

492 ATTACK SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

80 Aero Squadron organized, 15 Aug 1917
Redesignated 492 Aero Squadron, 1 Feb 1918
Demobilized, 13 Feb 1919

492 Bombardment Squadron constituted and allotted to the reserve, 31 Mar 1924

492 Aero Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 492 Bombardment Squadron, 1936.
Consolidated organization designated 492 Bombardment Squadron.

Disbanded, 31 May 1942

492 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 19 Sep 1942
Activated, 25 Oct 1942
Inactivated, 6 Jan 1946
Redesignated 492 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy and activated, 1 Oct 1946
Redesignated 492 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 20 Jul 1948

492 Bombardment Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 492 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 1960. Consolidated organization designated 492 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy

Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Feb 1963
Redesignated 492 Attack Squadron, 26 Mar 2019
Activated, 15 Apr 2019

STATIONS

Kelly Field, Tex, 15 Aug 1917
Garden City, NY, 3-22 Nov 1917
Tours, France, 17 Dec 1917
Brest, France, c. 30 Dec 1918-c. 19 Jan 1919
Garden City, NY, c. 31 Jan-13 Feb 1919
Karachi, India, 25 Oct 1942
Gaya, India, 14 Nov 1942
Bishnupur, India, 26 Feb 1943
Panagarh, India, 25 Apr 1943
Madhaiganj, India, 22 Jan 1944
Tezgaon, India, 17 Jun 1944
Madhaiganj, India, 6 Oct 1944 (detachment at Luliang, China, ferrying gasoline to Suichwan, China,
20 Dec 1944-30 Jan 1945)
Tezpur, India, 1 Jun-7 Dec 1945
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 5-6 Jan 1946
Ft Worth AAFld, TX, 1 Oct 1946
Columbus AFB, MS, 15 Jun 1959-1 Feb 1963
March ARS, CA, 15 Apr 2019

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 15 Aug 1917-Feb 1918
Headquarters, Air Service, Service of Supply, Feb-Dec 1918 (detachment attached to Second
Aviation Instruction Center, 25 Apr-9 Dec 1918)
Unkn, Dec 1918-13 Feb 1919
7 Bombardment Group, 25 Oct 1942-6 Jan 1946
7 Bombardment Group, 1 Oct 1946
7 Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1999
4228 Strategic Wing, 15 Jun 1959-1 Feb 1963
49 Operations Group, 15 Apr 2019

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1942-1945
B-29, 1946-1948
B-36, 1948-1958
B-52, 1958-1963

COMMANDERS

1st Lt Herbert C. Boettcher, 25 Oct 1942
Capt Joe Pirruccello, 13 Jan 1943
Capt William A. Delahay, 9 Apr 1943-28 Dec 1943
Capt Milliard L. Gandy, 8 Apr 1944
Maj Ralph A. Jensen, 15 Apr 1945

Capt Brad M. Chase, 15 Aug 1945
Inactive, 6 January 1946-25 Oct 1946
Lt Col James H. Thompson, 25 Oct 1946
Lt Col Howard T. Hugos, 27 Nov 1946-31 Oct 1947
Lt Col Richard T. Hernland, 17 Nov 1947-unknown
Lt Col Francis J. Schuck, 31 Aug 1948
Lt Col Walter E. Chambers, 15 Jan 1950
Maj Finaly Ross, Jr., 27 Oct 1950
Maj Arthur L. Barnes, 11 Aug 1951
Maj Delbert L. Huffman, 15 Dec 1951
Lt Col Lester Personeus, Jr., 21 Mar 1952
Lt Col William M. Crampton, 15 Jan 1953
Lt Col William M. Jones, 10 May 1956

HONORS

Service Streamers

Theater of Operations

Campaign Streamers

India-Burma
China Defensive
Central Burma
China Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Thailand, 19 Mar 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
6 Oct 1959-15 Jul 1960

EMBLEM



On a disc, light blue edged dark blue, in front and above clouds white in base, a personalized bee, body and wings natural, legs enclosed in boxing gloves red, wearing goggles over a red cap, observing through a telescope black, and standing on a bomb blue, flying through space. (Approved, 28 Feb 1952)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Constructed and maintained facilities, Jan-Dec 1918. Apparently never active during period 1924-1942 when allotted to the reserve with assignment to Ninth Corps Area and designated station at Seattle, Wash.

Constituted in the Organized Reserve on 31 March 1924, assigned to the 349th Bombardment Group (GHQR), and allotted to the Ninth Corps Area. Initiated in January 1925 at Sand Point Airport, Seattle, WA. Consolidated on 5 December 1936 with the 492 Aero Squadron (a WWI unit organized 11 August 1917 at Kelly Field, TX, as the 80th Aero Squadron; redesignated as the 492 Aero Squadron [Construction] on 1 February 1918; demobilized in February 1919 at Garden City, NY; reconstituted on 5 December 1936). Conducted summer training at various locations to include Rockwell Field, CA, and Pearson Field, WA. Inactivated on 2 March 1937 at Seattle by relief of personnel.

Combat in CBI, 24 Jan 1943-10 Jun 1944 and 19 Oct 1944-10 May 1945; transported gasoline to forward bases in China, 20 Jun-30 Sep 1944 and 20 Jun-18 Sep 1945.

The 492d Bombardment Squadron had its origin in the 80th Aero Squadron which was organized at Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, on 15 August 1917. Early the next month the service nature of the unit became clearly apparent when it was redesignated the 80th Aero Squadron (Construction). Near the end of October the unit left San Antonio on the first lap of its journey overseas, and arrived at Garden City, New York, on 3 November. The Carpathia, on which it sailed for Europe some three weeks later, docked at Le Havre, France, on 14 December 1917.

Three days after arriving in France the 80th Squadron took station at the 2d Aviation Instruction Center in Tours. There it performed construction work until the end of World War I. Meanwhile, on 1 February 1918, it had been redesignated the 492d Aero Squadron (Construction). The unit returned to the United States aboard the Frederick late in January 1919 and was disbanded at Garden City on 13 February.

In order to perpetuate the history and traditions of the 492d Aero Squadron the unit was reconstituted on 5 December 1936 and consolidated with the 492d Bombardment Squadron, which had been constituted and allotted to the Organized Reserve on 31 March 1924. The consolidation of the two units under the bombardment designation thus served to extend the history of the reserve squadron back to 15 August 1917. The 492d Bombardment Squadron was stationed at Seattle, Washington, from the time it was constituted in 1924 until it was disbanded on 31 May 1942.

On 19 September 1942, less than four months after the 492d Bombardment Squadron was disbanded, the 492d Bombardment Squadron (H) was constituted. Having been assigned to the 7th Bombardment Group (H), it was activated at New Delhi, India, on 25 October 1942. There was no relation between this 492d Bombardment Squadron (H) and the earlier 492d Bombardment Squadron until 31 March 1960, when the Department of the Air Force, acting on the recommendation of the USAF Historical Division, consolidated the histories of the two units.

When the "new" 492d Bombardment Squadron was activated in October 1942 it took station at Karachi Air Base, India, and immediately began preparations to enter combat with its parent group in the India-Burma Theater of Operations. The initial cadre consisted of one officer, First Lieutenant Herbert C. Boettcher, who assumed command of the unit, and ten enlisted men. Personnel strength grew slowly at first. Yet by 1 February 1943, with 48 officers and 388 enlisted men, the squadron was considered a complete fighting unit. By that time it was equipped with eight B-24 Liberator aircraft, a number which ultimately grew to fourteen.

The squadron actually entered combat on 24 January 1943 when, operating from its base at Gaya, India, it bombed docks, shipping, and warehouses at Rangoon, Burma. That raid was followed early in February with an attack upon a railroad bridge at Myitnge. During the next five months the squadron participated in repeated attacks on enemy communications lines in central and southern Burma, particularly in the area around Rangoon. Major targets in that respect included bridges, docks, and railroad yards at Rangoon; railroad bridges at Myitnge, Pyinmana, and Sinthe; docks at Moulmein; and shipping in the Gulf of Martaban. The squadron's Liberators struck also at the Mingaladon Airport, a Japanese fighter base near Rangoon; the Mantu lead mines; and the Thilawa oil refinery.

The monsoon season, commencing in May 1943, slowed down combat operations. Only eight missions were flown in that month, for instance only four were completed in June. Squadron officers took advantage of this slack period to initiate a number of special training courses. They included armament, the geography of Burma, naval craft identification, navigation, radio code

practice, and weather. In July 1943, however, the unit attacked enemy shipping in the far distant Port Blair in the Andaman Islands. During August it persistently harassed shipping lanes in the Gulf of Martaban from Rangoon down to the Andaman Islands. A significant mission for September was an attack upon the Syriam oil refineries on the river opposite Rangoon.

During the last three months of the year, following the breakup of the monsoon, the squadron increased the tempo of its combat activities. In October communications lines in the Rangoon area and shipping lanes in the Andaman Sea felt the brunt of its bombers. The highlight of the unit's raids during November 1943 was an attack upon the Insein yards at Rangoon, reportedly the only place in Burma with facilities for repairing locomotives. In December there were two 2,300 mile round-trip flights to Bangkok, Thailand, the first for an attack upon the government docks there, and the second to bomb the Terminus Railroad Station.

On 22 January 1944 the 492d Squadron took station at Madhaganj Army Air Base, India. It began the second year of combat activities with continued efforts to destroy enemy-held communications into and within Burma by bombing bridges, docks and warehouses, locomotives and rolling stock, and railway marshalling yards on land, and cargo vessels and naval craft on the adjacent waters. Such attacks were interspersed at times, particularly in the late spring of 1944, with raids on airdromes, barracks areas, depots, gasoline plants, landing strips, supply dumps, and troop concentrations.

In mid-June 1944, after the beginning of the monsoon period, the squadron moved to Tezganon-Kurmitola, India, and for the time being ceased combat operations. Instead it began transporting gasoline across the "Hump" to the Fourteenth Air Force in China. The first cargo was flown to Kunming on 20 June. These operations continued until after the first of October. During the period involved the unit had transported approximately 500,000 gallons of gasoline to China. Effective 5 October the squadron moved back to Madhaganj and began a "refresher" training course which included gunnery practice, formation flying, and dry-run bombing. Near the end of the month, much to the satisfaction of all personnel, the unit resumed regular combat activities.

Highlights of bombing operations for the remainder of the year were raids on the Ban Dara and the Geang Luang bridges on the Bangkok-Chiangmai railroad, an attack on the Pynmana railroad yards, and a series of strikes along a 60-mile stretch of the Bangkok-Thanyuayt railway yards. For the greater part of December 1944, however, the squadron switched from blasting enemy lines of communications to destroying enemy stores. In December also a small component of the 492d Squadron left on six weeks of detached service in China. Based at Luliang, it engaged in hauling gasoline and other supplies to Sui-chuan and Liang-shan.

Early in 1945 the 492d Bombardment Squadron supported British ground forces in the region north of Mandalay and east of the Irrawaddy River. After a resumption of attacks upon communications lines, it participated in a 2,500 mile mission in which it blasted railway roundhouses, rail sidings, and warehouses at Jumporn, a port on the Malay Peninsula south of Bangkok. In March the squadron went all out against enemy communications in southern Burma, Thailand, and the Tenasserim Peninsula, that involved two raids on the Ban Tak Kara Bridge at Bandon, Thailand. In each instance

the Liberators were in the air for over 17 hours, thought to be a record at the time for heavy bombers. Other highlights of the unit's combat activities during the closing weeks of the Burma campaign included a night raid up and down an 82-mile section of the Bangkok-Thanbyuzayt railroad, during which it destroyed two locomotives and numerous railroad cars. Later in the month the 492d participated in a massive effort with other units of the 7th Bombardment Group to destroy the Burma-Thailand railroad. Using the unit's Liberators as "dive-glide" bombers on that occasion, the aircrews destroyed nine bridges.

After the fall of Rangoon on 7 May 1945 the 492d Bombardment Squadron moved to Tezpur, India, and once again took on the mission of airlifting gasoline over the Hump into China. Some six weeks were required to refit the heavy bombers as substitute cargo carriers. The first mission was flown on 20 June. Normal operations continued throughout the summer. On 9 September the squadron was notified that its airlifting mission would be considered as accomplished when it had transported a specified amount of gasoline to China. Speeding up operations, the aircrews completed the allotted task by 18 September. Six weeks later the squadron moved to Dudhkundi, India, and thence to Kanchrapara on 19 November. It sailed from Calcutta aboard the General Black on 7 December 1945, and arrived at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, on 5 January 1946. The unit was inactivated at Camp Kilmer the following day.

Effective 1 October 1946 the 492d was redesignated a very heavy bombardment unit; activated at Fort Worth Army Air Field, Texas; and assigned to the 7th Bombardment Group, Fifteenth Air Force, Strategic Air Command. It was not until the last week in October, however, that the squadron received its first contingent of troops, 59 officers and 328 enlisted men on assignment from the 327th Bombardment Squadron. Lieutenant Colonel James H. Thompson assumed command of the newly activated 492d. It then began a training program which was designed primarily for overseas operations. The squadron was equipped with the B-29 aircraft until late in the summer of 1948.

In April 1947 the 492d Squadron engaged in three long-range missions. The first was as part of a mass formation flight from its home base to Los Angeles. Next it participated in a simulated bombing attack on Kansas City. Lastly, the squadron helped to provide an escort for President Miguel Aleman of Mexico in a flight from New Orleans to Washington, D.C., in May 1947.

The squadron spent a part of June and July 1947 on maneuvers in Japan. During August most of its B-29's joined others of its companion units (9th and 436th Bombardment Squadrons) on a nonstop flight to Anchorage, Alaska, for the purpose of testing the immediate mobility of the 7th Bombardment Group. Before returning to Fort Worth they engaged in flights that provided training in local approach procedures and in navigation. The following month the three squadrons deployed to Giebelstadt, Germany. While in Europe they flew several training missions in the central and southern parts of the continent.

The squadron received its first B-36 aircraft in June 1948. A few weeks thereafter it was redesignated a heavy bombardment unit. By January 1949 the squadron had completed the transition to the new bomber and had closed out its B-29 program. In March 1949 an aircrew assigned to the unit flew nonstop a distance of 9,600 miles (from Fort Worth to Minneapolis, Great

Falls, Key West, Denver, Great Falls, Spokane, Denver, and back to Fort Worth) in 44 hours. As reported, this was the longest recorded flight to that date in a B-36 bomber.

The 492d Bombardment Squadron remained assigned to the 7th Bombardment Group until the group was inactivated in June 1952. For several years thereafter it was assigned directly to the 7th Bombardment Wing. During that time it continued to operate from its Fort Worth station, known after 29 January 1948 as Carswell Air Force Base. Generally speaking, its primary mission all the while was to maintain a high degree of strategic striking power, whether operating on the squadron, group, wing, division, air force, or command level. Most of its operational activities were conducted at its home base and on various types of cross-country flights and special missions within the forty-eight states. Over the whole period, however, there were numerous deployments, maneuvers, and temporary duty missions outside the United States.

In August 1949, for instance, the 492d Squadron inaugurated for the 7th Bombardment Group a series of routine training missions to Alaska. During February 1950 the squadron participated with other bombardment units of the group in an operational readiness test which also involved flights to Alaska. For that purpose they deployed several aircraft to Eielson Air Force Base, Fairbanks. It served as a forward staging area from which simulated missions were directed against designated targets in the United States. In May 1950 the 492d Squadron provided one of two B-36 *s on a mobility mission to Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico.

On 17 July 1951 six aircraft and aircrews assigned to the squadron departed Fort Worth for Goose Air Base, Labrador, Canada. Thence they were dispatched on a navigation mission to Thule Air Base, Greenland. On the return flight from Goose Bay to Carswell, they made simulated attacks on Tampa, Florida; Birmingham, Alabama; and Fort Worth. Another deployment to Goose Bay on a unit simulated combat mission followed in March 1954. Meanwhile in December 1951 the squadron provided one of two heavy bombers of the 7th Bombardment Wing on a special mission to Sculthorpe, England. The purpose of this deployment was to participate in a Royal Air Force navigation mission on a noncompetitive basis, to effect a mutual exchange of ideas with Royal Air Force personnel, and to compare techniques in target study and briefing.

In August 1954 the 492d Squadron participated in a 7th Bombardment Wing maneuver to North Africa on a simulated strike mission, flying non-stop the 4,600 miles to Nouasseur Air Base, French Morocco, which had been designated the post-strike headquarters. On the return flight to Carswell Air Force Base the bombers made simulated attacks upon targets in the state of Mississippi. Eleven months later the entire 7th Wing deployed to North Africa for 60 days on a unit simulated combat mission. While there the 492d Squadron, along with its companion tactical units, flew several missions to test the facilities of Nouasseur Air Base both as prestrike and post-strike staging area for a B-36 task force. In February 1956 the squadron deployed about one-half of its aircraft and aircrews to North Africa as a part of a 19th Air Division Task Force operation. It involved a flight to Nouasseur Air Base by way of Loring Air Force Base, Limestone, Maine; a strike mission from Nouasseur to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia; a strike mission from Nouasseur and return; and redeployment to Fort Worth. A second mission overseas in connection with a 19th Air Division operations occurred in October-November 1956. On that occasion, in addition to the flights over

and back to the home base in the United States, there were strike missions from Nouasseur and return, and from Nouasseur to Burtonwood Air Depot, England.

In December 1957 the entire 7th Bombardment wing began preparations for converting from the B-36 aircraft to the B-52 Stratofortress. Early in February, the wing officially became a B-52 organization, with the adoption of pertinent manning documents and equipment authorization. In March 1958 the commanding officer of the 492d Bombardment Squadron, along with other officers in the wing, went to Castle Air Force Base, California, for transition training in the Stratofortress. The first of the B-52's arrived at Carswell in June, at which time the wing became in reality a jet bombardment organization. In January 1959 it attained a combat ready status in the B-52.

Effective 15 June 1959, less than six months after having completed the transition from the B-36 to the B-52 aircraft, the 492d Bombardment Squadron was reassigned to the 4228th Strategic Wing, and took station at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. It immediately began routine training activities as a component of the 4228th Wing. Special operations and missions soon followed.

492 Bombardment Squadron Completed Big Blast Simulated Night Penetration Against Norad (North American Air Defense) Defenses And Test Of Ecm (Electronic Countermeasures) Against Radar. Squadron Also Participated In Operation High Hand 2 Air Force Bombing/Navigation And Air Refueling Competition. 1955

Combat Ready Crews Of 492 Bombardment Squadron Flew 30 Big Blast Sorties In May 61. 1961
492 Bs

Reassigned From 7 Bw To 4228 Sw On 15/6/59 And Equipped With B-52f From 6/59 Until 1/2/63 When Discontinued And Inactivated. Resources Passed To The 736 Bs/454 Bw.

1961 492 Bombardment Squadron And 901 Air Refueling Squadron Flew Round The Clock Missions Under Operation Keen Axe.

26 Combat Ready Crews Of 492 Bombardment Squadron Completed Guided Air Missile Familiarization Course. Wing Participated In Operation Spruce Up. 1961

492 Bombardment Squadron Completed Big Blast Simulated Night Penetration Against Norad (North American Air Defense) Defenses And Test Of Ecm (Electronic Countermeasures) Against Radar. 1959

492 Bombardment Squadron Was Equipped With B-52f Aircraft

Wing Continued Build Up Of Personnel And Materiel In Guided Air Missile (Gam-77) Branch. Combat Ready Crews Of 492 Bombardment Squadron Flew 30 Big Blast Sorties In May 61.

Three of the B-36s taking part were from the 492 Bomb Squadron and the other three from the 436th Bomb Squadron. Five routes were flown on 18 September by the aircraft. Two 492 aircraft flew from Carswell on an 8,500 mile circuit to El Paso, Tucson, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Salt Lake City and back to Carswell. Next, one 492 B-36 took off from Carswell and flew to Kansas City, Omaha, Denver, Abilene, Oklahoma City, Tulsa and landed at Carswell. The fourth B-36, from the 436th Bomb Squadron flew to Des Moines, Minneapolis, Duluth, Chicago, Detroit, Ft. Wayne, Indianapolis, St. Louis and back to Carswell. The fifth B-36, assigned to the 436th, left Carswell and flew direct to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Buffalo, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, Memphis and back to Carswell. The last B-36, a 436th bomber, flew to Birmingham, Atlanta, Charleston, Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, Montgomery, New Orleans, Shreveport, Houston, San Antonio and finally landed at Carswell.

The B-36 "out-of-commission" rate almost brought crew training to a standstill since available B-36 flying consisted of primarily transition for pilots and meeting numerous commitments for flyover demonstrations. Included in those were static displays at the San Francisco Air Fair, flyover at the American Legion Parade in Miami, and flyover of Baltimore, Maryland. Also, one B-36 was placed on static display in St. Louis, Missouri on 16 October. The rest of October, the wing began preparations for the activation of a second bomb group at Carswell. This would be accomplished by partitioning the current 7th Bomb Group into two separate organizations. One additional B-36 A arrived in late October, bringing to a total of eighteen B-36A aircraft assigned. Of those, the 9th Bomb Squadron had five, the 436th eight, and the 492 five. Also, four B-29's were assigned, one in the 9th, one in the 436th and two in the 492 Bomb Squadron.

The most significant event that took place in December was the activation of the 11th Bomb Group, Heavy, by General Order 47, 8th Air Force, on 1 December 1948. Concurrently, with the activation of the group, the 26th, 42nd, and 98th Bomb Squadrons, Heavy, were activated and assigned. The 11th was further attached to the 7th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, the same day. Major Russell F. Ireland, former deputy commander, 7th Air Base Group, became the acting commanding officer of the newly activated group. The 11th Bomb Group would be equipped with eighteen B-36 As, presently used by the 7th Bomb Group for training purposes. Tentative plans called for squadron cadres to be housed with other bomb squadrons at Carswell. Supply and administrative people of the 98th Bomb Squadron worked with the 436th Bomb Squadron, while the 26th Bomb Squadron moved in with the 492 Bomb Squadron, and the 42nd Bomb Squadron shared facilities with the 9th Bomb Squadron.

On 7 December, the 492 flew two B-36s in an air demonstration over the state of West Virginia in celebration of Peace Week which the state was observing. Also, in December, a B-36B of the 436th Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group completed a round trip non-stop flight from Carswell AFB to Hawaii and back. The B-36, commanded by Major John D. Bartlett, flew the mock attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii flying over 8,000 miles without landing in thirty-five hours and thirty minutes. 7 December 1948 B-36B Round-robin, Hawaii and return. Back row, left to right: Sgt. Bill Welter, Right Lower Scan.; SSgt. Truley Ponder, Right Up Scan.; Lt Col Howard F. Hugos, Observer Pilot; S/Sgt T.D. Toombs, Left Upper Scan.; Major John D. Bartlett, Airplane Commander; Capt John Harrington, Pilot; Capt T.A. Heydon, 2nd Nav.; 1stLt Tom Harkness, Radar; T/Sgt Wm E. Holer,

Radio. Front Row: M/Sgt Russell Stokum, 2nd Engr.; 1st Lt. Wm. Grabowski, Cruise Contr. Spec.; M/Sgt G.F. McGraw, 3rd Engr; M/Sgt Clyde M. Youngblood, 1st Engr.; S/Sgt Joe B. Ward, Left Lower Scan.; Capt Wesley D. Morris, 1st Nav.; S/Sgt Vitale Trippodi, Radio.

December. 1948 During the month, the 7th Bomb Group received thirteen new B-36B aircraft from Consolidated Vultee. As December closed, thirty-six B-36s (eighteen A and eighteen B) were assigned to the 7th Bomb Group with no aircraft assigned to the 11th Bomb Group as yet. Of those, the 9th Bomb Squadron had twelve (six A and six B), the 436th had twelve (six A and six B), and the 492nd had twelve (six A and six B).

January As the month closed, the wing had thirty-five B-36s assigned, thirty in the 7th Bomb Group and five in the 11th Bomb Group. The 9th Bomb Squadron had eleven B-36s (five A and six B), the 436th had ten B-36s (five A and five B), and the 492nd had nine B-36s (four A and five B). In the 11th Bomb Group, the 26th Bomb Squadron had two B-36As assigned, the 42nd had two B-36As, and the 98th only one B-36A.

Of importance during the month of March 1949 was a 9,600 mile, non-stop flight by a 492 Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group, B-36B 44-92035. The flight, lasting over forty-four hours, pin-pointed entirely within the borders of the United States, began on 10 March from Carswell. The aircraft flew north to Minneapolis, Minnesota, then turned westward to Great Falls, Montana. From there, the bomber flew a diagonal line across the United States to Key West, Florida. While enroute north to Houston, midway from Key West, the aircraft dropped nearly 10,000 pounds of bombs over the Gulf of Mexico. Crossing over Houston, the B-36 headed for Fort Worth. Reaching Fort Worth, the bomber flew to Denver, Colorado, and Great Falls, Montana, before turning and flying to Spokane, Washington. From Spokane, the aircraft flew to Denver. During this leg, the aircraft developed engine trouble and was forced to land two hours early at Carswell. The flight was the longest recorded to date in a B-36.

On 22 April 1949, two B-36B aircraft of the 9th and 492 Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group, flew to Muroc, California to perform an accelerated service test at 40,000 feet. The mission tested the suitability of the B-36 as a bombing platform for very-large type bombs. The two aircraft returned to Carswell on 10 June 1949. During the month, a total of twenty-five B-36s were assigned to the 7th Bomb Group (seven A and eighteen B). Of those, the 9th Bomb Squadron had eight (two A and six B), the 436th had eight (two A and six B), while the 492nd had nine (three A and six B). In the 11th Bomb Group, total B-36s assigned increased by two over last month to twenty-two for April (fourteen A and eight B), the 98th had six (four A and two B).

On 9 June 1949, Captain Deane G. Curry, 492 Bomb Squadron, made the first Air Force flight in the new Consolidated XC-99 and accomplished six landings at Carswell. During the remainder of June, Captain Curry completed five additional flights, of which one was a night mission, and one an emergency landing at Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Texas. As the month closed, the XC-99 was at Kelly undergoing repair and installation of a new engine.

During June, the 11th Bomb Group transferred five B-36A aircraft to the Consolidated plant at Fort Worth and one B-36B to the Oklahoma City Air Material Area, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma for modification. Six remaining B-36Bs in the group were divided between the three assigned squadrons: 26th, 42nd and 98th Bomb Squadrons. Overall, the 11th Bomb Group has twenty-two B-36s assigned in June (fifteen A and seven B). Also, the 7th Bomb Group received three new B-36Bs from the factory in June for a total of twenty-four B-36s (three A and twenty-one B) assigned and one XC-99. Of those, the 9th Bomb Squadron had eight B-36s (one A and seven B), the 436th totaled seven B-36s (one A and six B), plus one XC-99. This left the 492 Bomb Squadron with the remaining nine B-36s (one A and eight B).

Two 492 Bomb Squadron B-36s departed for Alaska on 25 July 1949 with Major General Roger M. Ramey, 8th Air Force commander, and Colonel Fisher, 7th Bomb Wing commander. This flight was for the purpose of surveying B-36 facilities at Eielson AFB, Alaska. The aircraft returned to Carswell on 29 July.

During the month, the 7th Bomb Group transferred the last three B-36As to the Air Material Command Storage at the Consolidated plant in Fort Worth. That left the group with twenty-one B-36Bs and one XC-99 assigned. The 9th Bomb Squadron had eight B-36Bs, the 436th totaled seven B-36Bs and one XC-99 (at Kelly AFB, Texas since late June for engine changes), and the 492 with six B-36Bs. The 11th Bomb Group acquired four new B-36B aircraft in July, two (44-92053A and 44-92050A) went to the 98th Bomb Squadron. Additionally, the 11th sent four B-36As to Consolidated in July for conversion. As the month closed, twenty-two B-36s were assigned to the 11th Bomb Group (eleven As and eleven Bs).

Next, on 29 August 1949, the wing flew three B-36B aircraft in a flyover at the Pennsylvania Railroad Station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in conjunction with a commemoration of President Harry S. Truman and the Secretary of Defense attending the National American Legion Convention. During the rest of August, the 492 Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group, conducted a series of polar training missions out of Eielson AFB, Alaska in the B-36B.

One 492 Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group, B-36B flew a navigational training flight to Eielson AFB, Alaska on 14 September. Enroute to Alaska, the bomber conducted radar bombing at Stockton, California and Geiger Field, Washington. The aircraft returned to Carswell on 16 September.

By the end of August, three more D models: 49-2647 (42nd Bomb Squadron, 11th Bomb Group), 49-2652 (9th Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group), and 49-2654 (492 Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group) were delivered to Carswell. Also, two B-36B aircraft were sent to the Convair plant in San Diego, California for modification into D models. Overall, a total of thirty-five B-36s were assigned in August, nineteen in the 7th Bomb Group (two D and seventeen B), and sixteen in the 11th Bomb Group (two D and fourteen B).

Just over a week later on 20 September, three B-36Ds (436th, 492 and 9th Bomb Squadrons) of the 7th Bomb Group participated in an exact profile of the war plan. The mission consisted of a night attack on Fort Worth with additional training accomplished by making a simulated bomb run over

Birmingham, Alabama. Also, the aircraft conducted a live firing over the Eglin AFB Gunnery Range, Florida before recovering at Carswell.

Three 7th Bomb Group B-36D aircraft (9th, 436th and 492 Bomb Squadrons) took part in a special training mission in October 1950. The purpose was to determine requirements in people, equipment, and supplies for staging through bases other than Carswell or home base. On 13 October, one North American B-25 Mitchell (assigned to 8th Air Force at Carswell) flew to March AFB, California with the advance party. The next day, prior to the bombers deploying, a Douglas C-54 Skymaster cargo aircraft launched from Carswell with support people, recovering later in the day at March. The three bombers conducted a simulated bombing mission over Fort Worth after takeoff then proceeded to Phoenix, Arizona and accomplished a second bombing run. The bombers then flew to the Pacific Ocean for a gunnery mission. Completing this, they landed at March AFB. The three bombers launched from March on 16 October and flew to Castle AFB, California. On 17 October, the bombers redeployed from Castle to Carswell. Enroute, the bombers took part in a camera gunnery mission at 25,000 feet in Southern California with four Republic F-84 Thunderjet fighters of the 78th Fighter Group, Hamilton AFB, San Rafael, California. Additionally, the bombers conducted a simulated bomb run over San Francisco and Sacramento, California; Phoenix, Arizona; and Fort Worth, before landing at Carswell.

Next, the wing took part in a special training mission to the United Kingdom. The purpose of the mission was to evaluate the B-36D under simulated war plan conditions, further evaluate the equivalent airspeed and compression tactics for heavy bombardment aircraft, and evaluate select crew capability for bombing unfamiliar targets. The aircraft, staging through Limestone AFB, Maine would land at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom following a night radar bombing attack on Helgoland, Germany. From there, the bombers would conduct a simulated bomb run on the Heston Bomb Plot, London, finally landing at Lakenheath. A total of eleven bombers launched out of Carswell on 14 January to Limestone AFB, landing that same day. On 15 January, all were set to depart Limestone. Of those, two aborted shortly after takeoff for engine failures, and three more returned to Carswell that day. The remaining six (one 9th Bomb Squadron, two 436th Bomb Squadron, 7th Bomb Group; and one each from the 26th, 42nd and 98th Bomb Squadrons, 11th Bomb Group) landed at RAF Lakenheath on 16 January following the two bomb runs scheduled. This was the first deployment of wing and SAC B-36 aircraft to England and Europe. For the next four days, the flight flew sorties out of England. The aircraft redeployed to the states on 20 January arriving at Carswell on 21 January. As January closed, eighteen B-36B and eighteen B-36D bombers were assigned to the wing. Also, assigned B models began rotating to the Convair plant at San Diego, California for modifications to D models. This would continue until late June 1951 when all B models would be converted to B-36Ds in SAC.

Shortly after this, on 14 May, a survey team in the wing deployed from Carswell in a C-124 to investigate the facilities at Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada for its use in emergency war plan exercises. The team returned ten days later. On 17 May, Major General Irvine, 19th Air Division commander, presented Lieutenant Colonel Finlay F. Ross, Jr., 492 Bomb Squadron commander, the 19th Air Division Achievement Award for Outstanding Flying Safety for April 1951. This was the second consecutive month the 492 received the award.

On 17 July 1951, the 7th Wing dispatched six B-36 aircraft of the 492 Bomb Squadron to Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada. The purpose of the mission was to familiarize people in the squadron with the capabilities of the staging base, test these capabilities, provide an opportunity for crews to obtain actual polar experience, and to accomplish a partial profile mission on the return to Carswell. The flight enroute to Goose Bay was used as a routine training mission. All aircraft landed at Goose Bay on 17 July. Two days later, on 19 July, all six bombers flew a polar navigation training mission then recovered at Goose Bay. All six bombers redeployed to Carswell on 23 July. Enroute, a partial war plan profile was conducted as the bombers attacked Tampa, Florida; Birmingham, Alabama; Fort Worth; Memphis, Tennessee; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Dallas before landing at Carswell on 24 July. July closed out with twenty-four B-36D bombers assigned to the 7th Wing.

Eighteen 7th Wing B-36s (six-9th, six-436th and six-492 Bomb Squadron) participated in a high altitude formation flight on 24 April. The purpose was to accomplish formation radar camera attacks against New Orleans, Louisiana and Houston, Texas; high altitude gunnery, and other scheduled training including electronic countermeasures simulated runs against Forbes AFB, Topeka, Kansas and Carswell. Also, the aircraft conducted individual radar bomb scoring runs on targets of choice at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Little Rock, Arkansas.

June 1952 opened with the 7th Wing taking part in a high altitude formation flight against Dallas. A total of eighteen wing B-36s (six-9th, six-436th and six-492 Bomb Squadron) flew the mission on 5 June. Following the attack all aircraft flew to south Texas and participated in a gunnery exercise on the Matagorda Island Gunnery Range. The exercise had four primary purposes: to test and evaluate the feasibility of a new formation tactic; test wing capability to attack large force multiple targets within a large city complex; test the defensive fire power of B-36 aircraft at high altitude; and to test the feasibility of maintaining formation to cross-hair distance prior to making individual bomb runs. All aircraft recovered at Carswell the same day.

On 1 July, nine 7th Wing B-36s (5-H and 4-F) departed Carswell to take part in a high altitude formation radar camera attack on New York City. Three aircraft were from the 9th, three from the 436th, and three from the 492 Bomb Squadron! The nine B-36s flew to the orbit area at Cape St. Francis, Newfoundland, Canada then flew the scheduled attack on New York City. From there, the bombers flew to Montgomery, Alabama and recovered at Carswell on 2 July. Following this, the wing presented the Meritorious Achievement Award Plaque to the Outstanding Tactical and Support Units in the wing. The 9th Bomb Squadron and 7th Maintenance and Supply Group received the awards on 5 July 1952.

The next flying exercise took place on 27 July, as the 7th Wing launched twenty-one B-36s (seven-9th, seven-436th and seven-492 Bomb Squadron) from Carswell as part of a joint SAC/ADC attack on Detroit, Michigan. Enroute to Detroit, the bombers were intercepted by F-86 and F-94. Fighter opposition was considered ineffective as all bombers attacked the target then returned to Carswell the same day.

Two days later, on 6 August 1952, a unit simulated combat mission was flown against Philadelphia by nineteen wing B-36s (seven-F and twelve-H), nine of the 9th Bomb Squadron, five of the 436th

Bomb Squadron and five of the 492 Bomb Squadron. After launch, the bombers flew to Maine and encountered several Air Defense Command F-84, F-86 and F-94 fighters in the northeastern United States. From Maine, the bombers attacked Philadelphia. Following this, the aircraft landed at Carswell on 7 August. Fighter opposition was very small during the mission and did not affect the mission's effectiveness. Overall, the mission was considered very successful. On 15 August, the monthly wing Meritorious Achievement Award plaques were presented to the 9th Bomb Squadron and 7th Armament Electronic Maintenance Squadron.

Six wing B-36s (two D, two F and two H) were dispatched from Carswell AFB on 2 October 1952 on a night tactics mission to accomplish cell compression; station-keeping; camera attacks on Texarkana, Texas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; radar runs on Tampa, Florida; and night celestial navigation and actual armament firing. The mission was flown by two 9th Bomb Squadron, two 436th Bomb Squadron, and two 492 Bomb Squadron bombers. It was flown as planned with all aircraft finishing up with the actual firing on the Matagorda Gunnery Range, Texas, before landing back at Carswell. A few days later, the SAC Flying Safety Award for September 1952 was awarded to Carswell AFB on 6 October for the Best Flying Safety Record in SAC for the Month of September.

As part of a unit simulated combat mission to RAF Fairford, United Kingdom, eighteen wing B-36s (six 9th, six 436th, six 492 Bomb Squadron) flew from Carswell to the staging base at Goose Bay, Labrador on 2 and 3 February. Also, on 2 February, five Douglas C-124 Globemaster cargo aircraft deployed from Carswell to RAF Fairford with the wing advon party. Enroute to the United Kingdom, the aircraft stopped at Kindley AFB, Bermuda and Lajes AB, Azores, Portugal before landing at Fairford. On 6 February, seventeen B-36s departed Goose Bay with one B-36 returning to Carswell. Enroute to Fairford, the aircraft experienced adverse weather conditions.

As a result of the weather, one 492 Bomb Squadron B-36H 51-5719 was abandoned near Fairford when the crew had to bail out. The crash was the result of adverse weather conditions, undermanned and inexperienced ground control approach (GCA) personnel, fuel starvation after excessive holding, and two missed GCA approaches. There were no fatalities in the crash on 7 February. This was the eighth B-36 accident for the wing, the sixth flying to date.

The 7th Wing provided twelve B-36s (four 9th, four 436th and four 492 Bomb Squadron) to the Atomic Energy Commission for tests at Frenchman Flat, Nevada from 20 to 24 March. The wing's primary purpose in the tests was to provide photographic support. On 31 March a total of fifty-one B-36s (twenty-three D and twenty-eight H) were assigned to the wing.

July 1953 opened with three 7th Wing Featherweight B-36Hs (one 9th, one 436th and one 492 Bomb Squadron) participating in a two-phase bombing operation on 12 July. The exercise was nicknamed "TAILWIND." Each bomber flew simulated attacks on three vital control centers of the Air Defense Command: Colorado Springs, Colorado (Headquarters, Air Defense Command); Albuquerque, New Mexico and Buffalo, New York. Following the attacks, all aircraft recovered at Carswell. Aircraft commanders in the first phase were: Major Frederick Bachmann, Jr. (436th Bomb Squadron), Major Wells Zerdecki (492 Bomb Squadron), and Major Thomas A. Bell (9th Bomb Squadron). Also, the same day, eighteen B-36s (fifteen 7th and three 11th Bomb Wing) took part in

Phase II of "TAILWIND," flying to Savannah, Georgia then north for an attack on New York City. The five B-36s were from the 9th Bomb Squadron, five from the 436th Bomb Squadron, and one from the 492 Bomb Squadron. Additionally, Lieutenant Colonel George E. Cameron (436th Bomb Squadron), and Lieutenant Colonel Clifford Schoeffler (9th Bomb Squadron), were the two formation leaders in Phase II. All aircraft in Phase II landed at Carswell on 10 July following completion of the mission.

In September, the 7th Wing flew a simulated visual bombing mission against an industrial target complex in Omaha, Nebraska in three phases. The primary purpose of the mission was to test the visual radar bomb scoring capabilities of the wing crews under optimum conditions. On 1 September, eight wing B-36s (two 9th, three 492 and three 436th Bomb Squadron) flew the attack on Omaha in Phase I. A total of ten B-36s (three 9th, three 436th and three 492 Bomb Squadron and one 11th Bomb Wing) launched out of Carswell on 14 September, and flew the mission over Omaha. Phase III was flown on 18 September, by ten wing B-36s (two 9th, three 436th and four 492 Bomb Squadron). Of those, four (two 9th, one 436th and one 492 Bomb Squadron) did not make the visual bomb run over Omaha due to cloud cover and flew the mission again on 26 September. Overall, the results of the exercise were excellent. Additionally, this was the first time the wing had participated in a visual K-type evaluation.

On 7 October 1953, ten 7th Wing B-36s (three 9th, three 436th, four 492 Bomb Squadron) deployed to Nouasseur AB, French Morocco on a unit simulated combat mission. Prior to this, on 4 October, two Douglas C-124 Globemasters, with support equipment and personnel departed Carswell and arrived in Morocco on 6 October. This was followed by another C-124 with maintenance personnel on 5 October. The Globemaster stopped at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal, enroute to Morocco, finally arriving at Nouasseur on 8 October. All the B-36s launched out of Carswell on 7 October, touched down at Nouasseur on 8 October. The wing redeployed to Carswell on 14 October as eighteen B-36s departed and arrived at Carswell on 15 October. Also, on 14 October, one C-124 with support equipment and personnel left Morocco and flew to Carswell landing on 16 October. On 15 October, one Douglas C-97 transport with support personnel and one C-124 with cargo, departed Morocco for Carswell. Both aircraft arrived on 17 October, following a stop at Lajes AB, Azores.

On 23 November 1953, eighteen 7th Wing B-36H bombers (six 9th, six 436th and six 492 Bomb Squadron) accomplished a unit simulated combat mission which involved cell bombing over the Eglin AFB Range, Florida. All aircraft recovered at Carswell on 24 November. Three days later, on 27 November, another B-36D was transferred to Biggs AFB, El Paso, Texas, leaving only one D model in the wing assigned to the 492 Bomb Squadron. The wing B-36 inventory consisted of thirty-one B-36s (twenty-nine H, one D and one J) on 30 November.

The last B-36D, assigned to the 492 Bomb Squadron, was transferred to Biggs AFB, Texas on 11 December 1953. Enroute to Biggs, the aircraft crashed into Mt. Franklin in El Paso while the pilot was attempting an instrument approach to the base by ground control approach radar. The aircraft was completely destroyed and the crew of nine perished. This was the third B-36 crash this year in

the wing and the tenth overall since arrival of the B-36 to the 7th Bomb Wing in June 1948. Two of those losses were due to ground fires.

Nineteen of the 7th Wing's B-36s (four J, and fifteen-H), six from the 9th Bomb Squadron, seven from the 436th Bomb Squadron, and six from the 492 Bomb Squadron, took part in operation "PATHAND" on 14 March. That day, all nineteen aircraft launched out of Carswell on a unit simulated combat mission to Goose Bay AB, Labrador, Canada. Following arrival at Goose Bay on 15 March, the aircraft were prepared for return strike missions enroute to Carswell. All nineteen aircraft departed Goose AB on 18 March, flew strike missions in the central United States, then recovered at Carswell on 19 March.

The 7th Bomb Wing, along with other SAC wings, conducted night simulated radar bombing evaluation missions against an industrial complex in San Antonio, Texas from 30 April to 5 May 1954. Nicknamed "ALAMO", the purpose of the exercise was to determine the current radar bombing capability of the command on a large industrial type target complex. Six wing crews (two 9th, three 436th and two 492 Bomb Squadron) bombed by radar on the first night of the evaluation, 30 April. This was the only wing participation in the SAC wide exercise.

Three wing B-36s, lead by Brigadier General John D. Ryan, 19th Air Division commander, and Colonel Clarence A. Neely, 7th Bomb Wing vice commander, took part in a United States "Goodwill Policy Flight," to Central America on 26 May. The aircraft were flown by Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Bennett, 492 Bomb Squadron, Major Leslie W. Brockwell, 436th Bomb Squadron, and Major Wesley L. Pendergraft, 9th Bomb Squadron. All three flew a low level flyover of Managua, Nicaragua for the Nicaraguan Army Day Celebration. During low level, the bombers flew over the Nicaraguan cities of Granada, Managua, Leon, and Matagalpa. Following this, the bomb-ers returned to Carswell landing on 27 May. Overall, the formation flew over 3,800 miles non-stop.

From 9 to 10 July, the quarterly unit simulated combat mission was conducted at Carswell AFB. It involved twenty-two B-36s (eighteen 7th and four 11th Bomb Wing) striking industrial targets in northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. It was held in conjunction with Air Defense Command sites located along the United States-Canada border. The purpose of the exercise was to test the striking forces of the 7th and 11th Bomb Wings. Exercise nickname was operation "CHECK POINT." On 9 July, the 7th flew five B-36Js (two 492, one 9th and two 436th Bomb Squadron) in the exercise, and thirteen B-36Js (two 9th, five 436th and six 492 Bomb Squadron) on 10 July. For the remainder of the month the 7th Wing prepared for a deployment to North Africa in August.

That mission to North Africa, was a simulated strike mission using tactics employed in the current wing emergency war plan with a post strike base of Nouasseur AB, French Morocco. On 1 August 1954, Major Arthur Eberlein's 9th Bomb Squadron crew carried the advanced team to Nouasseur to prepare for the strike aircraft. The strike mission involving nine B-36s (three 9th, three 436th and three 492 Bomb Squadron) departed Carswell on 8 August. Enroute to Morocco, the crews conducted assigned USCM strike missions then recovered at Nouasseur AB on 10 August.

From 11 to 22 October 1954, the wing participated in Operation "FAT CAT," a combined operational readiness and unit simulated combat mission. It was divided into two phases consisting of a deployment phase and strike phase. The route of the flight for the strike mission went as far south as Mexico City, Mexico, then west to Los Angeles, north to Springfield, Illinois, and then east to Texarkana, Texas. A total of sixteen B-36s (six 9th, five 436th and five 492 Bomb Squadron) flew the mission out of Carswell on 14 October. On 18 October, a second flight consisting of twelve B-36s (four 9th, four 436th and four 492 Bomb Squadron) was flown.

"Operation Styleshow", simulated combat mission by 18 Convair B-36 Peacemakers of the 7th Bomb Wing, staging through Goose AFB, Labrador, from Carswell AFB, Texas, to RAF Fairford, ends badly for B-36H-25-CF, 51-5719, of the 492th Bomb Squadron, 7th BW. Weather had deteriorated when the flight arrived in the morning over Fairford. Undermanned and inexperienced GCA personnel led to delays while other B-36s landed. After two missed GCA approaches and extended holding, 5719 faced fuel exhaustion. Pilot Lt. Col. Herman F. Gerick, rather than risk the lives of his crew or those on the ground, orders bail out 22 miles NE of Fairford and aims bomber at open country. All crew parachute safely - sole injury is one breaks a leg upon landing. Unmanned B-36 flies 30 miles before breaking up and impacting at Nethermore Woods, Lacock, near Chippenham, Wiltshire, England. Gerick, the co-pilot George Morford, and crew members Royal Freeman, Edwin House and Doug Minor will all be KWF in the crash of B-36D 44-92071 on 11 December 1953. Other crew were William Minelli and Bill Plumb.

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