

60th FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

60th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 60th Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Redesignated 60th Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 8 Feb 1945
Inactivated, 8 Dec 1945
Redesignated 60th Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 17 Jul 1946
Activated, 20 Aug 1946
Redesignated 60th Fighter Squadron, Jet, 14 Jun 1948
Redesignated 60th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 20 Jan 1950
Inactivated, 30 Apr 1971
Redesignated 60th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 18 May 1971
Activated, 1 Sep 1971
Redesignated 60th Fighter Squadron on 1 Nov 1991

STATIONS

Mitchel Field, NY, 15 Jan 1941
Bolling Field, DC, 8 Dec 1941–12 Oct 1942
Port Lyautey, French Morocco, 10 Nov 1942
Casablanca, French Morocco, 17 Nov 1942
Oujda, Algeria, 6 Dec 1942
Telergma, Algeria, 26 Dec 1942

Youks-les-Bains, Algeria, 6 Jan 1943
Telergma, Algeria, 17 Feb 1943
Berteaux, Algeria, 2 Mar 1943
Ebba Ksour, Tunisia, 12 Apr 1943
Menzel Temime, Tunisia, 22 May 1943
Sousse, Tunisia, 10 Jun 1943
Pantelleria, 21 Jun 1943
Licata, Sicily, 17 Jul 1943
Paestum, Italy, 13 Sep 1943
Santa Maria, Italy, 18 Nov 1943 (operated from Paestum, Italy, 1–31 Dec 1943)
Cercola, Italy, 1 Jan–5 Feb 1944
Karachi, India, 20 Feb 1944
Shwangliu, China, 17 Apr 1944
Nagaghuli, India, 1 Sep 1944
Sahmaw, Burma, 20 Nov 1944
Myitkyina, Burma, 8 May 1945
Piardoba, India, 1 Oct–15 Nov 1945
Camp Shanks, NY, 7–8 Dec 1945
Neubiberg, Germany, 20 Aug 1946
Bad Kissingen, Germany, Jul–25 Aug 1947
Andrews Field, MD, 25 Aug 1947
Roswell AAFld (later, Walker AFB), NM, 16 Sep 1947
Otis AFB, MA, 16 Nov 1948
Westover AFB, MA, 10 Aug 1950
Otis AFB, MA, 18 Aug 1955–30 Apr 1971
Eglin AFB, FL, 1 Sep 1971

ASSIGNMENTS

33rd Pursuit (later, 33rd Fighter) Group, 15 Jan 1941–8 Dec 1945
33rd Fighter (later, 33rd Fighter Interceptor) Group, 20 Aug 1946
4707th Defense (later, 4707th Air Defense) Wing, 6 Feb 1952
33rd Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955
4735th Air Defense Group, 18 Aug 1957
Boston Air Defense Sector, 1 Aug 1959
35th Air Division, 1 Apr 1966
21st Air Division, 19 Nov 1969–30 Apr 1971
33rd Tactical Fighter (later, 33rd Fighter) Wing, 1 Sep 1971
33rd Operations Group, 1 Dec 1991

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-39, 1941
P-40, 1941–1944
P-40E
P-40F

P-40L
P-40N
P-47, 1944–1945
P-47D
P-38, 1945
P-38H
P-38L
P(later F)–51, 1946–1949
P-51D
F-84, 1948–1950
F-84C
F-86, 1950–1955
F-86A
F-86D
F-86E
F-94, 1955–1959
F-94C
F-101, 1959–1971
F-101B
F-15, 1979–1980, 1981

COMMANDERS

Maj Daniel James, Jr., 1955
LTC Oramel H. Skinner, Jr., #1956

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Algeria-French Morocco with Arrowhead
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Air Combat, EAME Theater
India-Burma
Central Burma
China Defensive
Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989–1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Central Tunisia, 15 Jan 1943

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

15 Jun 1979–22 Apr 1980

1 May 1984–30 Apr 1986

1 Apr 1990–31 Mar 1992

EMBLEM



60th Fighter Squadron, Jet emblem





60th Fighter Squadron, (WWII) emblem: On a disc of green within a border of black, piped blue, a caricatured crow of black; feet, beak, and tie yellow, wearing an aviator's helmet of blue, goggles white, and a checkered vest of alternate blue and white checks, holding in his wings a

"tommy" gun of red. (Approved, 15 May 1942)

60th Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem: On a disc quartered saltire-wise, Red at top and bottom and chequy Red and White on the sides, a Green disc bearing a Black caricatured crow with White eye, Black pupil, Yellow beak, feet and bow tie detailed and fimbriated Black, wearing a Blue aviator's helmet, with White goggles and a Blue and White checkered vest holding in his wings a Red tommy gun all fimbriated with Black and all within a narrow Red border. The crow, being a bird, represents the fact that this is an Air Force squadron. As portrayed, it shows the independent, cocky, and aggressive spirit of this organization. The submachine gun represents the fire power of the Pursuit Squadron. (Approved, 1986)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

FIGHTING CROWS

OPERATIONS

Air defense of US, Dec 1941–Oct 1942.

Combat in MTO, 10 Nov 1942–2 Feb 1944, and CBI, 29 Apr 1944–2 Aug 1945.

Part of US occupation forces in Germany, 1946–1947.

Air defense of US, 1947–1971.

On 9 October 1953 tragedy struck the squadron when an F-86D 51-5948 piloted by Capt Joseph Vitale crashed on takeoff at the end of runway 06.

"At approximately 3:15 A.M. the pilot called the tower for taxi and takeoff instructions. Instructions were given and the pilot was further advised of an obstruction 100-feet northeast on the overrun of the active runway 06. This obstruction consisted of a 15-foot wide trench, about 8-feet deep running across the overrun at a 90-degree angle. The earth excavated from this trench was piled in a windrow about 6-feet high parallel to the open trench. Highway barriers were erected on the southeast side of the trench and were lighted by three kerosene-type flares.

Capt Vitale taxied his aircraft into takeoff position on Runway 06 Prior to starting the takeoff roll the pilot acknowledged receipt of takeoff, seat pin and canopy check instructions. The weather was clear with visibility at 10-miles and wind calm. The takeoff roll was started at 0818Z (3:18 A.M. local time); navigation lights were on and landing lights off. The takeoff roll appeared normal up to the intersection of Runways 06 and 19 when, witnesses stated, the aircraft appeared to slow down or appeared to have inadequate speed for takeoff. As the aircraft continued its roll past the intersection of Runways 06 and 33 and onto the overrun the tower operator gave the crash alarm.

The aircraft passed the end of the runway, continued along the overrun and struck the windrow of earth and burst into flames. It was not definitely determined that the aircraft was airborne but the point of first contact of the landing gear and windrow of earth was 24-inches above the surface level.... After initial impact the aircraft 'planed' off the windrow of earth. The second impact occurred 200-feet northeast on the overrun and slightly left of the center line.... The pilot had been ejected from the aircraft. It could not be determined if the pilot intentionally ejected himself or if the ejection resulted from impact or a malfunction... .The pilot was unconscious from a severe brain concussion... . The pilot did not regain consciousness. Death occurred on 16 October 1953, seven days after the accident."

Captain Vitale had been assigned to Westover since January 1953 upon his return from Korea where he flew 100 combat missions, and who also evaded capture from the Germans in France after being shot down on his 22nd combat mission in World War II. He received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's highest award for valor, the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, the Purple Heart from World War II and three battle stars for the Korean War. He lived at Westover with his wife and four children. He was 35 years old

The squadron suffered another tragic aircraft accident just five weeks later. On 17 November 1953 another veteran combat pilot Capt Charles E. McDonald, flying F-86D 51-6004 crashed while attempting an emergency landing on Westover's runway 33 at 2:45 P.M. "At 1437 (2:37 P.M. local time) on 17 Nov 53, Gilbert Green Flight Leader Capt Charles B. McDonald, was cleared by Westover Tower for takeoff with his wingman, Lt Nelson N. Williams Jr. The takeoffs were made on runway 33 with afterburners.

Shortly after takeoff during right climbing turn to join wingman, Captain McDonald contacted Westover Tower declaring an emergency. He informed the tower that his forward fire warning light was on and requested clearance for a flame out landing on runway 06. A few seconds later he requested a change to land on runway 33. Both of his requests were received and acknowledged by Westover Tower. Captain McDonald arrived over Westover with approximately 3000-feet altitude and set up a flame out pattern for runway 33. At an early point in this pattern Captain McDonald requested the tower, his wing man, and mobile unit to check for signs of smoke or flames coming from his aircraft. Both the tower and wingman acknowledged his message and replied with a negative answer.

Up to this time Captain McDonald seemed to be making a satisfactory flame out pattern. While making a continuous left turn toward final he further informed the tower that he might land with gear up. A second or two later he was seen sinking rapidly in a left turn on final and disappeared into trees approximately 3500-feet from the end of runway 33. Smoke and flames immediately indicated the place where the crash occurred. The pilot had jettisoned his canopy shortly before crashing into the trees. Captain McDonald was found by a fireman and three-base construction workers approximately 40-feet in front of the wreckage. He was conscious, though badly burned. Due to complete destruction of the pilot's compartment, and the fact the

pilot never recovered for full questioning, his escape from the burning aircraft was not completely determined.

Efforts to salvage as much of the flaming aircraft as possible were hampered by detonation of the plane's rockets which started firing periodically, while the pilot was being carried to a nearby ambulance, and lasted for approximately one hour. It was established by the Accident Investigating Board that the aircraft crashed in a wing level attitude. Captain McDonald died at 10:05 A.M. EST on 25 Nov 53 in Brooks Army General Hospital, Ft. Sam Houston, Texas."

Captain McDonald saw service in World War II as a Spitfire pilot for the Royal Canadian Air Force in England, and flew 100 combat missions in Korea as an F-86 pilot. He was the holder of the British Military Medal and the Star Ribbon from Great Britain, and the Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, along with theater ribbons for service in Europe, Asia, and Korea, from the United States. He also held the American Defense, UN Service and World War II Victory Medal. He lived on Westover with his wife. They had no children. His funeral was held in his hometown of Shreveport, Louisiana.

On 7 December 1954 the flying safety record came to an end for the 60th, with the loss of 1st Lt Edward Dillon and F-86D 52-4248.

"Lieutenant Dillon was scrambled on an Active Air Defense mission at 5:17 A.M. local time. After a successful intercept and identification of the unknown aircraft, Lieutenant Dillon began his return toward Westover. Shortly thereafter, he contacted the Ground Control Intercept (GCI) controller and stated that he was having all kinds of problems, and a few seconds later, the pilot advised the controller that he was bailing out. Radar was tracking the aircraft at about 7,000 feet as it started making a shallow right turn for about one and one-half minutes after his last radio transmission, and then the aircraft faded from the radar screen at 5:48 A.M., about 25-miles ESE of Otis AFB, over Nantucket Sound, somewhere near the vicinity of Monomoy Point, Massachusetts. Weather in the area at the time of the crash was cold with light snow. No trace was ever found of either the pilot or the aircraft, even after an extensive and exhaustive air and sea search."

He originally entered the Air Force as an enlisted man in July 1946 and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in October 1952. He is a veteran of Korea having served with the 12th Fighter Bomber Squadron. He was a prisoner of war of the Communists in North Korea from 15 June 1953 to 4 September 1953. Upon his release he returned to the United States and was assigned to the 60th on 1 December 1953. Lieutenant Dillon was unmarried and was from Naugatuck, Connecticut.

14 November 1967 Two McDonnell F-101B Voodoos of the 60th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, out of Otis AFB, Massachusetts, collide over Maine during a cross-country formation flight. Aircraft 57-376 is destroyed crashing on Mount Abraham after the two-man crew ejects with minor injuries. The uninjured crew of moderately damaged aircraft 57-378 makes an emergency landing at Dow AFB, Maine.

Not operational, 1 Sep 1971–15 Jun 1979.

F–15 training of PACAF crews, 15 Jun 1979–16 Apr 1980. In 1979 the unit participated in the "Kadena Ready Eagle" program in which the members of the 60th trained new F-15 pilots stationed at Kadena AB, Japan.

Not operational, 17 Apr 1980–1 Jul 1981.

The 60th made its first combat deployment since World War II when it sent ten F-15s to Grenada in support of Operation Urgent Fury, the rescue of American medical students held in Grenada in the mid-1980s. The unit continued to train and hone its combat fighting skills until it was called upon to fly support missions for Operation Just Cause (the removal of Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega from Panama in the early 1990s).

Supported combat operations in Panama, Dec 1989–Jan 1990 and Southwest Asia, 26 Aug 1990–12 Apr 1991.

13 July 1992/1993 McDonnell-Douglas F-15C-40-MC Eagle. 85-0116, of the 60th Fighter Squadron, 33rd Fighter Wing, based at Eglin AFB, Florida, crashes at 0900 hrs. in the Gulf of Mexico, 90 miles S of Eglin. Capt. Darren S. Ruhnau, 27, of Niceville, Florida, assigned to the 60th Fighter Squadron, ejects safely. He and another F-15 had departed Eglin at 0835 hrs. for a training mission. "I'm just glad the ACES II ejection system worked as advertised", Ruhnau said in a statement, "and that the search-and-rescue guys were there to do the job." "He was picked up by an oil freighter", said Capt. Susan Brown, a spokeswoman for the 33rd, but the helicopter crew "couldn't get him off there. So they transferred him to a Coast Guard cutter, but they couldn't get him off there either. He was in such good shape, they dropped him back in the water, and picked him up from there." A U.S. Navy helicopter of HC-16 from the USS *Forrestal*, which is based in Pensacola, plucked him from the Gulf at 1000 hrs. and transported him to Eglin Regional Hospital where he was checked out and released at 1330 hrs. Ruhnau has been flying F-15s since May 1989 and assigned at Eglin since September of that year.

Final Sortie for 60th FS: The 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin AFB, Fla., planned to deactivate its 60th Fighter Squadron after the unit's final sortie on Dec. 4. Some 20 remaining airmen and 12 F-15s of the 60th FS will go to the other 33rd FW squadron, the 58th FS, as the wing continues its drawdown and transformation into the Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Center. "While we are sad to see one of our nation's top air superiority squadrons close their doors, it is a necessary move as the wing prepares for the future," said Col. Todd Harmer, 33rd FW commander.

6/29/2005 For the second time in less than 10 years, the 60th Fighter Squadron is the winner of the Raytheon Trophy. Started in 1953 by Hughes Aircraft Company, the trophy is given annually to the top air-superiority or air-defense squadron in the Air Force. "It's quite an honor - bottom line it's the highest achievement that an air-to-air superiority squadron can get in the entire Air

Force," said Lt. Col. Andrew Toth, 60th FS commander. "It took the entire team for this to happen; it's not just us, it's the entire (33rd Fighter Wing)." During 2004, the squadron's Airmen flew 10 missions supporting Operation Noble Eagle, racking up 140 sorties and 516 hours. Some of these missions included guarding the sky over the president's Texas ranch, and 24-hour airborne coverage of the G-8 Summit in Sea Isle, Ga. They also flew 4,749 sorties and 5,837 hours supporting peacetime operations. While at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., for the weapons system evaluation program, the squadron's Airmen conducted 10 live-missile firings and 24 live-aerial gunnery sorties. They also amassed 105 sorties and more than 137 flying hours, all the while maintaining a better-than 93-percent deployed mission-capable rate. Perhaps the biggest key to earning the trophy is the relationship between operations and maintenance. "It's the teamwork, the bond and the relationship between that we have with our aircraft maintenance unit," Colonel Toth said. "We have the best operations-maintenance relationship that you can see anywhere in the United States Air Force. Without their efforts there's no way we would have accomplished the award." "The Raytheon Trophy is a huge accomplishment and one of the few awards that really captures the efforts of both operations and maintenance," said Col. Brett Williams, 33rd FW commander.

The 60th FS winning the trophy was not lost on the maintenance side of the house. "That they're the best air-to-air squadron in the Air Force validates the work that we do to provide them quality aircraft so our pilots can train and stay proficient at tip of the spear of combat air superiority," said Senior Master Sgt. John Davis, 60th Aircraft Maintenance Unit superintendent. "It gives us satisfaction on what we do day in and day out." "The 60th FS clearly displayed its superior ability to mobilize, deploy, fly and dominate the sky anywhere in the world," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper, a former 33rd FW commander.

16 Dec 1998 The 60 FS participated in Operation DESERT FOX while deployed Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia. The goal was to degrade Saddam Hussein's ability to make and use weapons of mass destruction, diminish Saddam's ability to wage war against his neighbors, and demonstrate to Saddam the consequences of violating international obligations.

27 Mar 2007 The 60 FS deployed 16 F-15 Eagles and 245 Airmen to Elmendorf AFB AK as part of the deployment for RED FLAG 07-1 scheduled for 5 April through 21 April 2007. RED FLAG-Alaska, a Pacific Air Forces (PACAF)-sponsored exercise, was originally named COPE THUNDER. It was moved to Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, from Clark Air Base, Philippines, in 1992 after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo on June 15, 1991 forced the curtailment of operations. COPE THUNDER was redesignated RED FLAG-Alaska in 2006.

5-21 Apr 2007 The 60 FS deployed from Eglin AFB, FL to participate in RED FLAG-Alaska 07-1. The Wing deployed sixteen F-15Cs and 245 pilots and maintainers that joined more than 1,100 service members from the United States, France and Australia. RED FLAG-Alaska, a series of Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) commander-directed field training exercises for U.S. and coalition forces, provided joint offensive counter-air, interdiction, close air support, and large force employment training in a simulated combat environment. These exercises were conducted on the Pacific Alaskan Range Complex with air operations flown out of Eielson and Elmendorf Air Force Bases.

4 Dec 2008 The 60 FS flew their last sortie leading to the drawdown of the F-15 fleet for conversion to F-35 Operations. 60 FS personnel merged into the 58 FS until they all received new assignments. The 60 FS remained actively attached to the 33 FW throughout the transition from ACC to AETC.

26 Jul – 9 Aug 2008 The 60 FS deployed 183 personnel and 12 F-15 Eagles to Savannah International Airport (IAP, Travis Field), GA for Dissimilar Air Combat training (DACT). Dissimilar training combines members and airframes from the other services, and occasionally members and airframes from different countries, in exercises to train each of the aircrews to the particularities of the different services. This included tactics, communication and procedures. The concept was to prepare for the eventuality of a combat situation where interfacing with the different units

Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 9 Nov 2010
Updated: 25 Sep 2016

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.
USAF Accident Investigation Board Reports.