

## 45<sup>th</sup> FIGHTER SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

45<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Fighter) constituted, 22 Nov 1940  
Activated, 1 Dec 1940  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor), 12 Feb 1942  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942  
Inactivated, 15 Oct 1946  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 11 Sep 1952  
Activated, 1 Nov 1952  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Fighter Day Squadron, 8 Oct 1954  
Inactivated, 8 Jan 1958  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron and activated, 17 Apr 1962  
Organized, 8 May 1962  
Inactivated, 1 Jul 1971  
Activated, 1 Oct 1973  
Redesignated 45<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, 1 Feb 1992  
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1994  
Activated, 1 Nov 2009

### STATIONS

Wheeler Field, TH, 1 Dec 1940

Haleiwa Field, TH, 21-Dec 1941  
Mokuleia Field, TH, 27 Dec 1941  
Hilo Field, TH, 20 Oct 1942  
Stanley Field, TH, 20 Dec 1942  
Bellows Field, TH, 14 Aug 1943  
Baker Island, 1 Sep 1943  
Xanumea, 28 Nov 1943  
Abemama, 4 Jan 1944 (operated from Makin, 15 Jan-24 Mar 1944)  
Mokuleia Field, TH, 6 Apr 1944  
Bellows Field, TH, 19 Jun 1944-5 Feb 1945  
South Field, Iwo Jima, 4 Mar 1945  
Bellows Field, TH, 25 Nov 1945  
Wheeler Field, TH, 9 Feb-15 Oct 1946  
Suffolk County AFB, NY, 1 Nov 1952  
Sidi Slimane, French Morocco, 28 May 1953-8 Jan 1958  
MacDill AFB, FL, 8 May 1962-1 Jul 1971  
Grissom AFB, IN, 1 Oct 1973-30 Sep 1994  
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Nov 2009

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

15<sup>th</sup> Pursuit (later Fighter) Group, 1 Dec 1940-15 Oct 1946  
4709<sup>th</sup> Defense Wing, 1 Nov 1952  
519<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Group, 16 Feb 1953  
Seventeenth Air Force, 1 Jun 1953  
316<sup>th</sup> Air Division, 18 Sep 1953-8 Jan 1958  
Tactical Air Command, 17 Apr 1962  
15<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Jul 1962  
1<sup>st</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1970-1 Jul 1971  
930<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Group, 1 Oct 1973  
434<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Jul 1975  
930<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter (later, 930<sup>th</sup> Fighter; 930<sup>th</sup> Operations) Group, 1 Jul 1987-30 Sep 1994  
917<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 1 Nov 2009

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Air Defense Division [Prov], 8 Jun 1953  
12<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 May 1962

#### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-26, 1940-1941  
P-36, 1941  
P-40, 1942-1944  
P-47, 1944-1945  
P-51, 1944-1946  
F-86, 1952-1956

F-86F  
F-100, 1956-1957  
F-100C  
F-84, 1962  
F-84, 1962-1964  
F-4, 1964-1971  
A-37, 1973-1981  
A-10, 1981-1994, 2009  
P-36A  
P-40B  
P-40C  
P-47D  
P-51D  
P-51H

### **COMMANDERS**

Cpt Aaron W. Tyer, 1 Dec 1940  
Maj Harold E. Kofahl, 24 Dec 1941  
Maj Thomas B. Summers, 8 May 1942  
Maj George W. MacNichol, 16 Oct 1943  
Cpt Joseph L. Laughlin, 20 Jan 1943  
LTC Julian E. Thomas, 1 Mar 1943  
Maj Gilmer L. Snipes, 4 Apr 1944  
Maj Arthur H. Bridge, 16 Apr 1945  
Cpt Harold A. Collins, 4 Jun 1945  
Maj Robert W. Moore, 19 Jul 1945  
Maj Edwin T. Bayley, 1945  
LTC Edward S. G. Newbury, 18 Dec 1945  
Maj Eugene L. Kleiderer, c. 1946  
Maj James D. Catington, Sep 1946-1946  
LTC Morgan S. Tyler Jr., 1 Nov 1952  
Maj Raymond A. Poerschke, 17 Jan 1955  
Maj Robert O. Shimp, 30 Nov 1955  
LTC Henry W. Brown, 8 May 1956  
Maj William H. Fairbrother, Jul 1957  
LTC Wallace B. Frank, Aug 1957-c. 1958  
LTC Ivan L. McGuire, 1962  
LTC William A. Alden, 1964  
Cpt Jack A. Giglio, 8 Oct 1965  
LTC James Hollingsworth, 20 Nov 1965  
LTC Paul R. Henderson Jr., 19 Jan 1966  
LTC Frederick D. Ellis, 14 Aug 1967  
LTC Solomon D. Whitten Jr., 24 Nov 1968  
LTC David C. Smith, 15 Jun 1970-1 Jul 1971

Unkn, 1 Oct 1973  
Maj John J. Clark Jr., Jan 1974  
Maj Stanley Smith, Apr 1974  
LTC H. Heuss, Jul 1975  
LTC Henry Q. Long, Aug 1975  
LTC Stanley F. Smith, Oct 1976  
LTC Malcolm Jamieson, 1 Mar 1980  
LTC Gordon C. Grieder, Jul 1981  
LTC Boyd L. Ashcraft, 1 Feb 1984  
LTC Robert A. Nester, Jul 1987  
Unkn, 1989-1990  
LTC Edwin C. Girton, 19 May 1990  
LTC Leon A. Johnson, 27 Jun 1992-unkn  
LTC Terry W. McClain

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

None

### **Campaign Streamers**

Central Pacific  
Air Offensive, Japan  
Eastern Mandates  
Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater  
Vietnam: Winter-Spring, 1970

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
Japan, 7 Apr 1945

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

1 Jan 1965-1 Jun 1966  
1 Jan-31 Dec 1969  
1 Jun 1992-31 Aug 1993

## **EMBLEM**







On a lemon yellow disc, border equally divided tan and black, a caricatured red Indian, wearing light blue and white headdress and moccasins, holding forward in the right hand a red tomahawk with light green handle, trimmed white, while seated on fuselage of light green caricatured aircraft, having eye and teeth to form grinning face on nose of fuselage. (Approved, 24 Aug 1944)

On a disc Or, a hawk volant Brun, detailed Sable, garnished Azure and Vert, eyed and taloned Argent, charged with a bolt of the last, between two spears Azure, detailed Sable, within an inner border of the last, bordered of the second; all within a narrow Black border. Attached below the disc, a Gold Brown scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "45TH FIGHTER SQUADRON" 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 diving hawk signifies the P-36 Hawk and the P-40 Warhawk that the 45th Squadron flew during WWII. The thunderbolt upon the wing of the hawk signifies the Squadron's current aircraft, the A-10 Thunderbolt. The blue spears above and below the bird signify the sky and illustrate the attacker diving from above in pursuit of an air-to-ground kill. Gold Brown honors the 45th Fighter Squadron's combat history and Indian heritage. Emerald signifies the tail flash of the WW II fighters. White signifies speed of attack, the kill capability inherent in the hawk and the A-10. Black signifies strength, might, and determination--the ability to fly, fight, and return home safely.

#### **MOTTO**

#### **NICKNAME**

Hoosier Hogs

## **OPERATIONS**

Endured Japanese attack on Oahu, 7 Dec 1941. Provided air defense for Hawaiian Islands, Jan 1942-Oct 1943 and for central Pacific islands, 23 Oct 1943-11 Mar 1944 and the Western Pacific, 12 Mar-14 Aug 1945.

The squadron provided air defense for the Hawaiian Islands in P-36 and P-40 aircraft over the Pacific from January 1942 – October 1943.

The 45th Pursuit Squadron was activated on 1 December 1940 and assigned to the 15th Pursuit Group. It was redesignated the 45th Fighter Squadron on 15 May 1942 and remained active until deactivated on 15 October 1946. During its six years of operations the unit flew P-26s, P-36s and P-40s until 1944, then it re-equipped with the P-47 and P-51 for combat in the Central and Western Pacific.

Between 18 December, when the 46th and 72nd Fighter Squadrons went operational, and 12 February 1944, the two P-39 squadrons flew 749 sorties of which 635 were effective, carrying out escorts, fighter sweeps, strike and patrol missions. The P-40s of the 45th Fighter Squadron, which went operational on 23 October, flew 581 sorties between 16 January and 11 March 1944 of which 501 were effective, escorting, bombing (164 tons dropped), strafing, attacking ships and patrolling.

As the Seventh's attacks moved ever more westward after Eniwetok was taken, there was no longer a role to be played by its single engine fighter and dive bomber aircraft. Consequently, these units were withdrawn from combat and sent back to Hawaii for reequipment in March and April 1944. The 46th and 72nd Fighter Squadrons ceased combat operations on 7 and 14 February, the 45th Fighter Squadron flew its last combat sorties on 11 March and the 531st Fighter Bomber Squadron flew its final mission on 10 March. By early April 1944, all four squadrons were back on Oahu, the lighter units with their parent groups.

The squadron flew combat missions in the Central Pacific from Oct. 23, 1943 until March 11, 1944, and in the Western Pacific from March 12, 1944 until Aug. 14, 1945. Missions were accomplished using P-47 and P-51 Mustang aircraft.

Flying its first very long range mission to Japan April 7, 1945, the 45th Fighter Squadron provided fighter escort for the B-29 Superfortress that attacked the Nakajima aircraft plant near Tokyo, earning them a distinguished unit citation for their efforts.

During this two-year period, the 45th Fighter Squadron claimed destruction of 11 enemy aircraft Jan. 26, 1944, near Aur Atoll, Marshall Islands.

March – August 1945, they provided air defense for Iwo Jima; neutralized the Bonin Islands; and provided fighter escort for B-29s attacking the Japanese home islands.



Provided air defense in the northeastern United States, Sep 1952-Apr 1953, and in northwest Africa, Jun 1953-Feb 1956 and Jan-Oct 1957.

On Feb. 16, 1953, the squadron was assigned to the 519th Air Defense Group as part of the Air Defense Command commitment. The squadron's mission was to provide air defense in the Northeast United States flying the F-86 aircraft.

The 45th Fighter Squadron was assigned to Seventeenth Air Force and transferred to the United States Air Forces Europe in Sidi Slimane, French Morocco, North Africa May 28, 1953, where they remained until Jan. 8, 1958.

While assigned to USAFE, they deployed air defense in Northwest Africa from June 1953 – February 1956 and from January 1957 – October 1957. They also conducted F-100 transition training from May – December 1956.

In late May, 1953, an advance party of the 45th Fighter Interceptor Squadron (FIS) from Suffolk County Air Force Base, New York, arrived at Sidi Slimane Air Base to join the USAFE air defense force being established. Commanded by Lt. Colonel Morgan S. Tyler, Jr., the air echelon of the squadron arrived June 20 with twenty-five F-86 aircraft. They were assigned to the newly established Air Defense Division (Provisional), a unit of the 17th Air Force headquartered at Sale. It would become the 316th Air Division. Responsibility for air defense of French Morocco now belonged to the French Air Force Air Maroc but partially delegated to USAFE until such time as the French could assume the full air defense mission. With the arrival of the 45th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, military manpower at Sidi Slimane Air Base rose to more than 3,000, crowding the French-mandated manpower ceiling.

On 11 September 1952 the unit was redesignated as the 45th Fighter Interceptor Squadron and reactivated on 1 November 1952 with F-86Fs. On 28 May 1953, the 45th moved to Sidi Slimane, French Morocco, Africa. Here the unit served as an F-86F Interceptor Squadron under the command of the 316th Air Division.

The first F-100Cs arrived at Sidi Slimane during March of 1956, while the unit was still under the 316th Air Division. Its role now changed to that of an F-100 Training and Transition Squadron for all USAFE squadrons converting from F-86s and F-84Fs to the F-100.

A line up of F-100Cs of the 45th Fighter Day Squadron, 316th Air Division at Sidi Slimane Air Base, French Morocco during 1956. The 45th was responsible for training USAFE pilots transitioning onto the F-100.

From October 1962 – June 1971, the squadron participated in exercises, operations and tests of Tactical Air Command, including combat missions while on temporary duty in Southeast Asia, April – August 1965. While operating out to the Ubon Royal Thai Air Base they had the first USAF MIG kill of the Vietnam War.

For the next five years, the 45 TFS served as a replacement training unit for F-4 pilots headed to Southeast Asia.

Participated in Tactical Air Command exercises, operations and tests, Oct 1962-Jun 1971 including combat missions while on temporary duty in Southeast Asia, Apr-Aug 1965.

For the Pacific Air Forces, the Phantom era began in December 1964 when a TAC rotational F-4C squadron, the 555th TFS, arrived at Naha AB, Okinawa. Four months later, F-4C's of the 45th TFS deployed to Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, to commence the Phantom II's combat career.

First MiG Kill by USAF. F-4Cs of the 45 TFS, based at Ubon Royal Thai Air Force base, shot down two MiG-17s on 10 July, marking the first USAF kills of the war. 1965

Trained to maintain combat ready status, 1973-1994.

Early In 1980, the Air Force announced that the Air Force Reserve would begin operating the A-10. Scheduled to convert to the A-10 at that time were the 45th TFS at Grissom AFB, Indiana (from A-37s), and the 47th TFS at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana (also from A-37s). In June, 1980, the first AFRES A-10 was delivered to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana.

Davis-Monthan Fighter Unit Gets Designation It's official. The 45th Fighter Squadron is the unit designation for the new A-10 classic associate unit at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. The 45th FS, assigned to Air Force Reserve Command's 917th Operations Group at Barksdale AFB, La., will fly with the regular Air Force's 355th Fighter Wing. The squadron will support A-10 pilot training, according to Col. Ozzie Gorbitz, 917th OG commander. After a site activation task force visit in January, Lt. Cols. Rod Glass and Terry McClain, senior leaders in the squadron, began laying the groundwork to develop a 24-person team. "Building a unit from scratch has its challenges," Colonel Gorbitz said. "They are establishing processes and procedures, writing a host/tenant agreement, and building flight records. ... all from the ground up. "This will be a Reserve association, where Reservists will associate (directly) with active duty. We're taking lessons learned from other associate units." "This Total Force Integration initiative will provide highly skilled and experienced Hawgdrivers, who want to leave active duty but not the mission," Colonel Glass said. "This will give them the option to do so in the reserve component." Colonels Glass and McClain are in the process of hiring their first four A-10 instructor pilots and one administrative support person. According to Colonel Glass, they hope to have their full staff of 24 people on board in the next three years. "This TFI is about building relationships with people of two different viewpoints," Colonel Gorbitz said. "The goals are common. We must learn how to communicate them." A formal squadron activation ceremony is set for September. 2008

12/30/2009 The United States Air Force plans to reactivate the historic 45th Fighter Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., during a ceremony on base Jan. 7 at 3 pm. The reactivation of the 45th FS, by order of the Secretary of the Air Force Mr. Michael B. Donley, will place the unit under the command of the 917th Wing Operations Group on Barksdale Air Force Base, La. Retired Maj. Gen. Robert A. Nester is scheduled as the guest speaker for the

event. Col. Keith D. Schultz the 917th Operations Group deputy commander will act as the presiding official for the ceremony. Also in attendance will be Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner, commander, Air Force Reserve Command, Big. Gen. Robert S. Arthur, vice commander, 10th Air Force, and Col. Edmund D. Walker, commander, 917th Wing.

"I'm excited about the reactivation of the 45th FS mainly because my last interaction occurred while the A-10s were taken from the unit during a transitional phase," said Col. McClain. "I'm excited because I can bring the 45th FS back into the A-10 community." This unit has a rich history dating as far back as the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor Naval Station, on the Territory of Hawaii. Throughout history, the 45th FS has aided the U.S. Armed Forces in missions at home and abroad, providing air defense during both World War II and the Vietnam War. Today, they have a new mission. The reactivation of the 45th FS will occur in support of A-10 Formal Training Unit (FTU) training. The FTU will provide Initial Qualification in the A-10 as well as Transition, Instructor Pilot Upgrade and Senior Officer Course training.

Return of the 45th Fighter Squadron: Air Force Reserve Command officials on Jan. 7 formally reactivated the 45th Fighter Squadron, an A-10 training unit, at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. The unit last flew A-10s before its deactivation in 1994. The reanimated squadron, which falls administratively under the 917th Wing at Barksdale AFB, La., will support A-10 initial qualification training as well as transition and instructor pilot upgrade training together with the wing's 47th FS at Barksdale. 2010

Officials at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., inactivated Air Force Reserve Command's 45th Fighter Squadron, passing its A-10 pilot training duties to AFRC's 47th Fighter Squadron, which was transplanted from Barksdale AFB, La. "During the last five-plus years, members of the 45th FS have trained A-10 mission-ready pilots alongside our regular Air Force team," said Col. John Russell, 924th Fighter Group commander, at the March 8 ceremony. Davis-Monthan inactivated the Active Duty 358th Fighter Squadron last month and rolled it together with the Reserve 45th FS as the 47th FS, according to a release. The reformed 47th FS is now the Air Force's only "combined classic and Active association," according to a separate March 20 release. Under the arrangement, AFRC pilots will fly with the 347th FS—one of D-M's two remaining Active Duty A-10 training squadrons, while Active Duty pilots will in return fly with the Reserve unit. 2014

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Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 9 Nov 2010

Updated: 25 May 2012

#### Sources

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

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

Unit yearbook. *MacDill AFB, FL. 1965.*