

## 522nd SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE<sup>1</sup>

16th Bombardment Squadron (Light) constituted, 22 Dec 1939  
Activated, 1 Feb 1940  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 23 Aug 1943  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 30 May 1944  
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945  
Activated, 20 Aug 1946  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 22 Jul 1947  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter Squadron, Jet, 1 Dec 1949  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter Escort Squadron, 1 Feb 1950  
Redesignated 522nd Strategic Fighter Squadron, 20 Jan 1953  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Jul 1957  
Redesignated 522nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958  
Redesignated 522nd Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991

### STATIONS

Barksdale Field, LA, 1 Feb 1940  
Hunter Field, GA, 7 Oct 1940–19 Oct 1941  
Ft William McKinley, Luzon, 20 Nov 1941

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<sup>1</sup> Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.  
Unit yearbook. *Cannon AFB, NM, Home of the 832 Air Division*. Army and Navy Publishing Co Inc. 1959.  
Unit history. *Bergstrom AFB, TX, 27<sup>th</sup> Strategic Fighter Wing*. 1955.

Lipa Airfield, Luzon, 22 Dec 1941  
Cabcaben, Luzon, 25 Dec 1941 (air echelon operated from Brisbane, Australia, 24 Dec 1941–16 Feb 1942); Bataan, Luzon, 29 Dec 1941 (air echelon operated from Batchelor, Australia, 17 Feb–8 Mar 1942, and from Brisbane, Australia, 10–25 Mar 1942)  
Charters Towers, Australia, Apr–4 May 1942  
Hunter Field, GA, 4 May 1942  
Key Field, MS, 14 Jul 1942  
Hattiesburg, MS, 15 Aug 1942  
Harding Field, LA, 25 Oct–21 Nov 1942  
Ste-Barbe-du-Tlelat, Algeria, 26 Dec 1942  
Nouvion, Algeria, 5 Jan 1943  
Ras el Ma, French Morocco, 4 Apr 1943  
Korba, Tunisia, c. 8 Jun 1943  
Gela, Sicily, 18 Jul 1943  
Barcelona, Sicily, 3 Sep 1943  
Capaccio, Italy, 18 Sep 1943  
Paestum, Italy, 4 Nov 1943  
Pomigliano, Italy, 19 Jan 1944  
Castel Volturno, Italy, 10 Apr 1944  
Santa Maria, Italy, 9 May 1944  
Le Banca, Italy, 7 Jun 1944  
Ciampino, Italy, 12 Jun 1944  
Voltone, Italy, 4 Jul 1944  
Serragia, Corsica, 10 Jul 1944  
Le Luc, France, 25 Aug 1944  
Salon, France, 30 Aug 1944  
Loyettes, France, 11 Sep 1944  
Tarquinia, Italy, 2 Oct 1944  
Pontedera, Italy, 3 Dec 1944  
St Dizier, France, 21 Feb 1945  
Toul/Ochey, France, 19 Mar 1945  
Biblis, Germany, 5 Apr 1945  
Sandhofen, Germany, 23 Jun 1945  
Echterdingen, Germany, 15 Sep–20 Oct 1945  
Camp Shanks, NY, 6–7 Nov 1945  
Fritzlar, Germany, 20 Aug 1946  
Bad Kissingen, Germany, 25 Jun 1947  
Andrews Field, MD, 25 Jun 1947  
Kearney AAFld (later, AFB), NE, 16 Jul 1947  
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 16 Mar 1949  
Cannon AFB, NM, 18 Feb 1959

#### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Taegu AB, South Korea, 5 Dec 1950–30 Jan 1951

Itazuke AB, Japan, 31 Jan–20 Jun 1951  
Misawa AB, Japan, 13–16 Oct 1952  
Chitose AB, Japan, 17 Oct 1952–c. 13 Feb 1953  
Sturgate RAF Station, England, 7 May–17 Aug 1955  
Okinawa, 6 Sep–18 Dec 1958  
Incirlik AB, Turkey, 18 Oct 1959–22 Feb 1960  
Clark AB, Philippines, 13 Feb–7 Mar 1961  
England AFB, LA, 29 Mar–5 May 1961  
Incirlik AB, Turkey, 5 Feb–15 Jun 1962  
MacDill AFB, FL, 21 Oct–1 Dec 1962  
Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 12 Dec 1962–15 Feb 1963 and 16 Mar–6 May 1964  
Clark AB, Philippines [with further deployments to bases in Southeast Asia], 8 Aug–15 Nov  
1964 and 15 Aug–25 Nov 1965  
Holloman AFB, NM, 13 Apr–12 May 1966

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

27th Bombardment (later, 27th Fighter-Bomber; 27th Fighter) Group, 1 Feb 1940–7 Nov 1945  
27th Fighter (later, 27th Fighter-Escort) Group, 20 Aug 1946  
27th Fighter-Escort (later, 27th Strategic Fighter; 27th Fighter-Bomber; 27th Tactical Fighter;  
27th Fighter) Wing, 16 Jun 1952  
27th Operations Group, 1 Nov 1991

### **ATTACHMENTS**

27th Fighter-Escort Wing, 6 Aug 1951–15 Jun 1952  
Unkn, 6 Sep–18 Dec 1958  
TUSLOG, 18 Oct 1959–22 Feb 1960  
405th Fighter Wing, 13 Feb–7 Mar 1961  
TUSLOG, 5 Feb–15 Jun 1962  
2nd Air Division, 12 Dec 1962–c. 15 Feb 1963 and 16 Mar–6 May 1964  
405th Fighter Wing, 8 Aug–20 Sep 1964  
2nd Air Division, c. 20 Sep–15 Nov 1964  
405th Fighter Wing, 15 Aug–25 Nov 1965

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B–18  
A–18, 1940–1941  
A–24, 1941–1942  
A–20, 1941, 1942–1943  
A–36, 1943–1944  
P–40, 1944  
P–47, 1944–1945  
P–47, 1946–1947  
P–51, 1947–1948  
F–82, 1948–1950

F-84, 1950-1951, 1951-1957  
F-101, 1957-1958, 1958  
F-100, 1959-1969  
F-111, 1969-1971  
F-16

### **COMMANDERS**

Maj Bernard S. Thompson, 1 Feb 1940-Nov 1940  
Capt William G. Hipps, Nov 1940-17 Dec 1941  
Lt Stephenson, Dec 1941  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Savage, Jan 1942  
Capt Herbert L. Phillips, 14 Jul 1942-Unkn  
Maj Daniel B. Rathbun, Unkn-19 Oct 1943  
Lt Col Joseph A. Kelly, 20 Oct 1943  
Capt Emil G. Tanassy, 18 Mar 1944  
Capt Charles C. Williams, 22 Jul 1944  
Capt Robert E. Fromm, 19 Sep 1944  
Capt Thomas V. Murphy, 20 Oct 1944  
Maj Leonard I. Wiehrdt, 27 Oct 1944-1945  
Lt Col Glenn A. Stell, 20 Aug 1946-Unkn  
None (Not Manned), 25 Jun-15 Jul 1947  
Maj Raymond E. Beckley, Jul 1947-21 Jan 1948  
Unkn-22 Jan-Mar 1948  
Maj Virgil K. Meroney, By Mar-Aug 1948  
Unkn, Aug-Oct 1948  
Maj Ray C. Williams, Nov 1948-Jan 1949  
Unkn, C. Jan-Sep 1949  
Lt Col Roswell Freedman, Sep 1949  
Lt Col John W. Lafko, 6 Feb 1951  
Lt Col David N. Harmon, Jul 1953  
Maj James C. Peek, 7 Apr 1955-Unkn  
Maj John J. Burns, C. Jul 1957  
Unkn, 1-27 Jan 1959  
None (Not Manned), 28 Jan-17 Feb 1959  
Lt Col James M. Miller, 18 Feb 1959-Unkn  
Maj William E. Charlson, By Dec 1959-Unkn  
Maj John J. Voll, By Dec 1961  
Maj Robert J. Benedetti, 27 Jul 1962  
Lt Col Henry P. Rettinger, 8 Aug 1962  
Lt Col David O. Williams Jr., By 16 Mar 1964  
Lt Col Herbert D. Stallings Jr., By Jun 1965  
Maj James E. Steinmiller, By Jun 1967-Unkn  
None (Not Operational), 19 Jun 1969-Unkn  
Lt Col Kenneth A. Schuppe, By Aug 1969

Lt Col Martin J. Loftus, C. Sep 1969  
Lt Col Kenneth A. Schuppe, 1 Jun 1970  
Lt Col John W. Gordon, 28 Sep 1970  
Lt Col Roger D. Tucker, 11 Dec 1972  
Lt Col Milford E. Davis, 11 Jun 1973  
Lt Col Charles E. Van Driel, 2 Jan 1975  
Lt Col Robert A. Downs, 5 Jan 1976  
Lt Col Albert R. Krisch, 1 Jul 1977  
Lt Col Jack E. Gray, 2 Apr 1979  
Lt Col Stephen E. Piszczek, 26 Nov 1980  
Lt Col James K. Sluis, 30 Jun 1982  
Lt Col Christopher Russo, 27 Jun 1984  
Lt Col James T. Gribble III, 25 Nov 1985  
Lt Col Mike Carpenter, 23 Jul 1986  
Lt Col Ronald N. Braunhardt, 27 Jun 1988  
Lt Col Anthony J. Sobol Iii, 8 Jun 1990  
Lt Col John E. Hill, 29 Jun 1992  
Lt Col Virgil F. Unger, 11 Nov 1993  
Lt Col Stephen P. Mueller, 19 Aug 1995  
Lt Col Noel T. Jones, 7 Nov 1997  
Lt Col David D. Watt, 4 Jun 1999  
Lt Col John W. Wiebner, 8 Jun 2001  
Lt Col Mark A. Altobelli, 14 Aug 2002

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II  
Philippine Islands  
East Indies  
Sicily  
Naples-Foggia  
Anzio  
Rome-Arno  
Northern France  
Southern France  
North Apennines  
Rhineland  
Central Europe  
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korea

CCF Intervention  
First UN Counteroffensive  
CCF Spring Offensive

Vietnam  
Vietnam Advisory  
Vietnam Defensive

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations  
Philippine Islands, 7 Dec 1941–[Apr] 1942  
Philippine Islands, 8–22 Dec 1941  
Philippine Islands, 6 Jan–8 Mar 1942  
Italy, 10 Sep 1943  
France, 4 Sep 1944  
Korea, 26 Jan–21 Apr 1951

#### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 Jan 1962–1 Jan 1964  
8 Aug–15 Nov 1964  
1 Jan 1981–30 Jun 1982  
1 Jan 1988–31 Dec 1989  
1 Apr 1992–31 Mar 1993  
1 Jun 1996–31 May 1998  
1 Jun 2002–31 May 2004

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation  
9 Nov 1950–31 May 1951

#### **EMBLEM**



On an roundle Azure, fimbriated Sable, a fire ball, Gules, shooting toward base, surmounting clouds in base proper. (Approved, 25 Jun 1951)

On a disc Azure, fimbriated Argent, a thunderhead cloud formation of the last, surmounted by a fireball Proper transverse bend sinister wise throughout, all within a narrow border Black. Attached below the disc, a Red scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "522D SPECIAL OPS SQ" in Black 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 fireball rocketing down from the sky represents the unit's ability to arrive on target--any time, any place. The fireball colors of red, orange and yellow flames signify the boldness, determination and versatility required to accomplish the mission. The streaming fireball tails descending in unison symbolize the unit's ability to closely integrate with joint and coalition partners.

### **MOTTO**

First in, Last out  
Fireballs

### **OPERATIONS**

Constituted in the Regular Army on 22 December 1939 and assigned to the 27th Bombardment Group. Activated on 1 February 1940 at Barksdale Field, LA. Transferred on 7 October 1940 to Hunter Field, GA. Sailed from San Francisco on the U.S.A.T. President Coolidge and arrived at Manila, PI, on 20 November 1941. Transferred to Nielson Field, PI, on the same day.

The 522nd Fighter Squadron was activated Feb. 1, 1940, at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, as the 16th Bombardment Squadron (Light). Its first aircraft were the B-18 and A-24. The unit was later redesignated as the 522nd Fighter-Bomber Squadron, then the 522nd Fighter Squadron. During World War II, the unit saw action in the Southwest Pacific, Mediterranean and European theaters. During the late 1940s, the squadron moved and reactivated several times flying both the P-47 and the P-51. The unit moved to the United States, operating at bases in Maryland, Nebraska, and Texas. After serving in Korea, the unit moved to Cannon in 1959 where, it was re-equipped with F-100s and saw several Southeast Asia deployments. In 1969, the squadron received the F-111. For 26 years, the 522nd Fighter Squadron flew F-111As, F-111Ds, F-111Fs. During that period, the squadron supported numerous real-world contingencies while maintaining a worldwide nuclear strike mission. The last F-111s were retired from the squadron in January 1996. The F-16 flew for the first time with two sorties by the 522nd on September 18, 1995. In July 1996, the Fireballs became the first fully operational F-16 fighter squadron at Cannon AFB, undergoing a tremendous transfer of equipment, personnel, records, and overall mission.

The 522nd Fighter Squadron "Fireballs" is a combat-ready F-16CJ Fighter squadron prepared to deploy worldwide to conduct day and night, air-to-air and air-to-ground combat and contingency operations. The Fireballs maintain a high degree of readiness across the full spectrum of F-16CJ missions to include suppression of enemy air defenses, counter air, air interdiction, strategic attack, and close air support.



The 522nd is one of four fighter squadrons that make up the "World's Most Lethal War fighting Team," the 27th Fighter Wing. The Fireballs' F-16CJ "Fighting Falcons" are highly-maneuverable, compact, multi-role fighters capable of employing a variety of air-to-air and air-to-surface weapons. The F-16CJ's advanced avionics systems provide the Fireball fighter pilots with the capability to employ precision guided munitions and the High Speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM) with pinpoint accuracy. These capabilities make the Fireballs an essential element of "Lethal Wing" and an integral part of the Expeditionary Aerospace Forces.

Return of the Fireballs: Officials with the 27th Special Operations Wing at Cannon AFB, N.M., have activated the 522nd Special Operations Squadron. "We will commit ourselves to excellence, be dedicated and courageous, and we will always, lead the way," said Lt. Col. Paul Pendleton, who took command of the reformed unit, whose history dates back to World War II. The 522nd SOS will be USAF's first unit assigned the MC-130J Combat Shadow II, which is due to begin operations in 2012. The unit's role will be covert infiltration, exfiltration, and resupply of special forces in hostile and denied regions. Pendleton received the unit's laurelled guidon from 27th Special Operations Group acting commander Col. Charles Myers during the April 7 stand-up ceremony. The 522nd, known as the Fireballs, was one of the most decorated air units during World War II.

CANNON AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. (AFNS) -- Airmen assigned to the 27th Special Operations Wing held an aircraft acceptance ceremony Sept. 29 on the flightline here for the arrival of Air Force Special Operations Command's first MC-130J Combat Shadow II. Lt. Gen. Eric E. Fiel, the AFSOC commander, and Brig. Gen. Stephen Clark, the AFSOC director of plans, programs, requirements and assignments, were part of the official party flying the aircraft here for delivery to the 522nd Special Operations Squadron from the Lockheed Martin plant in Marietta, Ga. The MC-130J is the next generation special operations warfighter and a newer, better special operations C-130, said Lt. Col. Paul Pendleton, the 522nd SOS commander.

The MC-130J Combat Shadow II is the newest variant of the C-130J Super Hercules four-engine turboprop aircraft. The C-130 has been continuously produced longer than any military aircraft in history and has been a crucial component of U.S. special operations for decades. The "J-model" boasts more power and efficiency, longer range, shorter takeoff distance, a smaller required crew and a modern computerized flight deck, officials said. "We can carry about 40 percent more, it's about 25 percent more powerful and 15 to 20 percent faster," Pendleton said. "It's entirely computerized; this allows us to better complete our mission." A few of the Combat Shadow II's capabilities are to provide nighttime low-level infiltration and exfiltration, aerial refueling of helicopters and tilt-rotor aircraft, aerial delivery and resupply of special operations forces and ground refueling, officials said.

Fiel said it's a historic event for Cannon Air Force Base and "marks a milestone in improving the combat capabilities of AFSOC and more importantly the 27 SOW. "Members of the 522nd SOS will rewrite history as they fly the MC-130 farther, faster and higher," he said. "As innovative Air Commandos, you will push this plane to its limits and find creative ways to employ our people more effectively. Col. Buck Elton, the 27th SOW commander, spoke briefly on the significance of receiving the new aircraft and what it means for AFSOC's mission. "This newest version of a combat proven aircraft has big shoes to fill, but there is no doubt that the

MC-130J will take specialized mobility to a new level," he said. "This incredible new aircraft will quickly become the backbone of our nation's C-130 fleet. This is an exciting time for our base, our command and our Air Force." 2011

Cannon's New Aircraft Fleet Grows: Cannon AFB, N.M., last week received its seventh new-built MC-130J Commando II aircraft, announced manufacturer Lockheed Martin. The special-mission airplane arrived on June 20 direct from the company's production facility at Marietta, Ga., states the company's June 21 release. Assigned to Cannon's 522nd Special Operations Squadron, aircraft no. 5695 will support covert infiltration and recovery, aerial refueling, and clandestine resupply, like Cannon's other new MC-130Js. This airframe is the seventh of 11 aircraft slated for delivery to Cannon, according to Lockheed Martin. Air Force Special Operations Command is procuring the MC-130Js to replace legacy MC-130s in the fleet. 2012

Lockheed Martin delivered the eighth factory-fresh MC-130J to its operational unit at Cannon AFB, N.M., announced the company. Tail No. 5694 arrived at Cannon on Aug. 7 and Maj. Gen. Robert Kane, director of global reach programs in the Air Force Secretariat's acquisition office, accepted its delivery, according to the company. Assigned to the base's 522nd Special Operations Squadron, the new airframe will support the unit's mission of covertly inserting and extracting special operations forces, refueling SOF helicopters, and resupplying SOF personnel. This Commando II is one of 11 new-build MC-130Js that will gradually replace Cannon's aging fleet of MC-130E/Ps. 2012