

## 40 AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

40 Bombardment Group (Medium) established, 22 Nov 1940

Activated, 1 Apr 1941

Redesignated 40 Bombardment Group (Heavy), 7 May 1942

Redesignated 40 Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, 19 Nov 1943

Inactivated, 1 Oct 1946

40 Bombardment Wing, Medium established, 9 May 1952

Activated, 28 May 1952

Redesignated 40 Strategic Aerospace Wing, 1 Feb 1964

Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Sep 1964

40 Bombardment Group, Very Heavy redesignated 40 Tactical Group and activated, 14 Mar 1966

Organized, 1 Apr 1966

40 Tactical Group and 40 Strategic Aerospace Wing consolidated 31 Jan 1984. Consolidated unit designated

Redesignated 40 Tactical Support Wing, 30 Jul 1990

Redesignated 40 Support Wing, 1 Oct 1991

Inactivated, 4 May 1992

Redesignated 40 Air Expeditionary Wing and converted to provisional status, 31 Jan 2002

### **STATIONS**

Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, 1 Apr 1941  
Howard Field, Panama Canal Zone, 16 Jun 1942  
Albrook Field, Panama Canal Zone, 16 Sep 1942  
Howard Field, Panama Canal Zone, 2-15 Jun 1943  
Pratt AAFld, KS, 1 Jul 1943-Mar 1944  
Chakulia, India, 2 Apr 1944-25 Feb 1945  
West Field, Tinian, 4 Apr-7 Nov 1945  
March Field, CA, 27 Nov 1945  
Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 8 May-1 Oct 1946  
Smoky Hill (later, Schilling) AFB, KS, 28 May 1952  
Forbes AFB, KS, 20 Jun 1960-1 Sep 1964  
Aviano AB, Italy, 1 Apr 1966-4 May 1992

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

13 Composite Wing, 1 Apr 1941  
VI Bomber Command, 25 Oct 1941  
VI Interceptor Command, 6 Apr 1942  
VI Bomber Command, 22 Jun 1942  
58 Bombardment Operational Training (later, 58 Bombardment) Wing, 9 Jul 1943  
XX Bomber Command, 12 Oct 1944  
58 Bombardment Wing, 8 Feb 1945-1 Oct 1946  
802 Air Division, 28 May 1952  
21 Air (later, 21 Strategic Aerospace) Division, 20 Jun 1960-1 Sep 1964  
United States Air Forces in Europe, 14 Mar 1966  
Seventeenth Air Force, 1 Apr 1966  
Sixteenth Air Force, 1 Dec 1968-4 May 1992  
Pacific Air Forces to activate or inactivate at any time after 31 Jan 2002

### **ATTACHMENTS**

VI Interceptor Command, 15 Jan-5 Apr 1942  
310 Bombardment Wing, 6 Feb-1 May 1953  
7 Air Division, 9 Jun-9 Sep 1955 and 1 Jul-1 Oct 1957

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-18, 1941-1942  
B-17, 1942-1943, 1946  
B-24, 1943  
B-29, 1943-1946  
B-29, 1953-1954  
KC-97, 1953-1960, 1960-1962  
B-47, 1954-1964

Atlas E, 1964

**COMMANDERS**

Lt Col William B. Sousa, 1 Apr 1941  
Maj George W. McGregor, 29 Apr 1941  
Col Ivan M. Palmer, 26 Nov 1941  
Col Vernon C. Smith, 19 Jan 1943  
Col Henry K. Mooney, 16 May 1943  
Col Lewis R. Parker, 1 Jul 1943  
Lt Col Louis E. Coira, 24 Feb 1944  
Col Leonard F. Harman, 10 Apr 1944  
Col Willam H., Blanchard, 4 Aug 1944  
Col Henry R. Sullivan Jr., 16 Feb 1945  
Col William K. Skaer, 27 Feb 1945  
Lt Col Oscar R. Schaaf, 21 Mar 1946  
Col Alva L. Harvey, 4 May 1946  
Lt Col Oscar R. Schaaf, 21 Aug 1946  
1LT William F. Seith, 21 Sep-1 Oct 1946  
None (not manned), 28 May 1952-5 Feb 1953  
Col Stanley J. Donovan, 6 Feb 1953  
Col David A. Burchinal, 2 May 1953  
Col Robert J. Nolan, 26 Oct 1953  
Col Berton H. Burns, 11 Jun 1954  
Col Charles L. Wimberly, 15 Jul 1954  
Col Robert J. Nolan, 27 Jul 1954  
Col Berton H. Burns, 16 Sep 1954  
Col Andrew S. Low Jr., 1 Jun 1957  
Col George Y. Jumper, 4 Jul 1958  
Col Woodward B. Carpenter, 7 Jul 1959  
Col Norman J. McGowan, 20 Jun 1960  
Col Joel A. Carroll Jr., 8 Jul 1961-10 Aug 1964  
Unkn, 11 Aug-1 Sep 1964.  
None (not manned), 14-31 Mar 1966  
Col Carl E. Lovell, 1 Apr 1966  
Lt Col George M. Dwight Jr., 18 May 1966 (temporary)  
Col Robert R. Fowler, 3 Jun 1966 (temporary)  
Col Richard L. Hamilton, 27 Jun 1966  
Col Glyn W. Ramsey, 31 Mar 1967  
Col Thomas A. Barr, 7 Jul 1969  
Col Morton C. Mumma III, 10 May 1971  
Col John L. Piotrowski, 7 Jan 1972  
Col Robert L. Miller III, 16 Mar 1974  
Col William L. Gibson, 9 Jul 1976  
Col James W. Dearborn, 15 Jun 1978

Col Henry M. Yochum II, 22 May 1980  
Col Dean F. Vikan, 8 Jul 1981  
Col Lester P. Brown, Jr., 1 Jul 1982  
Col Frederick A. Zehrer III, 16 Mar 1984  
Col George W. McKenna, 20 Apr 1985 (temporary)  
Col James T. Hannam, 19 Jun 1985  
Col Frank Plescha, 25 Jun 1986  
Col John W. Hawley, 28 Jan 1988  
Lt Col Wayne Mayfield, 15 May 1989 (temporary)  
Col James C. Evans, 6 Jul 1989  
Col Wayne Mayfield, 10 Mar 1990 (temporary)  
Col Thomas K. Speelman, 30 Jul 1990  
Unkn, Jul 1991-4 May 1992

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II  
Antisubmarine, American Theater  
Western Pacific  
Air Offensive, Japan  
India-Burma  
China Defensive  
Central Burma

#### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations (Japan)  
20 Aug 1944  
5-14 May 1945  
24 Jul 1945

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

1 Oct 1972-30 Apr 1973  
6 May-31 Dec 1976  
1 Jul 1982-30 Jun 1984  
1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1991

## **EMBLEM**



40 Bombardment Group emblem: Coming in with the cross wind and from a long afternoon patrol over the Caribbean they looked for all the world like a herd of straw-colored pachyderms stampeding across the Veldt. From behind purple hills the sun threw their long grotesque shadows before them across the southwest ramp of Borinquen Field like scurrying patches of winged tar. These were the ships of the 40th Bombardment Group coming in. Their pilots and bombardiers were veterans of many a flight over the air lanes that stretch between Puerto Rico and Panama. They were the "heavies" of the United States Air Corps. Significantly the fuselage of each displayed insignia which aptly described the motto of the crew, "When records fall, we'll put the shot." In the athletic stance of the shot-putter a Disneyesque elephant emulates with clumsy grace, the strength and forcefulness of the group.



40 Bombardment Group (Medium) emblem: azure, on a bomb burst proper fimbriated argent four drop bombs in cross or. (Approved, 28 Mar 1942)

40 Bombardment Wing, Medium emblem: a shield divided in an angular manner with the apex of angle toward the upper left, yellow and light green, and with a base of blue; on the green area a black silhouette of a modernistic aircraft with trail above a wavy circular symbol in gray, light gray and white with a yellow center bearing a red and black atom symbol; on and over the base a yellow wreath outlined in black. Aircraft denotes the age of powered flight. Symbol represents the

atomic age as evidenced by heat, radiation, light, and short waves. The continuing role of the Air Force as a peace requirement is designated by the scroll of leaves. Shield represents strength and preparedness. The colors, yellow, red, blue, and light green, are representative of the assigned tactical squadrons. (Approved, 6 Jan 1954)



40 Tactical Support Wing emblem



40 Tactical Group



40 Air Expeditionary Wing emblem

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

Flew antisubmarine patrol missions around Puerto Rico from Apr 1941 to Jun 1942 and the Panama Canal Zone from Jun 1942 to Jun 1943, when it moved to the continental United States to train to become the first Army Air Forces group to be assigned the B-29. Moved to India and set up a staging base in China in Apr 1944, to which it shuttled fuel and oil over the Himalaya Mountains (the "Hump"). Entered combat on 5 Jun 1944 with a raid on railroad shops at Bangkok, Thailand. On 15 Jun the group took part in the first Army Air Forces air raid on Japan since the Doolittle raid of April 1942. Operating from bases in India, and at times staging through China, the group struck transportation centers, naval installations, iron works, and aircraft plants in Burma, Thailand, China, Japan, Indonesia, and Formosa. On August 10, 1944, the group took part with three other groups on the longest single-stage bombing mission of World War II, flying from a staging base in Ceylon to Palembang, Sumatra, to bomb a refinery and mine a river (Operation BOOMERANG). The group earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for bombing iron and steel plants at Yawata, Japan, on 20 Aug 1944. Moved to Tinian in the Marianas Islands in April 1945 for high altitude daylight attacks on strategic targets in Japan. Took part in lower-level night incendiary raids on urban areas and mined waters around Japan. Earned a second Distinguished Unit Citation for attacking naval aircraft factories at Kure, oil storage facilities at Oshima, and the industrial city of Nagoya, in May 1945. Received a third Distinguished Unit Citation for a 24 Jul 1945 air raid on light metal industries in Osaka. After victory over Japan, dropped food and supplies to Allied prisoners of war and took part in show-of-force missions over Japan. Returned to the United States in Nov 1945. Conducted air sampling missions for the Operation CROSSROADS atomic bomb tests, Jun-Aug 1946, and inactivated in Oct.

Although activated in May 1952, the 40 Wing was not manned until early Feb 1953, when it gained personnel and equipment from a provisional squadron originally established at Davis-

Monthan AFB, Ariz, as a holding unit for people and equipment surplus to another SAC wing.

Received control and guidance from the 310th Bombardment Wing at Smoky Hill AFB, KS, to 1 May 1953. By Oct 1953, all tactical squadrons were minimally operational. Converted from B-29s to B-47s in 1954 and became combat ready in Apr 1955.

Deployed at Lakenheath RAF Station, England, 9 Jun-9 Sep 1955. Performed bombardment training and air refueling missions to meet global commitments of Strategic Air Command, 1955-1964. Deployed at Greenham Common RAF Station, England, Jul-Oct 1957. Gained an Atlas missile squadron in Jan 1964. Began phasing down for inactivation shortly thereafter and was non-operational, 15 Aug-1 Sep 1964.

From Apr 1966 through May 1992, maintained readiness of Aviano AB, Italy and managed and supported squadron detachments that deployed there temporarily for training, exercises, humanitarian operations, or contingencies. During that period the organization had no assigned aircraft and no assigned flying units.

Began phasing down for inactivation shortly thereafter and was non-operational, 15 Aug-1 Sep 1964.

On 1 April 1966. USAFE inactivated the 7227th Support Group and activated the 40 Tactical Group as the new host unit at Aviano. In 1970, Aviano became one of three weapons training sites in USAFE. While rotational alert deployments continued, units deployed to Aviano AB also conducted weapons delivery training at the nearby Maniago Bombing and Gunnery Range. Training at the range continued through the mid-1990's until noise complaints and budgetary constraints ended Aviano's tenure as a weapons training site.



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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 29 Feb 2024

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

War Insignia Stamp Album, Vol. 2, Postamp Publishing Co., 1942.