

97 FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

97 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 13 Jan 1942
Activated, 9 Feb 1942
Redesignated 97 Pursuit Squadron (I) (Twin-Engine), 22 Apr 1942
Redesignated 97 Fighter Squadron (Twin-Engine), 15 May 1942
Redesignated 97 Fighter Squadron, Two-Engine, 28 Feb 1944
Inactivated, 9 Sep 1945
Activated, 12 Apr 1947
Redesignated 97 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 15 Aug 1947
Inactivated, 2 Oct 1949
Redesignated 97 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 13 Nov 1950
Activated, 1 Dec 1950
Inactivated, 8 Jan 1958
Redesignated 97 Flying Training Squadron, 22 Jun 1972
Activated, 1 Feb 1973
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1993
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Apr 1998

STATIONS

Harding Field, LA, 9 Feb 1942
Muroc, CA, 17 Apr 1942
Long Beach, CA, 22 May-16 Sep 1942
Eglington, Northern Ireland, 5 Oct 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 24 Dec 1942
Telergma, Algeria, 1 Jan 1943
Berteaux, Algeria, 28 Mar 1943

Souk-el-Arba, Algeria, 13 Jun 1943
Grombalia, Tunisia, 4 Aug 1943 (operated from Gerbini, Sicily, 6-18 Sep 1943)
San Pacrazio, Italy, 3 Oct 1943
Lecce, Italy, 10 Oct 1943
Vicenzo Airfield, Italy, 11 Jan 1944
Lesina, Italy, c. 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945
Grenier Field (later, AFB), NH, 12 Apr 1947-2 Oct 1949
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Dec 1950
New Castle County Aprt, DE, 18 Aug 1955-8 Jan 1958
Williams AB, AZ, 1 Feb 1973-1 Apr 1993
Sheppard AFB, TX, 1 Apr 1998

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Ladd AFB, AK, 4 Apr-29 Jun 1948

ASSIGNMENTS

82 Pursuit (later, 82 Fighter) Group, 9 Feb 1942-9 Sep 1945
82 Fighter Group, 12 Apr 1947-2 Oct 1949
Eastern Air Defense Force, 1 Dec 1950
4706 Defense (later, 4706 Air Defense) Wing, 6 Feb 1952
82 Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955-8 Jan 1958
82 Flying Training Wing, 1 Feb 1973
82 Operations Group, 15 Dec 1991-1 Apr 1993
340th Flying Training Group, 1 Apr 1998

ATTACHMENTS

56 Fighter Interceptor Wing, 1 Dec 1950-20 May 1951
142 Fighter Interceptor Wing, 20 May 1951-6 Feb 1952

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-38, 1942-1945
P (later, F)-51, 1947-1949
F-86, 1951-1955
F-94, 1955-1957
T-38, 1973-1993
T-37, 1998
T-38, 1998
AT-38, 1998
T-6

COMMANDERS

Unkn, 9 Feb-16 Apr 1942
Maj Ernest C. Young, 17 Apr 1942
Maj William W. Wittliff, 13 Jan 1943

Cpt Richard G. McAuliffe, 28 Mar 1943
Maj William W. Wittliff, 28 Apr 1943
Maj William B. Peterson, 2 May 1943
Maj William W. Wittliff, 16 Jul 1943
Maj Harry L. Smith Jr., 26 Aug 1943
Maj Charles R. Spencer, 19 Jan 1944
Cpt John S. Litchfield, 30 Jan 1944
Maj Claude E. Ford, 1 Apr 1944
LTC Paul J. Greene, 12 Aug 1944
LTC Thomas C. Kelly, Oct 1944
LTC Joseph L. Dickman, Apr 1945
Maj Robert C. Booth, 23 Jun-29 Aug 1945
Unkn, 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945
None (not manned), 12 Apr-13 Jun 1947
Maj Julius D. Shivers, 14 Jun 1947
Maj Donald V. Miller, 10 Mar-2 Oct 1949
None (not manned), 1-5 Dec 1950
LTC Frank Q. O'Conner, 6 Dec 1950
LTC Walter E. Modesitt, 29 Jan 1952
Maj Stevens H. Turner, Aug 1952
LTC George V. Lane, Jul 1954-18 Aug 1955
Maj Ernest P. Stuyvesant, c. 18 Aug 1955
LTC Willis J. Gary, 3 Jul 1956-8 Oct 1957
None (not manned), 8 Oct 1957-8 Jan 1958
LTC William P. Smith, 1 Feb 1973
LTC Richard L. Russell, 25 Nov 1974
LTC John R. Hullender, 14 Jun 1976
LTC Joseph L. Higgins, 9 Jun 1978
LTC Howard T. Hanson, 4 Jan 1980
LTC Lonny R. Alexander, 20 Oct 1980
LTC James T. Thomes, 14 Dec 1981
LTC John R. Rademacher, 30 Jun 1982
LTC Gary A. Swigart, 23 Jun 1983
LTC Percy D. Leonard Jr., 15 Jun 1984
LTC Johnny Engleman, 18 Nov 1985
LTC David S. Taylor, 16 Sep 1986
LTC Russell L. Allen, 12 Nov 1987
LTC Dennis L. Austin, 31 Oct 1989
LTC Douglas W. Knutsen, 17 Jun 1991
LTC Terrence P. Long, 2 Dec 1992-1 Apr 1993
LTC William T. Cahoon, 16 Jun 1998
LTC Wolfgang C. Asmus, Feb 2000
LTC Douglas H. Standifer, 18 Feb 2005
LTC Bo McGowan, 23 Mar 2007

LTC William T. Cahoon, 16 Jun 1998
LTC Wolfgang C. Asmus, Feb 2000
LTC Douglas H. Standifer, 18 Feb 2005
LTC Bo McGowan, 23 Mar 2007
LTC Scott Thomas, 19 Sep 2008
LTC Michael Stolt, 15 Oct 2010
LTC Christopher L. Manning, 25 Jan 2013
LTC William Kennedy, 23 Oct 2015
LTC Allen Duckworth, 28 Apr 2017
LTC Mike Rose, 9 Feb 2018
LTC Charles Sallee, 25 Apr 2019

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Italy, 25 Aug 1943
Italy, 2 Sep 1943
Ploesti, Rumania, 10 Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1978-30 Apr 1979
1 May 1983-30 Apr 1985
1 Jun 1988-31 May 1990

1 Apr 1991-31 Mar 1993
 1 Jan 1978-30 Apr 1979
 1 May 1983-30 Apr 1985
 1 Jun 1988-31 May 1990
 1 Apr 1991-31 Mar 1993
 10 Oct 1999-30 Sep 2001
 10 Oct 2001-30 Sep 2003
 10 Oct 2003-30 Sep 2005

EMBLEM



On a blue rectangle, long axis vertical, the face of a stylized yellow Devil-Cat (Gerenvetso-Satana) affronte, trimmed red and black, tusks white, eyes green.

The Devil Cat, neither cat nor wolf, has roamed the steppes of Asiatic Russia for generations. Its awesome appearance is but mildly indicative of the beast's true ferocity, of its almost diabolical wiliness and daring. In all of central and northern Asia there is no animal real or legendary which excites a greater respect or fear among the hardened and barbaric peoples of this vast hinterland. The Devil-Cat portrays the endurance, courage resourcefulness, and ferocity which the 97 Fighter Squadron desires to emulate

The 97 FTS emblem, originally adopted by the 97 Fighter Squadron, one of the three original squadrons of the 82d Fighter Group, is the stylized face of a Devil-Cat, trimmed in red and black with white tusks and green eyes on a blue background. The Devil Cat, neither cat nor wolf, has roamed the steppes of Asiatic Russia for generations. Its awesome appearance is but mildly indicative of the beast's true ferocity, of its almost diabolical wiliness and daring. In all of central and northern Asia there is no animal real or legendary which excites a greater respect or fear among that hardened and barbaric peoples of this vast hinterland. Devil Cat portrays the

endurance, courage, resourcefulness and ferocity which the 97 FTS desires to emulate.
(Approved, 30 Oct 1942)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO and MTO, 25 Dec 1942-3 May 1945.

The 97 was assigned to March Field, Calif., on 13 July 1942, as a permanent station. The Squadron remained at Long Beach on TDY. With eight months of training and organizing behind them, the personnel of the 97 were ready and waiting for P.O.E. orders. On 10 September 1942 orders were received directing the 97 to the New York Port of Embarkation. Members of the 97 set foot on England 2 October 1942. Shortly after arriving the P-38 pilots of the 97 flew their first combat mission.

Duty in England was short. After three months the Unit was shipped to North Africa, arriving there 17 January 1943. Nine months of African duty passed before the next transfer, which was to Italy.

The 97 arrived in Italy 2 October 1943 and remained there until the Squadron was ordered inactivated. This was completed 9 September 1945 at Lesina, Italy. On 10 June 1946, the 97 was assigned to Strategic Air Command in an inactive status. Then on 12 April 1947, the 97 was organized and activated at Grenier Field, Manchester, New Hampshire and assigned to the 82 Fighter Group.

Fighter escort and air defense, 1947-1949.

Finally, on 2 September 1949, the 97 was again inactivated at Grenier AFB, with no change in assignment. On 10 November 1950, the 97 was redesignated as the 97 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron and assigned to ConAC. Activated again (around 1 December 1950) the 97 organized at its assigned station, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. This time the Squadron was under command of Eastern Air Defense Force and ConAC.

Air defense, 1951-1957.

On 1 January 1951, the 97 was reassigned to Air Defense Command and the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Wing. The first of the Squadron's new F-86E aircraft arrived in January 1951

The 97 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was a component of the Eastern Air Defense Force. It arrived at Wright-Patterson on January 8, 1951, as part of the Air Defense Command's program to provide aerial defense for all industrial areas of the United States. The squadron's specific mission was to provide air defense for heavily populated and industrial areas of the greater

Miami Valley, including Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

The 97 moved its aircraft into new operations facilities constructed for them at the north end of Area C in December 1952 (location of the WPAFB Aero Club and Bldgs. 151 and 152.) The squadron maintained a 24-hour state of alert readiness. Four aircraft loaded with live ammunition, and their crews, were stationed near the end of the Patterson flightline, ready to scramble within five minutes.

Trained USAF pilots 1973-1993. Trained Air Force Reserve instructor pilots, 1998.

Tuesday, June 7, 1949 - At 8:43 p.m., 1Lt. William A. Primm, of the 97 Fighter Squadron, died during a routine training flight when he attempted an emergency landing and crashed his F-51 fighter at the extreme end of Grenier Air Base's runway 24.

USAF Unit Histories

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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 yearbook. *26 Air Division, Defense. 1956.*

Unit yearbook. *82 Fighter Group, Nineteen Forty-nine.* Robert W. Kelly Publishing Corporation. New York. 1949.