

131st FIGHTER SQUADRON



LINEAGE

333rd Fighter Squadron constituted, 18 Aug 1942
Activated, 23 Aug 1942
Inactivated, 12 Jan 1946
Redesignated 131st Fighter Squadron and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
131st FS (SE) extended federal recognition 24 Feb 1947
Redesignated 131st Tactical Fighter Squadron, 10 Nov 1958
Redesignated 131st Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Bellows Field, TH, 23 Aug 1942
Canton, 11 Sep 1942
Hilo, TH, 6 Apr 1943
Bellows Field, TH, 28 Jul 1943
Saipan, 6 Jul 1944
Ie Shima, 30 Apr 1945
Okinawa, Nov-Dec 1945
Ft Lewis, WA, 11-12 Jan 1946
Barnes ANGB, Westfield, MA

ASSIGNMENTS

18th Fighter Group, 23 Aug 1942
318th Fighter Group, 11 Jan 1943-12 Jan 1946
17 AF, 1 Oct 1961
104th Tactical Fighter Group, 20 Aug 1962

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-39, 1942
P-47D
P-47N,
P-38, 1944
F-47D, 1947
F-51H, 1951

F-94A, 1954
 F-94B
 F-94C 1957
 F-86H, 1958
 F-84F, 1964
F-100D, 1971
F-100C
F-100F
 A-10A, 1979
 F-15

Support Aircraft

L-5 1946
 T-6 1947-1955
 B-26, 1947
 C-47, 1948-1963
 B-25, 1954-1957
 T-33, 1954-1971
 C-54G, 1963-1971
 U-3, 1968

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

F-47: 549488
 F-51: XX347; 464459; 464564
 F-84: 26385
 F-86: 22030; 22028; 22012
 C-47: 223599

F-51H

44-64197	44-64302	44-64455	44-64541	44-64606
44-64223	44-64311	44-64457	44-64558	44-64618
44-64230	44-64319	44-64459	44-64564	44-64655
44-64233	44-64365	44-64478	44-64570	44-64683
44-64237	44-64372	44-64486	44-64583	44-64684
44-64243	44-64412	44-64509	44-64584	44-64685
44-64259	44-64418	44-64533	44-64591	
44-64278	44-64448	44-64536	44-64601	

F-86H

52-1983	52-2009	52-2028	52-2037	52-2061	52-2069
52-1987	52-2012	52-2029	52-2042	52-2062	52-2079
52-2002	52-2017	52-2030	52-2046	52-2063	
52-2007	52-2018	52-2033	52-2055	52-2064	
52-2008	52-2019	52-2035	52-2057	52-2068	

F-94

515495
515501
515393

F-100
563241
53804
63426
63740

A-10			
790104	780628	780614	780640
780612	780659	780629	780647
780617	780104	780616	

F-15				
78-0469	78-0501	79-0064	85-0101	86-0168
78-0474	78-0508	79-0066	85-0108	78-0561
78-0475	78-0519	79-0078	85-0113	85-0133
78-0476	78-0520	83-0018	85-0118	85-0134
78-0478	78-0543	84-0013	85-0122	
78-0485	78-0544	84-0016	85-0125	
78-0499	78-0545	84-0023	86-0157	
78-0500	79-0047	84-0028	86-0158	

T-33
529542

C-47A (EC-47N)
42-100513

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

F-100: MA
A-10: MA

UNIT COLORS

The 333rd Squadron arrived on Saipan in mid-July and was equipped with OD and some NMF P-47D's. Basic unit markings for the three squadrons consisted of the forward cowl, bands on vertical and horizontal tail units, and mid fuselage bands (73rd and 333rd) and wing tips (73rd and some 333rd aircraft) being in the squadron color — blue, white and yellow. Many 19th D's had NMF or blue wing tips. The P-47D's of the 333rd carried neither an aircraft number nor an aircraft letter.

F-51H yellow spinner and green fin and wing tips

F-86 Nose and tail trim was red and white

F-86 red and white bands upon its fuel tanks and vertical stabilizer

F-100Ds and -Fs in mid-1971. the 131st TFS used several different styles of tail bands to mark their Huns. It appears that the most common was the single red band that was bordered in white.

A different style of tail bands is illustrated here along with the addition of the MA tail code. This photograph is August 1979

A-10 Red

A-10 RED STRIPE WITH A BLACK STRIPE WITH FIVE WHITE STARS

All of the 104th's A-10s arrived in European I camouflage. A black MA tail code standing for Massachusetts was added. A red tail stripe with five white stars and a black stripe was added by mid-1981. A map of Massachusetts was added to each nacelle in black. A 104 shows through the eastern part of the map in the background camouflage color. The map had been removed by the late 1980s. A full-color Outstanding Unit Citation (with 2 oak leaves) was added to each side of the fuselage above the strakes in 1989. The 104th's A-10 are now painted in the new grays and still carry the 104th's red stripe with five white stars in a + pattern, three stars in the stripe with one star above and one star below the center star in the stripe.

A-10 Massachusetts Air National Guard tail markings made up of a red stripe with a black stripe and five white stars.

COMMANDERS

Col Lyle E. Halstead

Maj Stefanik, Apr 1947

Maj Bruno J. Grabovsky, Apr 1956

LTC David R. Cummock, 1967

Maj Richard Farrell 1 Dec 1984

Maj Geoffrey Giddings, #1987

LTC James Keefe, 2007

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Japan

Eastern Mandates

Western Pacific

Ryukyus

China Offensive

Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Antisubmarine, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

Jan 79-May 1980

May 1981-Dec 1982

Jan 1983-Dec 1984

EMBLEM

Unit's insignie, designed by MSG Alphonso Willey and Harold Maschin of Westfield approved, 1954

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Patrols over the Pacific, Sep 1942-Jul 1943. Replacement training, Jul 1943-June 1944. Combat in Western Pacific, 20 Jul 1944-14 Aug 1945

The very first step toward the establishment of an Air National Guard unit in Western Massachusetts came in Mar 1946, when the National Guard Bureau authorized its existence. The Bureau gave the task of getting a fighter squadron started to Cols Francis H. King and Lyle E. Halstead. The first gatherings of what was to become the 131st Fighter Squadron were held at the Holyoke Gas & Electric Company building. Later, while still in its formative stages, the unit relocated to the Howard St. Armory in Springfield.

Although they had not yet received official recognition, the 131st started a search for a permanent home. Facilities were not available at Westover AFB, so the unit officials turned their attention to Westfield. The Westfield Aviation Commission agreed to the use of Barnes Airport in Jan 1947. The unit moved its administrative functions into the Westfield Armory on Franklin Street, where they shared facilities with the 104th Infantry's Company "H". Tents were erected at Barnes near the area where the present facilities stand.

On 24 Feb 1947, with the Federal recognition of the 131st Fighter Squadron, the 131st Utility Flight, the 131st Weather Flight and Detachment B of the 202d Air Service Group.

The first plane, a P-47, arrived on Apr 1947, flown in by Maj Charles E. Gilbert II of Logan. The P-47s kept trickling in until early autumn until the base was fully equipped. A few days after the first plane landed, a jeep, two trucks and a refueling unit arrived to start the ground support side of the operation.

In Jun 1947, the Westfield City Council approved the taking of 62 acres of land to be used for hangars, machine shops and other buildings that would become the base. Within the next six months, aircraft and other equipment arrived, pilots were checked out in the P-47s and the unit was on duty.

The squadron's base of operations was a cleared area in the north corner of Barnes Airport. The area was alternately extremely hot and cold, muddy and dusty, and always windy and dirty. The thickness of tentcloth was the only protection from the elements during the "Valley Forge" winters of 1947 and 1948. Everything that was accomplished during those early days reflected the spirit of cooperation and is particularly noteworthy given the conditions under which they operated.

On 19 Jul 1948, the Squadron, led by Maj Stefanik made its first cross-country flight. The flight went to Logan, Otis, and back. Shortly thereafter, the 131st participated in the flyover for the dedication of the new Idlewild Airport, now John F. Kennedy International.

The first field training for the 131st was in Aug of 1948 at Otis Field, then a Naval Reserve facility. 1LT Edward W. Meacham became the unit's first fatality during this period. His P-47 crashed into the Atlantic, off Monomoy Point, near Chatham, MA.

In its first year, it was estimated the unit had a \$1 million economic impact on the local area. The unit grew steadily in size and prominence. Pilots from the 131st performed a flyover in Jan 1949, for President Harry S Truman's inauguration.

For the first of several times in history, the Air Guard units at Barnes reached their full authorized strength in Jan 1949.

The graduation to long range, cross-country flights came with the departure on 4 Feb 1950, of sixteen P-47s and two C-47s for Lambert Field, St. Louis, 900 miles away.

The Administration, Maintenance, Motor Pool and paint-dope-lubricant storage buildings, totaling a half-million dollars, all began construction in the early summer of 1950. Personnel were buzzing with the news that the "Jugs" were to be replaced with the same vintage, but higher performance, P-51s which were ferried in before the annual field training by the squadron pilots. The P-47s were flown to Tinker AFB, OK, for mothballing.

Another subject of great concern at this time was the probability of the unit's activation to participate in the Korean conflict. One ANG unit after another were activated all over the country. When the callups stopped, there were only six groups left untouched: the groups located in the industrial complexes of California and the Northeast.

The first major reorganization of the Air Guard on 1 Nov 1950 was the demise of both the Utility Flight and Detachment B. The former's functions and personnel were absorbed into the Fighter Squadron, while Detachment B was divided into elements of functional squadrons. These elements were attached to the 131st for administration but housed at Logan.

Conversion to the two-seater jet fighter, the F-94 was the main theme of 1954. Three RO instructors, using two B-25Ks as flying classrooms, trained the second-seat radar observers.

Dawn-to-dusk runway alerts were started in Sep 1954, with a pilot and a radar observer on call fourteen hours a day. They were ready to take to the skies for intercepts, training or actual, on minimum notice

1954 was slated to be a sad one for the Squadron. Maj Robert Anderstrom, flying a F-51 back from Mitchell AFB on Long Island, crashed into a hillside in CT, 7 May 1954.

On the night of 19 Oct 1954, a T-33 accident in Granville took a double toll in the deaths of LT Richard G. Brown, the pilot, and TGT Austin A. Cooper, a mechanic and passenger on the flight.

LT Dewey Durett parachuted to safety with the loss of an F-94 in 1955 in the Quabbin Reservoir.

The fifth aircraft fatality for the Westfield Air Guard occurred on the afternoon of 28 Jul 1956. While maneuvering to land, Cpt Frank A. Gibe crashed his F-94B into the woods near the base.

As the 104th Fighter Group went into its second decade, the city officials of Westfield were pondering the problem of whether to turn Barnes Airport over to the State of Massachusetts. Both sides of the issue were aired, across the conference tables and in the local press. The argument for the suggested shift in ownership was that the State had relatively greater resources which it could tap for the maintenance, improvement and expansion of the facility; when all the smoke had cleared, the field remained in the hands of the City of Westfield. **1956/1957**

Late summer 1958 was the period in which the polkadot F-86H made its appearance. The special paint effects on the intake cowling helped to identify the aircraft towing targets for aerial gunnery.

Col John J. Stefanik, deputy Wing commander, walked away, shaken up but safe, from a wheels-up landing with his F-86H. Lt Col Bruno Grabovsky, attending a course at Luke AFB, AZ, bailed out of his F-100C when it developed mechanical trouble and crashed.

On 22 Apr 1961, Maj Richard W. Mahoney was killed as his T-33 plunged into a canal near New Orleans. He was returning from a conference at Houston, Texas, low on fuel, and had radioed Callander NAS for landing instructions. Maj Philip D. Burke, flight surgeon, a passenger in the craft, received only minor injuries.

The sqn got off to a real cool start for 1961 by taking part in Operation Willow Freeze. The 131st supplied close support to the 6500 ground troops fighting it out in war games in Gulkana Basin, in central Alaska. Eleven pilots and planes, two ground officers and 23 airmen, made up the fighter task force, providing air cover from February 4 through 18. The ground troops made the three day trip to Alaska in C-119s, stopping at Minneapolis and Namao RCAF Station. The base of operations of the "war" was Elmendorf AFB, near Anchorage.

On August first, rumors that had been circulating were confirmed. The Air Force had alerted 71

Air Guard and Reserve units for possible callup in connection with developments in Europe. The entire 102nd Wing was included in this list of alerted units. At one minute after midnight, on the morning of 1 Oct 1961, 730 Airguardsmen of the 104th became members of the United States Air Force "for a period of twelve months unless sooner relieved by competent authority." While a large ceremony in Boston marked the Sunday morning activation of the 102d Wing and the other Logan Airport units, the first day of active duty at Barnes was quiet in comparison. The month of October that year was exhausting as 104th personnel worked long shifts, six and seven days a week. The time flew by as personnel packed necessary gear and equipment, received training, changed records, obtained wills, powers of attorney, I.D. cards, and were given required immunizations. It was an ominous "Friday the 13th" that the word was given about the movement of the first Airguardsmen to Europe. Two days later, 49 members of the base left for a classified destination in France. This advance party, commanded by Maj Leonard B. Murphy, was comprised of representatives from various base work sections. Their mission was to turn the all-but-abandoned airfield into a facility that would be usable and livable. The new home of the Massachusetts Air Guard units became the French province of Lorraine, 35 miles west of Strasbourg, where the Rhine forms the Franco-German border. The Air Guard contingent from Hancock Field in Syracuse, New York, was added to the 104th forming a three-Squadron wing. This wing was the largest of any activated organizations. The pace at Barnes slackened as the shipments went off to France. Only the barest of necessities were left behind to support the work necessary to move the main body of the unit. Pilots received intensified training in preparation for the over-water deployment. The Coast Guard vessels were equipped with radar and rescue gear and stationed along the planned routes to insure a safe journey. These efforts were regarded as every plane in the deployment arrived safely at its destination and one hour after touchdown was ready to meet its commitment. This entire process had taken less than six weeks after activation from civilian to reserve status. This was Operation Stairstep. In the total airlift, MATS planes moved over 10,000 troops from their ANG bases to their new home in Europe. Over 2,000 tons of cargo made the same trip. The Air Force gave much of the credit for the success of the move to the high combat readiness posture of the Air National Guard units. Meanwhile, Lt Col Alexander R. Robertson, MSgt Nelson J. Brown and TSgt James H. Williams remained at Barnes caring for the lonely, and quiet, home base. They were also responsible for handling supplies and working with the families of the men of the 104th who were deployed to Phalsbourg. All the large, heavy support equipment such as desks, machinery, cabinets, benches and bins were shipped to France by sea. While the planes were ready to fly and the ground crews ready to support them, work in the lower priority areas was performed with makeshift facilities for the first few weekends. Boxes and crates were used as desks, chairs, workbenches and bookcases. In the barracks, clothing was hung from steam pipes, window hinges and even light fixtures. The 131st from Westfield, the 101st from Boston and the 138th from Syracuse were entities in themselves; there were members of incomplete teams or detached elements of other units. After their arrival at Phalsbourg, twelve F-86 and C-130s with support personnel and equipment, flew to Wheelus Air Base in Tripoli, Libya to undergo aerial gunnery exercises. The North African weather was more suitable for this activity, especially in November. This was the first extended deployment to Wheelus for this particular type of training. In an attempt to fill some of the off duty time a number of extracurricular activities were formed. In early February a dozen officers and nine airmen were transferred to other Stairstep bases.

102d Tactical Fighter Wing, F-86Hs, 7 November 1961 - 20 July 1962

Twenty-six aircraft per squadron. Sabres were flown from Logan Airport, MA, Barnes Field, MA, and Hancock Field, NY to Phalsbourg Air Base, France, by 102d TFWg pilots. Aircraft returned to their U.S. bases by 20 July 1962.

52-2008 - Crashed, low level flight, 11nm S of Chalons-sur-Marne, France, 21 MAR 62, 1 fatality.

The wording on the planes was changed this summer of 1963 from "MASS AIR GUARD" to "US AIR FORCE," with the word "MASS" and the National Guard emblem added on the vertical tail surface. This was for quicker integration into the Air Force in the event of any future callups.

First Lt Joseph F. Crehore was Westfield's only casualty during the year in France. He was killed on 21 Mar **1963** when his F-86 dove into a wooded area near Chalons, in the province of Champagne, while flying a navigational training mission.

The first contact between the 131st Tactical Fighter Squadron and the Russians was made in Aug **1963** as a Soviet fishing vessel, the Johannes Wares, picked up Cpt Hugh M Lavallee after he had parachuted from his crippled F-86H and was floating in the Atlantic in his little inflatable raft. Only three months after his Russian adventure, Cpt Lavallee was killed in an air accident in upstate New York. The F-86H he was flying disappeared into a thick bank of clouds and all contact with him was lost. A search of the area disclosed the wreckage in a wooded area not far from where he had been lost from view.

During the field training on 19 Jul 1964 Cpt John H Paris experienced the loss of control of his F-86H while in the landing pattern with his four-plane formation. He ejected from the stricken plane over Hampton Ponds at 500 feet, but his parachute did not have time to open, while the aircraft glided to a relatively smooth landing in an open field. A large crowd of bathers at the Ponds' beaches witnessed the fatal accident.

The main concern in early 1964 was the expected arrival here of a complement of fifteen B-57. They were to have come here from Yokota AB, Japan, upon deactivation of the 3d Wing there. Boston and Syracuse were also to have received this type of aircraft. The B-57 situation got alternately hot and cold as delivery seemed to be postponed. Eventually, the news got out that the planes that had been earmarked for all three bases in our Wing were given quite another destiny. All were sent to the Vietnam area, where they were considered particularly practical in view of the mission requirements there. As the year turned, the business of conversions to B-57s was finally written off the books. It was about this time that the official notification that the 131st would be converted to F-84F was received. These sweptback jet fighters were to be an interim aircraft, readying the pilots and ground crews for operation with and on the Century series fighters. Their nuclear capability and that of mid-air refueling were among the characteristics they shared with the first line fighters.

Maj James Romanowicz, who had served 16 of his 23 flying years with the 131st, was killed on the night of 1 Feb 1965, when he was returning in a flight of four planes from a gunnery exercise at MacDill AFB, FL. The accident occurred when he failed to negotiate a landing approach into

Westover AFB, near here.

Cpt Leonard Bannish was killed on Memorial Day 1968, trying to make an emergency landing in his F-84F at Scranton-Wilkes Barre Airport in PA.

1969 began, not with winter blasts but warm, soft breezes, as over 100 104th members departed Barnes on January 11th for Hickam AFB, HI. The exercise dubbed "Commando Elite II". The 4-week deployment was composed of two periods; January 11-25 and January 25 to February 11. Teams of approximately 60 members supported each period with some overlap of personnel who covered the entire period. While on the exercise, the unit expended over 43,000 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, 1300 2.75 rockets and 100 bombs. Missions were flown from Hickam AFB to the Pohakula range on the island of Hawaii.

The first F-100 which was to replace the F-84F, here since 1965, was flown in May by LTC George Pinney, who stayed on as Air Force Advisor to the Group. Although there was no change in mission, the new planes were larger, heavier, noisier and more effective than the craft they replaced.

More than 160 members of the 104th participated in Exercise Brave Shield at Ellington AFB, Texas. Support personnel and equipment left Barnes on 29 Jul **1974** aboard six Air Force C-141s. Eighteen F-100 left Barnes the following day for the 7-day exercise.

Two C-141s full of 104th personnel and cargo and ten F-100 fighters took off in Jan **1976** for Operation "Jack Frost 76" to spend the two middle weeks at Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, Alaska. They were part of some 14,000 to take part, including Army, USAF, ANG and Canadian Forces. The exercise was to train air and ground troops to defend the new Alaska Pipeline.

In Dec 1977, the Group experienced its first major accident since 1974. While returning from an air tactics mission in New Hampshire Cpt David Clark experienced an engine malfunction and was forced to bail out. Clark landed safely in a field. The airplane impacted in a heavily wooded area with no loss to civilian property.

The Air Force officially announced that the 131st Tactical Fighter Squadron would convert from F-100D to the new A-10 by Jun 1979. While the announcement of the aircraft change would not affect the overall mission, the change over was greeted with some mixed feelings especially on the part of the aircrews. The aircrews had come to appreciate the speed and responsiveness of the older F-100D. On the positive side, the A-10 would be delivered direct from the factory. The aircraft would require the addition of 33 military personnel including eight full-time air technicians. Also, the maintenance record of the A-10 was outstanding. According to tests, the number of sorties flown was limited more to the aircrew availability than to maintenance.

The most significant development during mid-1979 was the arrival of the A-10. On Jun 12, the first A-10 assigned to the 131 TFS arrived at Barnes flown by LTC Connie Coward. A total of 19 were to provide full manning. The A-10s were delivered directly from the Fairchild Republic plant in Hagerstown MD. The aircraft was officially received during ceremonies at Barnes MAP on 19 Jun Jack Owens, Vice President of Fairchild Industries, presented LTC Myrle B. Langley,

Commander, 104th TFG, with the aircraft Historical Record of the first A-10 assigned to the Group.

The first group of 104th support personnel to deploy to RAF Bentwaters, England returned on 15 Jan **1982** full of enthusiasm for the Thunderswap program. This group was the first of three planned deployments designed to allow 104th Guardsmen the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with active AF personnel in a "real world situation".

During Apr **1982** 125 men and women and a complement of A-10 aircraft from the 104th took part in Operation Snowbird at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ. Snowbird is an ongoing exercise for Air Guard units. This exercise gives northern flying units the opportunity to maintain their readiness in the winter months.

The big deployment of the year, code name "Coronet Spur", was a massive move to Yenisehir AB, Turkey. This move involved 12 A-10s and over 280 support personnel. The purpose of the deployment was to allow the 104th to participate in the Allied Command Europe (ACE) Exercise Series Autumn Forge '82. The aims of the Autumn Forge series are to improve combat effectiveness through interoperability among ACE forces, to improve ACE crisis management capabilities and to demonstrate allied solidarity and preparedness.

135 members of the unit deployed to Davis-Monthan AFB AZ in Jan **1983/1984** to take part in Snowbird. This deployment gave 104th pilots the opportunity to use munitions not normally available due to high cost, as well as some night flying.

In 1984, the 131st for the second time in its history, received the Air Force's outstanding unit award. It honored work done by the unit from May, 1981, through December, 1982, in making the conversion to the A-10 and becoming combat ready with the aircraft in an unusually short period of time.

Tragedy struck the 104th on 17 Sep 1986 when two 104th A-10's, while enroute to the Ft. Drum range collided over Wells, NY. The two A-10's were part of a four-ship formation that left Barnes at 2:20 p.m. While flying in tactical formation two of the A-10's collided. One of the pilots Cpt Michael Kohut ejected safely but sustained injuries to his back. The other pilot, Maj John Southrey failed to eject and was killed.

Two weeks into a mission as part of the NATO Operation Deny Flight peacekeeping effort to the war-torn former Yugoslavia, members of the 104th sent aircraft into combat for the first time in the unit's history. Pilots from the 131st flew 207 missions over Bosnia-Herzegovina that helped pave the way for the signing of a peace accord to end more than three years of violence. The success of the mission to Bosnia, which involved more than 400 members of the unit deployed to Aviano Air Base in Italy, had come on the heels of the 104th becoming the best-rated fighter unit in the nation in an Air Force inspection in 1994.

During Operation Deliberate Force, the 131st Fighter Squadron of the 104th Fighter Wing was TDY to Aviano AB. The 104th Fighter Wing, Massachusetts Air National Guard, is at stationed at Air National Guard Base, Westfield Massachusetts. The unit deployed on August 6, 1995 for a

two month deployment to Italy in support of Operation Deny Flight. While at Aviano AB, Operation Deny Flight expanded to include Operation Deliberate Force. During Deliberate Force, the A-10s of the 131st acted as forward air controllers for U.N. ground and air forces, directing ground fire and NATO strike aircraft. In addition the A-10s were tasked for attack missions against air defense missile sites, radar sites, storage and staging areas, and command and control facilities. The A-10s employed their full range of weapons including the GAU-8 30mm cannon and the AGM-65 Maverick missile. The typical mission weapons load was 1,350 rounds of 30mm ammunition, two AGM-65 Mavericks or a selection of general purpose bombs. The self-defense load included two AIM-9M Sidewinder missiles and an AN/ALQ-131 ECM pod augmented with internally carried chaff and flares. 207 sorties were flown by the 104th in support of Operation Deliberate Force with no losses. On one mission six SAMs were launched at A-10A 78-0626, the pilot successfully evaded the missiles. The deployed aircraft returned home to Barnes Field on October 16, 1995.

The unit officially received its sixth Outstanding Unit Award for the period of August 31, 1997 through August 30, 1999. The unit also deployed to Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait in support of Air Expeditionary Force in July. Several unit members also deployed to various locations throughout Turkey, Italy and Saudi Arabia for Expeditionary Combat Support from May through October.

The 131st Fighter Squadron received a rating of Outstanding on their Stan Eval Inspection. Several members of the wing were deployed to various locations in southwest Asia, including two pilots to Afghanistan and Security Forces in Qatar and Kyrgyzstan where they remained into 2002.

Beginning in January, the wing deploys approximately 500 personnel in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia and to other locations within the same region. There, the wing becomes the lead unit of the 387th Air Expeditionary Wing, a combined unit comprised of 103rd Fighter Wing, Connecticut Air National Guard personnel and personnel from other units. The wing sends 11 A-10s to the deployed location where they fly each day of the war, compiling a 98 percent Mission Effectiveness Rate with no combat losses or damage.

The Wing is presented its seventh overall Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the period from January 1 - May 21, 2003, recognizing its service as the lead unit of the 387th Air Expeditionary Group, 410th Air Expeditionary Wing, in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Wing is awarded the National Guard Bureau's Winston P. Wilson Trophy as most outstanding Air National Guard unit equipped with jet fighter or reconnaissance aircraft for 2003. The award recognizes the 104th's role in leading the development of the Litening II Targeting Pod Program for the A-10 aircraft community. The Wing provided 34 modified aircraft, 18 Litening II Pods and 54 qualified pilots in less than three months, an amount triple the initial goal. Upon completion of the project, the Wing deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, where its efforts in combat ensured that no Scud missiles were launched during the conflict and that the sanctity of coalition forces were preserved. In August, the Wing's Operations Group Commander, Col. Michael D. Akey, is named Commander of the Massachusetts Air National Guard. 2005- Col Marcel E. Kerdavid, Jr., formerly the Wing's Vice Commander, assumes command of the Wing from Col. Michael R. Boulanger in January. Colonel Kerdavid becomes the 13th Commander of the Wing. Also in

January, Lt. Col. Jon K. Mott is named Vice Commander. The Wing receives the eighth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award in its history for the period from August 25, 2002 to August 25, 2004, further recognizing its accomplishments leading up to and through its participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

8 September 2007 to Present F-15C Eagle aircraft flying at the 104th

Massachusetts ANG Begins New Mission: The 104th Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard on Monday began its air sovereignty alert mission, sitting on 24-hour alert with its new force of F-15 fighters. The unit, based at Barnes Municipal Airport, switched from the A-10 to the F-15, courtesy of BRAC 2005. The 104th FW replaces the Vermont ANG's 158th FW, which has flown ASA missions since late 2007. Previously, another Massachusetts Air Guard unit—the 102nd FW at Otis ANGB—had the ASA mission for the northeast sector, but it has switched to an intelligence mission.

Massachusetts Air Guard Helped Deal with Air Threat: Two F-15s from the Massachusetts Air National Guard's 104th Fighter Wing last week scrambled to intercept an Emirates Airlines 777 en route to Chicago as US authorities acted to prevent a possible terrorist attack. They escorted the commercial flight, originating in Yemen, to New York City's Kennedy Airport as a precaution on Oct. 29 after authorities found bombs on two other aircraft destined for Chicago out of London and Dubai, UAE. The Associated Press reported (via National Public Radio) that Canadian CF-18 Hornets operating from Bagotville, Quebec, initially intercepted the 777 in Canadian airspace. They passed escort to the Air Guard F-15s flying from Barnes ANG Base as the flight entered US airspace. US officials found no explosive device on the diverted aircraft, although President Obama declared the seemingly coordinated actions involving the Chicago-bound aircraft that day a "credible terrorist threat" to US security. 2010

The last F-15 assigned to JB Elmendorf, Alaska, has left the base for good, flying to its new assignment with the Massachusetts Air National Guard's 104th Fighter Wing in Westfield. 2010

11 November 1965 F-84F goes into flat spin during simulated combat over Porter, Maine and crashes on Colcord Pond Road in Freedom, New Hampshire. Capt. Edward S. Mansfield has minor injuries; plane is destroyed.

A formation of US Air Force and Royal Malaysian Air Force aircraft, including an F-15 Eagle from the 131st Fighter Squadron at Barnes ANGB, Mass., an RMAF SU-30MKM Flanker, a USAF F-22 Raptor from the 154th Wing at JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, an RMAF MIG-29N Fulcrum, a BAE Hawk, and an RMAF F/A-18 Hornet fly over Penang, Malaysia, during Cope Taufan 14 on June 18, 2014. Cope Taufan is a biennial large force employment exercise, which took place June 9-20. It was the Raptor's first time participating in an South East Asian international exercise. 2014

8/29/2014 - BARNES AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, 104TH FIGHTER WING, Westfield, Mass. -- Following the fatal crash of a 104th Fighter Wing F-15C aircraft in the remote

mountains near Deerfield Valley, Va. the family has asked that the unit share with the public the name of the pilot who was fatally injured Wednesday. "On behalf of the family of our fallen pilot and with a sense of profound sadness, I am sad to share that Lt. Col. Morris "Moose" Fontenot Jr., was killed tragically in Wednesday's F-15 crash," said Col. James Keefe, 104th Fighter Wing Commander. "We all continue to keep the Fontenot family in our thoughts and prayers during this very difficult time," added Keefe. Lt. Col. Morris Fontenot Jr. served with the 104th Fighter Wing as the full-time Wing Inspector General, responsible for the implementation of the Air Force Inspection System and as an F-15 instructor pilot with more than 2,300 flight hours. A 1996 Air Force Academy Graduate, Lt. Col. Fontenot was additionally a Weapons School Graduate with more than 17 years of F-15 flying experience. He served as a squadron commander at multiple locations. Following Active Duty assignments in Washington D.C., Japan, Idaho, Florida, Alaska and numerous deployments to the Middle East, Lt. Col. Fontenot joined the Massachusetts Air National Guard in February 2014. He was a decorated combat veteran, earning the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Aerial Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, and Combat Readiness Medal among others. At approximately 9:05 a.m. Wednesday, Washington Center Air Traffic Control in Washington, D.C. lost radio contact with the F-15C aircraft stationed at the 104th Fighter Wing, Mass., and at approximately 9:30 a.m. the 104th Fighter Wing learned that the aircraft had crashed in a remote site near Deerfield Valley, Va. The single seat F-15C aircraft was en route to Naval Air Station New Orleans to receive a radar system upgrade. The flight was not related to the 104th Fighter Wing's homeland defense mission, and there were no munitions on the aircraft during this flight. The pilot was flying a solo mission when he reported an in-flight emergency prior to the loss of radio contact with Washington Center. Officials confirmed Thursday evening at 5:00 p.m. the pilot was fatally injured in the Aug. 27 crash of an F-15C Eagle in the remote mountains near Deerfield Valley, Va.

470801	L-5G	45-34965	131FS	102FG	Westfield NG, MA	GL	Bolton, Allan F	Metropolitan Apt (Palmer)
500905	F-51H	44-64684	131FS	102FG	Barnes APT, MA	CBLEF	Swift, Marshall E.	3 Mi W Agawam
510217	F-51H	44-64509	131FS	102FG	Westover AFB, MA	GAC	Bashford, Leslie N.	Westover AFB
510428	F-51H	44-64233	131FS	102FG	Barnes APT, MA	LACEF	Grabovsky, Bruno J.	Barnes APT
470815	TA-26B	44-34610	131FS		Lambert Field, MO	MF	Dubois, Charles H Jr	Orchard Park, IL, IL Airport, MO
501203	F-84B	46-0598	131FS		Hensley Field, TX	KTOAMF	Bradley, James A.	1 Mi N Hensley Field

440114	P-39D	41-38410	333FS	318FG		KCR	Rogers, Thomas W	Stanley Fld
450405	P-47N	44-87861	333FS	318FG		LAC	Ellis, Francis R	Kobler Fld
450406	P-47D	43-25462	333FS	318FG		TAC	Duerschmidt, Wayne A	Kobler Fld
450516	P-47N	44-88010	333FS	318FG		LAC	[parked aircraft]	Ie Shima
450516	P-47N	44-87870	333FS	318FG		LAC	De Yonker, James A	Ie Shima
450528	P-47N	44-87978	333FS	318FG		KTOAEF	Byfield, Melvin L	Ie Shima
450530	P-47N	44-87892	333FS	318FG		KCR	Reed, James C	Ie Shima
450621	P-47N	44-88055	333FS	318FG		TOAEF	Schulten, George W	Ie Shima
450629	P-47N	44-87891	333FS	318FG		TAC	Bunnell, Marshall W	Ie Shima
450701	P-47N	44-88126	333FS	318FG		LAC	Force, Myron C	Ie Shima
450712	P-47N	44-87851	333FS	318FG		LAC	Nelson, Lewis A	Ie Shima
450716	P-47N	44-87890	333FS	318FG	Easy Fld/ISA	TAC	Voss, Harry C	Easy Fld
450717	P-47N	44-87841	333FS	318FG		TOA	Rumph, Dwasne M	Ie Shima, Easy Fld
450731	P-47N	44-87980	333FS	318FG		LAC	Krieger, John E	Ie Shima, Easy Fld
450731	P-47N	44-88128	333FS	318FG		LAC	Voss, Harry C	Ie Shima, Easy Fld
450807	P-47N	44-87894	333FS	318FG		LAC	Voss, Harry C	Ie Shima, Easy Fld
450808	P-47N	44-88158	333FS	318FG		BOEF	Marvin, Churchill A	Ariake Wan
450808	P-47N	44-87890	333FS	318FG		BOEF	Kempter, Harley C	Fukucko Wan

450809	P-47N	44-88299	333FS	318FG	Easy Fld/Ryl	TAC	Currey, Douglas V	Easy Fld (le Shima)
450813	P-47N	44-88328	333FS	318FG		TAC	Brunner, John D K	le Shima
450821	P-47N	44-87996	333FS	318FG		LAC	Rugney, Harold D	le Shima
450827	P-47N	44-88284	333FS	318FG		CBL	Katz, Benjamin Z	Yontan Strip
450828	P-47N	44-87972	333FS	318FG	Easy Fld/Ryl	TAC	Herrling, Sanford E	Easy Fld (le Shima)
451016	P-47N	44-88330	333FS	318FG		CRLEF	Smith, Earl C	Kume Shima
420923	P-40K	42-46184	333FS	18FG	Bellows Field, Oahu, HI	FLEF	Nelson, Lewis A	400 yds off shore, Kaneohe Field, HI
440114	P-39D	41-38410	333FS	318FG		KCR	Rogers, Thomas W	Stanley Fld



333rd Fighter Sq.
(Until 1943)





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