

602nd SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

2nd Fighter Reconnaissance Squadron constituted, 11 Apr 1944
Activated, 20 Apr 1944
Redesignated 2nd Fighter Squadron (Commando), 2 Jun 1944
Inactivated, 12 Nov 1945
Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948
Reconstituted, 1963
Activated and organized, 15 Apr 1963
Redesignated 602nd Special Operations Squadron, 1 Aug 1968
Inactivated, 1 Dec 1970

STATIONS

Lakeland AAFld, Fla, 20 Apr 1944
Cross City AAFld, Fla, 9 Jun 1944
Alachua AAFld, Fla, 21 Jun 1944
Drew Field, Fla, 17 Aug 1944
Lakeland AAFld, Fla, 22 Aug - 23 Oct 1944
Kalaikunda, India, 15 Dec 1944
Cox's Bazaar, India, 13 Feb 1945

Kalaikunda, India, 14 May - 22 Oct 1945
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 11-12 Nov 1945
Hurlburt Fld, FL 1963-1 Oct 64
Bien Hoa AB, (South) Viet Nam -8 Feb 66
Nha Trang AB, (South) VietNam
Nakhon Phanom RTAB, Thailand

ASSIGNMENTS

Third Air Force, 20 Apr 1944
2nd Air Commando Group, 22 Apr 1944 - 12 Nov 1945
1st Air Commando Group 1963-1 Oct 1964
34th Tactical Group
6251st Tactical Fighter Wing
2nd Air Division
14 Air Commando Wing
56th Air Commando Wing/Special Operations Wing

ATTACHMENTS

3rd Tactical Fighter Wing Nov 65-Mar 66

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-51, 1944-1945
F-6, 1945
A-1E
A-1G
A-1H
A-1J

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Central Burma

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Bangkok, Thailand, 15 Mar 1945

EMBLEM



602nd Special Operations Squadron emblems: Over and through a light turquoise blue disc, a caricatured, brown eagle with yellow beak and feet, diving through space toward dexter base, wearing a GI helmet with orange straps, holding a commando knife, proper, in the beak, and grasping and firing a black "tommy" gun held in the talons, all emitting speed lines to rear. (Approved 3 Aug 1945)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

602nd Special Operations Squadron (Fire Fly)- This unit flew the same types of missions as did the 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron and the 22nd. Special Operations Squadron. The three units rotated between U.S. Elements operating in Laos. Missions consisted of close air support, direct air strikes and search and rescue. The A1 Douglas Skyraider was used for these missions.

In August 1965, to meet the needs of rescue escort over northern Laos and North Vietnam, the 602d Fighter Squadron (Commando) rotated its A-IEs from Bien Hoa to Udorn. Two TAC CH-3Es had, meanwhile, arrived at Nakhon Phanom on July 5, and two HH-43Bs moved up from the Mekong River town to Udorn where they were joined by two factory-fresh HH-43Fs. The addition of the A-IEs meant that with the HC-54s in place, and the HU-16s operating out of Da Nang to cover the water rescue mission, a full search and rescue task force was in Southeast Asia. Over the years equipment improved and aircraft changed but the search and rescue task force of 1965 closely resembled that of 1973 in doctrine, tactics, and procedures.

December 1970, the 602 SOS with 33 A-1H/J aircraft inactivated and its assets transferred to the 1 SOS at Nakhon Phanom.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 8 Apr 2011

Updated:

Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.