

326th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (HEAVY)



MISSION

LINEAGE

326th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 28 Jan 1942
Activated, 1 Mar 1942
Inactivated, 28 Feb 1946
Redesignated 326th Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 15 Jul 1946
Activated, 4 Aug 1946
Redesignated 326th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 28 May 1948
Redesignated 326th Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 16 Jun 1951
Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Feb 1963

STATIONS

Barksdale Field, LA, 1 Mar 1942
MacDill Field, FL, 26 Mar 1942
Sarasota, FL, 18 May-18 Jul 1942
Bovingdon, England, 18 Aug 1942
Alconbury, England, 6 Jul 1943
Podington, England, 15 Sep 1943
Istres, France, Jun 1945-28 Feb 1946
Fort Worth AAFld, TX, 4 Aug 1946
Smoky Hill AAFld, KS, 25 Oct 1946
Spokane AAFld, WA, 20 Jun 1947
Glasgow AFB, MT, 1 Apr 1961-1 Feb 1963

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Yokota, Japan, 9 Jul-26 Oct 1950

Andersen AFB, Guam, 16 Oct 1954-12 Jan 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

92nd Bombardment Group, 1 Mar 1942-28 Feb 1946

92nd Bombardment Group, 4 Aug 1946

92nd Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1951

4141st Strategic Wing, 1 Apr 1961-1 Feb 1963

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942-1946

B-17E

B-17F

B-17G

B-29, 1946, 1947-1951

B-29A

B-36, 1951-1957

B-52, 1957-1963

B-52C

B-52D

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Antisubmarine, American Theater

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korean War

UN Defensive

UN Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Germany, 11 Jan 1944

Germany, 11 Sep 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

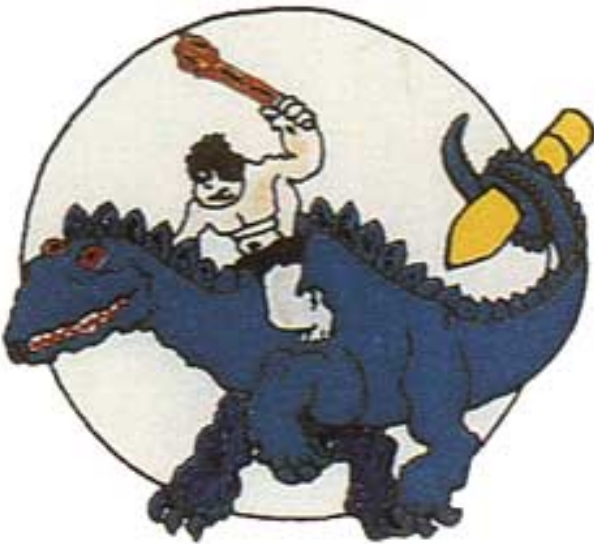
22 Aug-11 Sep 1953

3 Mar-4 Oct 1959

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

10 Jul-24 Oct 1950

EMBLEM



Over and through a white disc, thin border black, the comic strip character, ALLEY OOP, proper, with stone club grasped in left hand in striking position, all proper, astride the back of a blue-green dinosaur, trimmed dark blue, tail entwined about large yellow aerial bomb. (Approved, 3 Jun 1943)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine duty while training in Florida. In June of 1942, the Squadron moved to Bangor, Maine. They received new B-17F aircraft. In August, the Squadron became the first heavy bomber squadron to fly the North Atlantic ferry route to Prestwick, Scotland as it deployed to England and then on to Bovingdon AB. The 92nd Bomb Group was directed to exchange their new B-17F aircraft with the 97th Bomb Group's B-17E aircraft. The 97th BG would move to North Africa. The 92nd BG was directed to set up and operate the 1/11 CCRC (Combat Crew

Replacement Center). The 326th BS would remain for the remainder of 1942 and the first six months of 1943, operating the 1/11 CCRC. The Squadron flew four combat missions beginning on September 6, 1942.

In January, 1943 the 92BG, 325th, 327th and 407th Squadrons moved to Alconbury AB to reequip, fly support missions to North Africa and train for combat. The 326th Bomb Squadron would rejoin the 92nd Group in July 1943 and return to bombing operations. On September 15, 1943, the 92BG moved to Podington AB, where they would remain until June, 1945.

In the fall of 1943 longer range raids began, and resulted immediately in heavy losses. One of these missions was flown on Thursday, October 14, 1943, against the ball bearing plants at Schweinfurt. For what was to become a famous mission called "Black Thursday", the 326th led the mission with Capt J K McLaughlin and Co-Pilot Colonel Budd J. Peaslee, the Mission Commander and led the group in the lead wing with 21, 92BG aircraft; one 326th Squadron and two other Group aircraft aborted, and of the 12 group aircraft that made it back to England, only 3 came home that day.

This loss of six is sobering enough, but it was not the only loss suffered by the 92nd BG during the war, and two more years of combat flying lay ahead. By the end of the war against Germany, the group had flown over 300 combat missions, 154 aircraft missing in action and more than 150 returned with battle damage that it would not fly again. It was a war of grim determination, grinding hard work, and heroic acts on an everyday basis.

Some of the notable successes of the squadron included missions against German troop concentrations in Normandy after D-Day. On the 24th of July, 1944, for example, the Squadron participated in a raid that virtually destroyed the elite "Panzer Lehr" armored division outside St. Lo. General Bayerlein, the Panzer division commander, described this raid, "Back and forth the bomb carpets were laid. Artillery positions were wiped out, tanks overturned and buried, infantry positions flattened and all roads and tracks destroyed. By midday, the entire area resembled a moon landscape...The shock effect on the troops was indescribable."

Another notable success was a raid against the virtually indestructible German submarine pens at Ijmuiden. Using experimental rocket-propelled bombs, the Squadron destroyed these pens in a single raid after hundreds of conventional bombs dropped in earlier raids had failed. The Squadron flew its last mission of the Second World War on April 25th, 1945, against the chemical plants at Pilsen. One 327th aircraft was lost, and Germany had lost the war. The group and squadrons were selected to run the Green Project and Blue Project using their B-17s as transports.

Following the Second World War, the Squadron was inactivated, and then re-activated as the 326th Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, on August 4, 1946, at Fort Worth. The Squadron was then armed with the B-29 Superfortress. The squadron was again redesignated in 1948, this time as the 326th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, as the B-29 became a smaller bomber when compared to the B-36 which was being introduced at the time.

The 92nd BG and 325th, 326th, and 327th squadrons would deploy as an instrument of Power Projection of the United States. In March 1948 the group deployed to England and Germany to support the Berlin Airlift.

On June 25th 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea without warning, and the United States intervened on South Korea's behalf. On July 4th, 1950 the 92ndBG and 326th Bombardment Squadron was ordered to deploy to Yokota, Japan and fly missions against North Korea. Just eight days later, the Squadron conducted its first attack. Although there were no North Korean fighters left at the time, the enemy put up a ferocious anti-aircraft defense, and several aircraft of the group were lost. The Squadron pressed the attack so fiercely that within three months there were no industrial or strategic targets left in North Korea. The Squadron turned to attacking supply lines and troop concentrations, and was released from combat by General MacArthur on October 20, 1950. Accidents do happen; on November 16, 1949, a 326th B-29, 44-86364, was in a Mid-Air collision with a 325th B-29, 44-69939 near Stockton California. Nine crewmembers died in each aircraft, one 326th crewman survived and two 325th crewmen survived.

1951 was used for the conversion from B-29 to B-36 aircraft. Many of the still operational B-29s returned to Korea to serve on with the 19th BG and 307th BG at Kadena AB, Okinawa; and the 98th BG at Yokota, Japan.

Once the now 92nd Bomb Wing H completed conversion, operational training and nuclear mission was established. The deployment of the wing in August 1953 to the Far East was to survey suitable bases for B-36 use and to reinforce the Korean armistice of July 1953. 20 B-36D aircraft led by Colonel James V Edmundson, Commander, 92nd BW landed at Kadena AB, for 'Operation Big Stick'. B-36 aircraft visited Yokota AB and Anderson AFB Guam. The wing returned to Fairchild after a short stay. The wing and squadrons would deploy to Guam October 14, 1954 for 90 days, which established a succession of deployed B-36 wings to maintain a heavy bomber presence in the western Pacific. The 92nd Bomb Wing would return for its second 90 day deployment in April 1956. When relieved in July, the new unit was a B-47 Bomb Wing.

B-36 operations of the 326th were not without casualties. On April 15, 1952, a borrowed 327th B-36 with a 326th crew crashed on takeoff, killing 15 crewmen, 2 survived, severely burned. In May 1955, the 326th was awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) for Operation Big Stick.

In October of 1956, the Squadron was scheduled to convert to the B-52D Stratofortress retaining its designation. Events in the fall of 1956 would delay the conversion to B-52. The Suez Crisis and Eastern Europe conflicts required the wing and squadrons to remain operational, and were on "cocked ground alert" into the second week of December. The 326th was not operational from February 5, 1957 to 1 June 1957. B-52 operations continued through February 1961, with training missions to improve and maintain proficiency, served on Ground Alert, and

participated in a seven month test of Airborne Alert missions during March 3, to October 6, 1959. The airborne alert test would earn the second AFOUA.

In February, 1961, the 326th began the movement of the squadron's personnel, aircraft and equipment to Glasgow AFB, MT. This was the completion of the dispersal program to reduce vulnerability of large (three squadron, 45 B-52s) unit at one base. The 327th had already moved to Larson AFB WA in July, 1960. On setup at Glasgow, the squadron resumed alert duties and training under the command of the 4141 Strategic Wing. In an effort to honor heritage units of the past, on February 1 1963, the 4141 SW and 326th BS were inactivated and replaced by the 91st Bomb Wing and 322nd BS.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Updated:

Sources

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