966-1994

### **COMMANDERS**

Cpt Leonard R. Ledbetter, 1 Mar 1943  
LTC J. C. Bailey, Oct 1943  
Maj Edmund F. Freeman, 15 Jan 1944  
Cpt Malcolm M. Brown, 3 Feb-10 Apr 1944  
Maj Herbert E. Wunderlich, Jul 1948  
Maj Philip Y. Williams, 4 Aug 1948  
Unkn, 21 Sep 1948-Aug 1949  
LTC Leslie W. Holman, Aug 1949

LTC Sherman F. Martin, 1950  
Col Howard E. Jackson, 21 May 1951  
LTC Robert T. Larkin, 1 Jul 1952  
Maj Norman L. Harvey, 20 Oct 1952  
Maj Theodore J. Tanner, May 1953  
LTC Dale G. Boccock, Apr 1955  
LTC Gaylord B. Jannot, May 1955  
Maj John R. Smith, Feb 1956  
Maj Russell A. Downey, 1 Jun 1957  
LTC Howard W. Slaton, 25 Feb 1958  
LTC Jack H. Ingham, 26 Jul 1961  
LTC Raymond L. Miller, 25 May 1963  
LTC John M. Gaither, 20 Apr 1964  
LTC Roger G. Altman, 1 May-25 Jun 1965  
LTC Bernard R. Simon, 2 Oct 1966  
LTC Samuel W. Tyson, 20 Jun 1968  
LTC Charles Hunter, 28 Sep 1969  
LTC William Petersen, 1 Sep 1971  
LTC James R. Wilson, 1 Dec 1972  
LTC Conrad L. Wilson, 10 Apr 1973  
LTC James W. Herman, 6 Jun 1974  
LTC George W. Pyle, 1 Dec 1975  
LTC Gerald E. Bozeman, 7 Apr 1977  
LTC Walter J. Skaggs, 2 Jan 1979  
LTC Dennis P. Tewell, 2 Sep 1980  
LTC John R. Kuester, 14 Jul 1982  
LTC Russell W. Fitch Jr., 20 Sep 1983  
LTC David F. Roll, 21 May 1985  
LTC Brent E. Chapman, 19 Jun 1986  
LTC Sidney P. Dubois, 29 Apr 1988  
LTC James R. Welteroth, 12 Dec 1989  
LTC David L. Fundarek, 1 Jul 1990  
LTC Michael D. Brashear, 1 Jun 1992  
LTC Michael D. Scarce, 4 Jun 1993  
Maj Gary H. Mueller, 13 Aug 1994  
None (not manned) 29 Sep-1 Oct 1994

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

World War II American Theater

### **Campaign Streamers**

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation of Kuwait

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device  
5 Mar-2 Jun 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr-1 Oct 1968

1 Jul 1979-30 Jun 1980

1 Jul 1981-30 Jun 1982

1 Jul 1982-30 Jun 1984

1 Jul 1985-30 Jun 1987

1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1991

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

5 Mar 1969-2 Jun 1969

### **EMBLEM**



509<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Squadron

509<sup>th</sup> Weapons Squadron emblem: On a disc Argent, a Pegasus in flight Gules, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "509TH WEAPONS SQUADRON" in Yellow 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 Pegasus, Zeus's servant, has Greek mythological origins as a symbol of swiftness, regeneration and victory. (Approved, 12 Sep 1957)

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

Trained crews for B-24 aircraft operations May-Dec 1943; replacement training unit, Dec 1943-Feb 1944. Refueled tactical and strategic aircraft and trained combat crews, Jul 1948- Jun 1965. Worldwide air refueling operations, 1966-1994; supported the wars in Vietnam in the late 1960s, Southwest Asia in 1991, and numerous contingency operations.

First Air Refueling Squadrons Activated - In preparation for the assignment of tanker aircraft, the 43d and 509th Air Refueling Squadrons were activated at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, and Roswell Air Force Base, New Mexico, on 19 July. Assigned to the 43d and 509th Bomb Groups, these two squadrons were the first air refueling units in the United States Air Force. They began receiving tanker aircraft in late 1948. These first tankers were simply B-29s modified to carry and dispense fuel in the air. Employing the British- developed system of in-flight refueling, that is, the use of trailing hoses and grapnel hooks, these tankers were designated KB-29Ms. 1948

24 September 1968 A Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker crash during an emergency landing at Wake Island produces the first tanker casualty in the Southeast Asia war. The Aircraft is 55-3133 assigned to the 509th Air Refueling Squadron, 509th Bombardment Wing, assigned to Pease AFB, New Hampshire. The crash claims 11 Arc Light support personnel, assigned to the 509th Field Maintenance Squadron, redeploying from U-Tapao Air Base, Thailand.