

## 56<sup>th</sup> FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR SQUADRON



### LINEAGE

56<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 20 Nov 1940  
Activated, 15 Jan 1941  
Redesignated 56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942  
Disbanded, 1 May 1944  
Reconstituted and redesignated 56<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 14 Nov 1952  
Activated, 27 Nov 1952  
Discontinued, 1 Mar 1960

### STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 15 Jan 1941  
Eyerett, WA, 26 Jun 1941  
Harding Field LA, 31 Jan 1942 (detachment operate from Santa Ana, CA, 28 May-12 Jun 1942  
Nome, AK, 20 Jun-20 Oct 1942 Anchorage, AK, 23 Oct-21 Dec 1942)  
Bartow AAFld, FL, 11 May 1943-1 May 1944

Selfridge AFB, MI, 27 Nov 1952  
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 18 Aug 1955-1 Mar 1960

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

54<sup>th</sup> Pursuit (later Fighter) Group, 15 Jan 1941-1 May 1944  
4708<sup>th</sup> Defense Wing, 27 Nov 1952  
575<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Group, 16 Feb 1953  
4706<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Wing, 18 Aug 1955  
58<sup>th</sup> Air Division, 1 Mar 1956  
30<sup>th</sup> Air Division, 1 Sep 1958  
Detroit Defense Sector, 1 Apr 1959  
Department of the Air Force, 1 Mar 1960

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-39, 1941-1943  
P-51, 1943-1944  
F-51, 1952-1953  
F-86F, 1953  
F-86L  
F-104A, 1958-1960

### **ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS**

### **ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES**

### **UNIT COLORS**

### **COMMANDERS**

LTC Howard S. Askelson, #1957

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

American Theater

#### **Campaign Streamers**

Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

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

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
Alaska, Jun- 4 Nov 1942

### **EMBLEM**

A caricatured "policeman" bird tenne, feet and beak yellow, wearing a red policeman's coat with

tails, trimmed with gold belt, star, collar and sleeve braid, and buttons, and an ultramarine blue policeman's "bobby" hat with yellow crescent moon thereon, strutting out of white disc formed by border of yellow stars in orle, arranged five and six respectively, and swinging a red "billy" outlined black by cord held between thumb and right forefinger. (Approved, 1 Mar 1944)

## **EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

The squadron's specific mission was to provide air defense for the heavily populated and industrial areas of the greater Miami Valley, which included Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. From mid-summer of 1958, the squadron flew F-104 Starfighter airplanes. On 1 Mar 1960, the 56th FIS, with a strength of 300 assigned 1961 was known as the Wright Air Development Division individuals and 25 F-104s, was inactivated at Wright-Patterson, one of four such squadrons inactivated by the Air Defense Command.

F-104 were flown by the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, assigned to Wright-Patterson from 1955 to 1960.

56th F-I Squadron: activated 27 Nov 52 at Selfridge AFB, MI, as the 4708th Defense Wing; flying F-51D acft; cony to F-86F acft in Jan 53; transferred to 575th AD Group 16 Feb 53; con to F-8-6D acft 16 Jul 53; transferred to 4706th AD Wing and moved to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 18 Aug 55; TAW Project Arrow; transferred to 58th AD 8 Jul 56; cony to F-104A acft in fall of 58; transferred to 30th AD 1 Sep 58; transferred to Detroit ADS, 1, Apr 59; inactivated 1 Mar 60

On March 1, 1960, the 56th FIS, with a strength of 300 assigned individuals and 25 F-104s, inactivated at Wright-Patterson, one of four such squadrons inactivated by Air Defense Command.

## **Operations History**

The 56th PS was activated on 15 January 1941, defending the war industry in Southern California until June 1942.

On 20 June 1942, the 56th (now) Fighter Squadron, took their Bell P-39 Airacobras to Nome, Alaska, where they won a Distinguished Unit Citation for operations against the Japanese in November 1942. In 1943, the 56th FS returned to the ConUS, and were based at Bartow Army Air Base, Florida, where they converted to North American P-51 Mustangs. One year later, on 1 May 1944, the 56th FS was disbanded.

Re-constituted and activated at Selfridge AFB, Michigan in November 1952, the 56th (now) Fighter Interceptor Squadron was assigned to the 4708th Air Defense Wing, and equipped with North American F-86F Sabres. In February 1953, the 56th FIS began conversion to F-86D interceptors, and was assigned to the 575th Air Defense Group.

On 18 August 1955, under Project ARROW, the 56th FIS designation was transferred from Selfridge AFB to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, initially under operational control of the 4706th Air Defense Wing, then the 58th Air Division (Air Defense) on 1 March 1956, where the squadron was the primary air defense unit for southwestern Ohio and the research facilities at Wright-Patterson.

In the Spring of 1957, the 56th FIS began re-equipping with the North American F-86L Sabre, an improved version of the F-86D which incorporated the Semi Automatic Ground Environment, or SAGE. The unit became proficient with both the F-86L and SAGE, and won an Air Defense Command "A" award for live rocket SURE-FIRE missions in the late summer of 1957.

The transition into the F-86L was short-lived however, as the squadron began transition into the "missile-with-a-man-in-it" (the Lockheed F-104A) in May 1958. The 56th FIS was now under operational control of 30th Air Division (Air Defense), before being transferred to the Detroit Air Defense Sector in April 1959.

Deactivated at Wright-Patterson on 1 March 1960

430206	P-40M	43-5642	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	LAC	Blanks, John T Jr	Harding Field, LA
430212	P-40M	43-5618	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	TAC	Anthony, Richard C	Harding Field, LA
430217	P-39F	41-7226	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	TOA	Harker, Ward W	Paine Field, Everett, WA
430302	P-40L	42-10670	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	LAC	Bowser, Roman N	Harding Field, LA
430313	P-40M	43-5634	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	CRGC	Storts, Gerald E	Near Gurley, LA
430503	P-51A	43-6067	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	KCR	Kielman, Earl	3 1/2 Mi N Harding Field, LA
430504	P-51A	43-6183	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, LA	CREF	Sanford, Joshua D	2 Mi NW Bunkie, LA
430522	P-51A	43-6064	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	KMAC	Dudley, Robert P	7 Mi SE Bartow AAB, FL
430522	P-51A	43-6061	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	MAC	Fisk, Harry R	7 Mi SE Bartow AAB, FL
430527	P-51A	43-6193	56FS	54FG	Tallahassee, FL	BLEF	Norton, Melvin J	Bartow AAF, FL
430527	P-51A	43-6117	56FS	54FG	Tallahassee, FL	LACGL	Cottingham, William O J	Bartow AAF, FL

430528	P-51A	43-6074	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAB, FL	TACGC	Schmitt, Eugene E	Bartow AAB, FL
430528	P-51A	43-6079	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAB, FL	TACGC	McPherson, Samuel O Jr	Bartow AAB, FL
430530	P-51A	43-6063	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LACGL	Harriss, Hayden H	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
430619	P-51A	42-6180	56FS	54FG	Bartow Field, FL	LACGL	Coleman, Sheftall B	Bartow Army Air Base, FL
430623	P-51A	43-6189	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LACGL	Harriss, Hayden H	Bartow AAF, FL
430624	P-51A	43-6126	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LACMF	Lawler, John B	Bartow AAF, FL
430709	P-51A	43-6141	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	TACGC	Piatt, Jacob I Jr	Bartow AAF, FL
430709	P-51A	43-6108	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	TACGC	Starkey, Durwood P	Bartow AAF, FL
430717	P-51A	43-6117	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	TOAEF	Baron, Walter	Bartow AAF, FL
430722	P-51B	43-12120	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	KCR DF	Starkey, Durward P	7 Mi S Myakka City, FL
430804	P-51A	43-6070	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	KCR	Woodbury, Edward	Into Lake Marian, FL
430816	P-51A	43-6108	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAB, FL	TACGC	Parked Airplane	William Northern AAF, TN
430818	P-51A	43-6117	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	BOMAC	Weld, Richard E	3 Mi W Riverview, FL
430825	P-51A	43-6141	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	CREF	Elliott, Benjamin F	Bartow AAF, FL
430827	P-51A	43-6204	56FS	54FG	Talahassee, FL	LAC	McDaniel, Wallace S	Bartow AAF, FL
430902	P-51B	43-12107	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LAC	Cobb, Guy T	Bartow AAF, FL
430918	A-36A	42-83980	56FS	54FG	Bartow, FL	BLMF	Sundblom, Virgil D	Bartow AAF, FL
430919	P-51B	43-12293	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	KMAC	Busby, Robert E	5 Mi N Camp Gruber,

								OK
430919	A-36A	42-83692	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	KCRSSP	Diment, James F	5 Mi SE Drane Field
430929	P-51A	43-6036	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	TACGC	No Pilot	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
430929	P-51A	43-6126	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	TACGC	Greene, John H	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
430930	P-51A	43-6204	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KBO	Diehl, Charles W	4 Mi SW Ft Myers, FL
431108	P-51B	43-12192	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	TAC	Hill, Robert G	Bartow AAF, FL
431108	P-51B	43-12854	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	TAC	(parked aircraft)	Bartow AAF, FL
431109	P-51B	43-12118	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LACNU	Dita, Daniel G	Bartow AAF, FL
431115	RP-47C	41-6112	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	FLEF	Calkins, Harold C	Bartow AAF, FL
431118	P-51B	43-12118	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, FL	LACNU	Goulait, Bert J., Jr	Bartow AAF, FL
431124	P-51B	43-12108	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KCRGC	Smith, Enrique R., Jr	Lake Hancock, 5 mi NW of Bartow AAF, FL
431124	P-51B	42-12112	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KCRGC	Short, Richard K., Jr	Lake Hancock, 5 mi NW of Bartow AAF, FL
440107	P-51C	42- 102985	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	CREF	Ross, Harold L.	9 Mi S Hudson, FL
440119	P-51B	43-6387	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KCRGC	Mackenzie, John A.	SE Lake Eloise, FL
440204	P-51A	43-6243	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	TACGC	Spencer, Dale F	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
440204	P-51A	43-6191	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	TACGC	Danehower, Will R	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
440224	P-51C	43- 102987	56FS	54FG	Bartow Field, Bartow, FL	BOF	Fifield, Robert S	Hatchineha Lake, FL

440226	P-51B	43-12489	56FS	54FG	Bartow Field, Bartow, FL	TAC	Bradley, Robert T	Bartow Field, Bartow, FL
440305	BC-1	38-382	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KCRGC	Cantlon, Roy J Jr	6 Mi N Highland City, FL
440305	P-51A	43-6146	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	BOMF	Williams, Thomas T	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
440310	P-51B	43-12201	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	LACMF	Harrison, James B	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
440314	P-51B	43-12215	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KSSP	Rivers, Leslie T	2 Mi N Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL
440318	P-51B	43-12139	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	BOSSP	Miles, Orval C	6 Mi NE Polk City, FL
440414	P-51B	43-12106	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	LAC	Cox, Lynd J	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL

440107	P-51C	42- 102985	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	CREF	Ross, Harold L.	9 Mi S Hudson, FL
440119	P-51B	43-6387	56FS	54FG	Bartow AAF, Bartow, FL	KCRGC	Mackenzie, John A.	SE Lake Eloise, FL
420619	P-39F	41-7175	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	TAC	Mayo, Frederick W.	Brookley Field, AL
420630	P-39F	41-7202	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	FLEF	Ramsey, Glym W	Harding Field, LA
420705	P-39D	41-38292	56FS	54FG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	FLEF	Fulton, Kenneth F	Harding Field, LA
420808	P-39F	41-7274	56FS	54FG	Fort Spencer, Nome, AK	LACGL	Crouch, John L	Fort Spencer, Nome, AK
420811	P-39F	41-7315	56FS	54FG	Ft Spencer, Nome, AK	FLEF	Crouch John L	Short of Runway,Ft Spencer, Nome, AK

420909	P-39F	41-7323	56FS	54FG	Fort Spencer, Nome, AK	FLEF	Brown, Grant W	2 mi E of Fort Spencer, Nome, AK
420918	P-39F	41-7322	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	LAC	Peter, Lewis S	Nome, AK
421002	P-39F	41-7321	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	LACGC	Crouch, John L	Nome, AK
421016	P-39F	41-7341	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	FLoGW	Litton, William P	McGrath, AK
421016	P-39D	41-7070	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	FLoGW	Carter, Roger M	McGrath, AK
421016	P-39D	41-7064	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	FLoGW	Tracy, Richard H	McGrath, AK
421016	P-39F	41-7317	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	FLoGW	Nicholson, Alexander G	McGrath, AK
421016	P-39F	41-7187	56FS	54FG	Nome, AK	FLoGW	Mcguire, Thomas B	McGrath, AK
420627	P-39D	41-38289	56FS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACSSP	Funke, Robert W.	Harding Field, LA

411030	RP-36A	38-12	56PS	54PG	Paine Field, Everett, WA	KCRGC	Cox, Francis M	5 mi off Dungeness Point, WA
420209	P-39D	40-3016	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	TAC	Hanson, Stanley K	Harding Field, LA
420218	RP-40G	41-13347	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACNU	Paris, Ferdinand B	Harding Field, LA
420228	P-40C	41-13416	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	FLEF	Brown, Grant W	Harding Field, LA
420307	P-40C	41-13347	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, LA	LACGL	Hanson, Stanley K	Harding Field, LA



420314	P-40G	42-14266	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACGL	Mink, Wesley S	Harding Field, LA
420317	P-40C	41-13501	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACGC	Carter, Robert M	Harding Field, LA
420320	RP-40	39-205	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	TOAEF	Hanson, Stanley K	Harding Field, LA
420321	P-40A	39-184	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	TOAGL	Paris, Ferdinand B	Harding Field, LA
420322	P-40E	41-25028	56PS	54PG	Muni Airport, Norfolk, VA	BOEFF	Baker, Ralph M	Norfolk, VA
420322	P-40G	41-13368	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LAC	Paris, Ferdinand B	Alexandria Field, LA
420325	RP-40	40-319	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LAC	Callaway, James E	Harding Field, LA
420405	P-40G	42-14271	56PS	54PG	Eglin Field, Valpariso, FL	TOAGL	Flusche, Raymond P	Eglin Field, FL
420411	P-40	41-133380	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACGL	Nicholson, Alexander G	Eglin Field, FL
420422	P-40	39-254	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	KMAC	Paris, Ferdinand	5 mi W of Harding Field, LA
420422	P-40	40-304	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	BOMAC	Mink, Wesley S	5 mi W of Harding Field, LA
420424	P-40	39-184	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACNU	Wood, Don B. M.	Harding Field, LA
420424	P-40	39-175	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACNU	Davison, Denver B	Harding Field, LA
420428	P-40C	41-13338	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	BOEF	Nicholson, Alexander G	10 mi S of Harding Field, LA

					LA			
420501	P-40	39-261	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	BOMAC	Tunis, Jack K	15 mi SE of Harding Field, LA
420501	P-40	39-175	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	BOMAC	Langford, Ray C	15 mi SE of Harding Field, LA
420505	P-40	39-160	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACGL	Anderson, Leonard W	Harding Field, LA
420510	P-40	39-229	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LACGL	Lind, Harold A	Harding Field, LA
420514	P-40	40-357	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	LAC	Bland, John W	Harding Field, LA
420515	P-40F	41-13631	56PS	54PG	Harding Field, Baton Rouge, LA	FLEF	Langford, Ray C	Hester, LA




---

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 27 Dec 2010

Updated:

#### Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit History 58<sup>th</sup> Air Division (Defense) Wright Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH. 1957

