

## 308<sup>th</sup> ARMAMENT SYSTEMS GROUP



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

308<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy) established, 28 Jan 1942

Activated, 15 Apr 1942

Inactivated, 6 Jan 1946

Redesignated 308<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Group, Weather, 27 Sep 1946

Activated, 17 Oct 1946

Inactivated, 5 Jan 1951

Redesignated 308<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Medium, 4 Oct 1951

Activated, 10 Oct 1951

Inactivated, 16 Jun 1952

Long Range Missile Systems Group established, 23 Nov 2004

Activated, 27 Jan 2005

308<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Medium consolidated with Long Range Missile Systems Group, (3 May 2006)

Redesignated 308<sup>th</sup> Armament Systems Group, 15 May 2006

#### STATIONS

Gowen Field, ID, 15 Apr 1942

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 20 Jun 1942

Wendover Field, UT, 1 Oct-28 Nov 1942

Kunming, China, 20 Mar 1943

Hsinching , China, 10 Feb 1945  
Ruspi, India, 27 Jun-15 Oct 1945  
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 5-6 Jan 1946  
Morrison Field, FL, 17 Oct 1946  
Fairfield-Suisun AAFld, CA, 1 Jul 1947  
Tinker AFB, OK, 10 Nov 1949-5 Jan 1951  
Forbes AFB, KS, 10 Oct 1951  
Hunter AFB, GA, 11 Apr-16 Jun 1952  
Eglin AFB, FL, 27 Jan 2005

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Second Air Force, 15 Apr 1942  
Fourteenth Air Force, 10 Mar 1943  
United States Forces India-Burma Theater, Aug-Dec 1945  
Air Transport Command, Air Weather Service, 17 Oct 1946  
Military Air Transport Service, Air Weather Service, 1 Jun 1948-5 Jan 1951  
308<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 10 Oct 1951-16 Jan 1952  
Air to Ground Munitions Systems (later, 308<sup>th</sup> Armament Systems) Wing, 27 Jan 2005

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-24, 1942-1945  
B-29, 1946-1951

### **COMMANDERS**

Capt Harris K. McCauley, 11 May 1942  
Col Fay R. Upthegrove, 5 Jun 1942  
Maj Leroy A. Rainey, 15 Jul 1942  
Col Eugene H. Beebe, 16 Sep 1942  
Col William P. Fisher, c. 3 Nov 1943  
Col John G. Armstrong, 19 Oct 1944  
Col William D. Hopson, 1 Jul 1945-unkn  
Col Richard E. Ellsworth, 17 Oct 1946-unkn  
Col Hervey H. Whitfield, Apr 1949-unkn  
Col George N. Newton Jr., 5 Nov 1951  
Col Maurice A. Preston, 10 May-16 Jun 1952  
Col James Geurts, Jan 2005  
Col John R. Griggs, 4 May 2006

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

None

#### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

China Defensive  
China Offensive  
India-Burma  
Western Pacific  
New Guinea

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations

China, 21 Aug 1943

East and South China Seas, Straits of Formosa, and Gulf of Tonkin, 24 May 1944-28 Apr 1945

### **EMBLEM**

The bombardment functions of the organization are allegorically implied by the ability of the organization to grow, in spite of possible losses of some of its branches, and by the mythical head of the Gorgon Medusa, supposedly capable of overcoming all opposition. The oak tree denotes the strength of the organization and the numerical designation is indicated by the three branches, the zero formed by the shield and the eight leaves on each branch. (Approved, 8 Dec 1944)



Azure, between a pale argent thereon three pallets gules, on the dexter a star of twelve points white, charged with an annulet azure; on the sinister a thundercloud proper with three lightning

flashes or; in chief per chevron, inverted and enhanced sable, three bombs points downward or, between a semee of fifteen stars argent. (Approved 29 Aug 1952.)

Per chevron reversed Azure and Celeste, a chevronel reversed and diminished Argent, in chief three bombs points to base two and one Or, in base a pale of five Gules and of the third, surmounted by a stylized flight symbol bendwise of the fourth, emitting a contrail arching bendwise to sinister of the third, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "308TH ARMAMENT SYSTEMS GROUP" in Blue letters. 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 three gravity free-fall bombs represent the unit's historical ties with the founding wing, the 308th Bombardment Wing, established on 4 October 1951. The flight symbol with contrail signifies the mission of the unit to equip warfighters with strike weapons to fight and win decisively.

#### **MOTTO**

PERCUSSUS RESURGO--When Struck Down I Rise Again

NON SIBI, SED ALIIS - Not for Self, But for Others

#### **NICKNAME**

#### **OPERATIONS**

Received second DUC for interdiction of Japanese shipping during 1944-1945. Maj Horace S Carswell Jr was awarded the Medal of Honor for action on 26 Oct 1944 when, in spite of intense antiaircraft fire, he attacked a Japanese convoy in the South China Sea; his plane was so badly damaged that when he reached land he ordered the crew to bail out; Carswell remained with the plane to try to save one man who could not jump because his parachute had been ripped by flak; before Carswell could attempt a crash landing, the plane struck a mountainside and burned.

The 308th Bombardment Group (H) was established by Army Air Forces on 28 Jan 1942. It was not until the 15th of April that the unit was activated at Gowen Field, Idaho. On that same day authorization for, and activation of, the 373d, 374th, 375th and 425th Bomb Squadrons occurred, with all of them assigned to the 308th. For the next three months little training occurred while the unit worked through its growing pains, resolving administrative and personnel acquisition difficulties. Then a totally new problem arose....all but four personnel were transferred to the 330th Bomb Group! While active on paper, it wasn't until September that personnel were taken from the 39th Bomb Group to form a cadre for the 308th, again making it a 'real force'. On 29 Sep, the Group was designated an Operational Training Unit (OTU) with Wendover Field, Utah as its home station. The unit was fully manned by November, after receiving personnel from the 18th Replacement Wing.

During this time of trials and tribulations in forming a recognizable force, the flying echelon had

transferred to Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona, on 20 June for incidental training. Colonel Eugene H. Beebe, an experienced commander and recent member of Gen 'Hap' Arnold's staff, was relieved of command of the 302nd and ordered to command the 308th. Col Beebe also assembled his initial staff; Lt Trimble B. Latting (adjutant), Maj William A. Miller (exec), and Capt (Dr) William P. Gjerde (surgeon). The flight crews had been chosen and assigned for all four squadrons, having completed their respective training schools; ie., pilot, navigator, bombardier, engineer, radio and gunnery.

Members of the 308th had to complete three phases of training prior to moving overseas and entering combat. The flying personnel spent most of October in transition training with the B-24, training combat crews as well. Meanwhile, the ground echelon was acquiring, organizing and processing personnel and supplies at Wendover Field.

With the training complete and the personnel and supplies processed, the 308th Bombardment Group officially transferred to China early in 1943. The air echelon began flying its 'brand new' B-24D Liberators from Morrison Field, West Palm Beach, Florida on 15 Feb 43. Traveling by way of Central and South America, the Azores, Africa and India; while the ground echelon travelled by ship across the Pacific.

The group was assigned to the 14th Air Force and made many trips over the 'Hump' between India and China to obtain gasoline, bombs, spare parts, and other items they needed to prepare for and sustain their combat operations. The 308th supported Chinese ground forces; attacked airfields, coal yards, docks, oil refineries and fuel dumps in French Indochina; mined rivers and ports; bombed maintenance shops and docks at Rangoon, Burma; attacked Japanese shipping in the East China Sea, Formosa Strait, South China Sea and Gulf of Tonkin.

Although the 308th had a difficult time getting started because of the supply shortage and monsoon weather, it had built up an impressive record, especially when it is realized that all gas, bombs, ammunition, and other supplies had to be flown over the Hump in the unit's own planes, thus making it necessary to fly about three Hump flights for every combat mission. The Group received a Distinguished Unit Citation for an unescorted bombing attack, conducted through antiaircraft fire and fighter defenses, against docks and warehouses at Hankow, China, on 21 Aug 1943. They were awarded a second DUC for interdiction of Japanese shipping through 1944 and 1945. Maj. Horace S. Carswell, Jr. was awarded the Medal Of Honor for action on 26 Oct 1944, when, in spite of intense antiaircraft fire, he attacked a Japanese convoy in the South China Sea. His aircraft was so badly damaged that when he reached land he ordered the crew to bail out. Carswell remained with the plane to save one man who could not jump because his parachute had been ripped by flak. Before Carswell could attempt a crash landing, the plane struck a mountainside and burned."

The group moved to India in June 1945, ferrying gasoline and supplies from there back into China.

The unit sailed for the United States, where it was inactivated on 6 Jan 1946.

On 17 October 1946, the 1st Air Weather Group (Provisional) was discontinued and the 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) was activated at Morrison Field, Florida. The two active and two in-training reconnaissance squadrons were assigned to the 308th Group.

At the start of 1947, then, the 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) had its headquarters and the 53rd, 54th, and 55th Reconnaissance Squadrons, VLR, Weather located at Morrison Field, Florida and the 59th Squadron at Fairfield-Suisun AAB, California. Morrison Field had become crowded by this time and a new home was sought for the 308th Group. The active squadrons were scheduled to move, also; the 53rd was to move to Kindley Field, Bermuda and the 59th was to move to Ladd Field, Alaska. The 308th Group was busy during the first few months of 1947 preparing the squadrons for deployment. Also scheduled for movement were the 54th Squadron to Guam and the 55th Squadron to Fairfield-Suisun, to replace the 59th at that location.

Plans which had called for the permanent assignment of the 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) on the east coast were changed when it was decided that administrative control could be more efficiently maintained from the west coast, since three of the four squadrons would operate in the Pacific area. Fairfield-Suisun AAB, California was selected as a new home and the advanced echelon of the Group headquarters began operating at Fairfield-Suisun AAB at 0001 hours, 1 July 1947 and had the following squadrons under its supervision:

53rd Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather Kindley Field, Bermuda  
54th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather North Field, Guam  
55th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather Fairfield-Suisun AAB, California  
59th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather Ladd Field, Alaska

All squadrons of the 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) were inactivated on 15 October 1947. New organizations were activated on 16 October 1947 to replace the units lost. 308th Reconnaissance Group continued to serve as the training organization for all the squadrons.

Fairfield-Suisun AFB was to be transferred to SAC and the crowded conditions at the base meant that the 308th Group would have to move. Plans were made in mid-1947 for the 308th Group headquarters and the 2078th Squadron to move to Tinker AFB, Oklahoma and for the 374th Squadron to move to McClellan AFB, Calif. The 512<sup>th</sup> Squadron's training was speeded up in anticipation of an early movement date. Movement of the 308th, the 2078th, and the 513th to Tinker AFB began in mid-October 1949 and was completed by 11 November 1949. The 374th moved from Fairfield-Suisun AFB to McClellan AFB, California in October 1949.

2078th Air Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (Special), Tinker AFB, Oklahoma – assigned to the 308th Group

The 308th Reconnaissance Group (Weather) began to outlive its usefulness in the latter part of

1950. The Group was inactivated at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma effective 5 January 1951. This action was the start of an overall change in the reconnaissance program.

From Oct 1946 through Jan 1951, served with Air Weather Service; supervised training and operation of weather reconnaissance units.

Not operational 10 Oct 1951-16 Jun 1952.

Beginning in Jan 2005 equipped warfighters with long range, precision attack capabilities.

---

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 5 Mar 2012

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.

*Chennault's Forgotten Warrior's: Saga of the 308th Bomb Group in China.* Carrol V. Glines.