

## 561<sup>st</sup> AIR FORCE BAND



### **MISSION**

The primary mission of the 561<sup>st</sup> is to provide support for recruiting, military parades, ceremonies, entertainment and official functions. The band also performs extensively to support Air Force and Department of Defense community relations programs.

The unit consists of 35 members and is capable of performing as a concert band, marching band, stage/dance band, protocol combo, dixieland band and small brass or woodwind ensembles.

Members of the 561<sup>st</sup> come from all walks of civilian life and include professional musicians, school instructors, engineers, accountants, business personnel, government employees, law enforcement personnel and college students. All members of the unit are highly skilled and must maintain the same standards expected of active duty band members.

### **LINEAGE**

561<sup>st</sup> received federal recognition, 14 Oct 1948

### **STATIONS**

Hayward Air National Guard Station, CA

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **COMMANDERS**

WO Don Schary, 1948

Lt Michael J. Garcia, 1976

Maj Gary L. Wulbern, Feb 1978

### **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

## Campaign Streamers

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

### Decorations

#### EMBLEM

Or, on a disc per bend sinister of the first and Azure entwined by an annulet Argent the bell end of a trombone in sinister base coupé and cojoined with the contrails of three flight symbols, the middle one enhanced bendwise counterchanged of the field, all within a diminished border Blue. Attached above the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "561ST AIR FORCE BAND" in Blue letters. Attached below the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "KEEPING THE SPIRIT ALIVE" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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 flight symbols rising and cojoined with a musical instrument symbolize the purpose of the unit. The slide and bell of a trombone, the instrument at the forefront of a military marching band, embodies the pride the squadron personnel have in their mission to sound the military call as an incentive to the courage of the troops.

#### MOTTO

#### NICKNAME

#### OPERATIONS

The 561<sup>st</sup> Air Force is a numbered Air Force Band assigned to the Air National Guard of the United States. The 561<sup>st</sup> received federal recognition on 14 Oct 1948 and was attached to the 61<sup>st</sup> Fighter Wing at the National Guard Center, Alameda, CA. In 1951 the 561<sup>st</sup> was attached to the 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and moved to Hayward Air National Guard Base with the wing. When the 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing transferred to Fresno, CA, in 1955, the 561<sup>st</sup> was attached to the newly organized 129<sup>th</sup> Air Resupply Squadron. Although now attached to the 129<sup>th</sup> Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group for administrative and support services, the 561<sup>st</sup> is stationed at Hayward ANG, CA.

Since its inception, the 561<sup>st</sup> has entertained extensively throughout California. One of the unit's first public appearances was at the 1949 California State Fair, where former Governor Earl Warren acted as host and introduced the unit. The 561<sup>st</sup> has been appearing at the State Fair on an annual basis since that time and has received several awards for its contribution to this annual event.

A highlight of the 561<sup>st</sup> AF Band's "early Years" was participating in the inauguration parade for President Dwight D. Eisenhower in Washington, D.C. on 21 Jan 1957. The unit has also

performed in the inaugurals of former California Governors Edmund Brown and Ronald Reagan.

Annual Field Training for the 561<sup>st</sup> is devoted to performing its primary mission. In this capacity, the unit appears extensively throughout California and the United States. In 1967 the unit performed a goodwill tour of Denmark as part of the "People to People Program" instituted by former President Eisenhower.

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Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 12 Oct 2010

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#### Sources

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

Unit yearbook. *129<sup>th</sup> Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group. NAS Moffett Field, CA. 1956-1986.*