

17 BOMBARDMENT GROUP, TACTICAL



MISSION

LINEAGE

17 Observation Group authorized, 18 Oct 1927

Redesignated 17 Pursuit Group, 1929

Activated, 15 Jul 1931

Redesignated 17 Attack Group, 1935

Redesignated 17 Bombardment Group (Medium), 1939

Inactivated, 26 Nov 1945

Redesignated 17 Bombardment Group (Light) and activated, 19 May 1947

Inactivated, 10 Sep 1948

Activated, 10 May 1952

Redesignated 17 Bombardment Group, Tactical, Oct 1955

Inactivated, 25 Jun 1958

STATIONS

March Field, CA, 15 Jul 1931

McChord Field, WA, 24 Jun 1940

Pendleton, OR, 29 Jun 1941

Lexington County Aprt, SC, 9 Feb 1942

Barksdale Field, LA, 23 Jun-Nov 1942

Telergma, Algeria, Dec 1942

Sedrata, Algeria, 10 May 1943
Djedeida, Tunisia, 23 Jun 1943
Sardinia, Nov 1943
Corsica, 14 Sep 1944
Dijon, France, 20 Nov 1944
Horsching, Austria, Jun 1945
Clastres, France, 3 Oct-Nov 1945
Camp Myles Standish, Mass, Nov-26 Nov 1945
Langley Field, VA, 19 May 1947-10 Sep 1948
Pusan, Korea, 10 May 1952
Pusan East, South Korea, May 10, 1952
Pusan West, South Korea, 1 Oct 1952
Pusan East, South Korea, 20 Dec 1952
Miho, Japan, 10 Oct 1954-16 Mar 1955
Eglin AF Aux Field No 9, Apr 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

Twelfth Air Force
Fifteenth Air Force, Nov 1943
Twelfth Air Force, Jan 1944
Far East Air Forces
Tactical Air Command

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-12
P-26, 1931-1932
A-17, 1933-1939
B-18, 1940-1941
B-25
B-26
B-57

COMMANDERS

Maj Malcolm J. Buchanan, Jan 1928
Inactive, 1 Oct 1929-29 Oct 1931
Capt Frank O. Hunter, 29 Oct 1931
Capt Charles Douglas, 26 Jan 1933
Maj Clarence L. Tinker, 14 Jun 1933
Capt Ira C. Eaker, 1 Nov 1934
Lt Col John H. Pirie, 10 Apr 1935
Lt Col Carlyle H. Wash, 19 Jul 1936
Lt Col William H. Crom, 17 Mar 1940
Lt Col Walter R. Peck, 12 Feb 1941
Lt Col William C Mills, Feb 1942

Lt Col Flint Garrison, 16 Jun 1942
Lt Col Curtis D Sluman, 26 Jun 1942
Lt Col Karl E Baumeister, Mar 1943
Lt Col Charles R Greening, 25 May 1943
Lt Col Robert A Zaiser, 18 Jul 1943
Col Donald L Gilbert, 14 Oct 1943
Col R O Harrell, 21 Jul 1944
Col Wallace C Barrett, 20 Mar 1945
Lt Col Stanford W Gregory, 1 Jun 1945
Unkn, 1947-1948
Col James D Kemp, 10 May 1952
Col William C Lindley, Jr., 11 Jul 1952
Col Robert E Keating, 14 Feb 1953
Col Gordon D Timmons, 8 Apr 1953
Col George D Hughes, 1954
Col Norton W Sanders, 1954

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Antisubmarine, American Theater
Air Combat, EAME Theater
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe

Korean War
Korea Summer-Fall, 1952
Third Korean Winter
Korea Summer-Fall, 1953

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Italy, 13 Jan 1944

Schweinfurt, Germany, 10 Apr 1945
Korea, 1 Dec 1952-30 Apr 1953

French Croix de Guerre with Palm
Apr, May, and Jun 1944

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation
24 May 1952-31 Mar 1953

EMBLEM



Or, seven crosses pat-tee in pale sable. Crest: On a wreath of the colors (or and sable) a griffin rampant of the first, beaked, fore-legged and winged of the second, and langued gules. (Approved, 19 Jan 1934)

MOTTO

TOUJOURS AU DANGER—Ever Into Danger

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Used B-25's for patrol duty on the west coast after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and later patrolled the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast. Converted to B-26's in the summer of 1942. Moved to North Africa late in 1942 and began operations on 30 Dec. Served in combat in the Mediterranean theater until the end of the war, being assigned first to Twelfth AF, then to Fifteenth (Nov 1943), and again to Twelfth (Jan 1944). Flew interdiction and close-support missions, bombing bridges, rail lines, marshalling yards, harbors, shipping, gun emplacements, troop concentrations, and other targets. Helped to bring about the defeat of Axis forces in North Africa in May 1943; assisted in the reduction of Pantelleria and Lampedusa in Jun 1943; participated in the invasions of Sicily in Jul and of Italy in Sep 1943; and took part in the drive toward Rome, receiving

a DUG for a bombing attack on airdromes at Rome on 13 Jan 1944. Also received the French Croix de Guerre with Palm for operations in Italy, Apr-Jun 1944. Took part in the invasion of Southern France in Aug 1944, and continued bombardment operations in northern Italy, France, and later in Germany. Received second DUG for bombing attacks on enemy defenses near Schweinfurt on 10 Apr 1945. Assisted in the disarmament of Germany after V-E Day. Returned to the US in Nov. Inactivated on 26 Nov 1945. Redesignated 17th Bombardment Group (Light). Activated on 19 May 1947. Apparently did not become operative. Inactivated on 10 Sep 1948. Activated in Korea on 10 May 1952. Assigned to Far East Air Forces and equipped with B-26's for service in the Korean War. Engaged in interdiction and provided close support for UN ground forces until the armistice in Jul 1953.

The 17th BG's B-26 saw initial night action against enemy communication centers, railroads, vehicles, bridges, gun emplacements, and troop concentrations. In 1953, the group engaged in interdiction operations designed to achieve the greatest destruction of enemy rail rolling stock, facilities, and supplies. In early February, equipped with glass-nose B-26s, it adopted new tactics for armed reconnaissance missions against railroads, locomotives, and boxcars. The 17th BG participated in Operation Spring Thaw in March 1953 against roads, and in April it repeatedly attacked the southbound route originating at Yangdok along the eastern coast of North Korea. By then, it was flying about a third of its sorties in close air support of ground troops. The 17th BG claimed the last enemy vehicle destroyed in the war.



USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Unit yearbook. *17 Bombardment Wing, The Black Knights, Hurlburt Field, FL, 1956*. Army and Navy Publishing Co.
Baton Rouge, LA. 1956.