

20th FIGHTER WING



LINEAGE

20th Fighter Wing, established, 28 Jul 1947
Organized, 15 Aug 1947
Redesignated 20th Fighter Bomber Wing, 20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 20th Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Jul 1958
Redesignated 20th Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1991

STATIONS

Shaw Field (later, AFB), SC, 15 Aug 1947
Langley AFB, VA, 9 Nov 1951- 22 May 1952
Langley AFB, VA, 26 Nov 1951-22 May 1952
Wethersfield RAF Station (later, RAF Wethersfield), England, 31 May 1952
RAF Upper Heyford, England, 1 Apr 1970-1 Jan 1994
Shaw AFB, SC, 1 Jan 1994

ASSIGNMENTS

Ninth Air Force, 15 Aug 1947
Fourteenth Air Force, 1 Feb 1949
Tactical Air Command, 1 Aug 1950
Ninth Air Force, 22 Jan 1951
Tactical Air Command, 1 Dec 1951
United States Air Forces in Europe, 31 May 1952
Third Air Force, 5 Jun 1952
Seventeenth Air Force, 1 Jul 1961
Third Air Force, 1 Sep 1963
Ninth Air Force, 1 Jan 1994

ATTACHMENTS

Tactical Air Division, Provisional, 25 Apr-10 Oct 1951
Tactical Air Command, 6-30 Nov 1951
49th Air Division, Operational, 12 Feb 1952-1 Jul 1956

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P (later, F)-51, 1947-1948
P (later, F)-84, 1948-1950, 1950-1951, 1951- 1957
F-100, 1957-1971
F-111, 1970-1993
EF-111, 1984-1992
A/OA-10, 1994-1996
F-16, 1994

COMMANDERS

Col Phineas K. Morrill Jr., 15 Aug 1947
none (not manned), 25 Apr-10 Oct 1951
Col Reginald F. C. Vance, c. 11 Oct 1951
Col John A. Dunning, 22 Oct 1951
Col Arthur G. Salisbury, 6 Jun 1955
Col Raymond F. Toliver, 4 Apr 1957
Col Jay T. Robbins, 21 Jun 1959
Col Wendell J. Kelly, 26 Jun 1961
Col Royal N. Baker, 9 Jul 1961
BG John W. Baer, 10 Jun 1963
Col Ernest T. Cragg, 26 Jun 1965
Col Paul C. Watson, 10 Jul 1966
BG Edmund B. Edwards, 12 Aug 1966
Col Joseph A. Hagemann, 11 Jul 1968
Col Grant R. Smith, 1 Apr 1970
BG Richard M. Baughn, 15 Jun 1971
BG William C. Norris, 2 Feb 1973
Col James H. Ahmann, 12 Nov 1973
Col Kenneth D. Burns, 17 Aug 1974
Col Robert D. Anderson, 23 Jun 1975
Col Gerald D. Larson, 9 Jun 1977
Col Jerry W. Tietge, 30 Mar 1978
Col Merrill A. McPeak, 25 Feb 1980
Col Donald G. Waltman, 12 Apr 1981
BG Fred R. Nelson, 27 May 1981
BG Dale W. Thompson Jr., 17 Feb 1984
Col Graham E. Shirley, 7 Jul 1986
Col Lee A. Downer, 8 Jul 1988
Col Lawrence E. Stellmon, 9 Feb 1990
Col Terry J. Schwalier, 20 Jul 1992
Col Randall M. Schmidt, #1993? TEMPORARY BC OF INCIDENT?
BG John B. Hall Jr., 1 Jan 1994
BG James D. Latham, 5 Aug 1994
Col John W. Rosa Jr., 30 Aug 1995
Col Daniel P. Leaf, 28 Jul 1997
Col Daniel J. Darnell, 24 Nov 1998

Col Dana T. Atkins, 14 Jan 2000
Col William J. Rew, Jun 2001
Col Salvatore A. Angelella, Feb 2003
Col Philip M. Ruhlman, Jun 2004
Col James W. Hyatt, 26 Aug 2005
Col James N. Post III, Feb 2007

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1956-30 Sep 1957
1 May 1963- 31 Dec 1964
1 Jan 1965-31 Mar 1966
1 Jul 1968-31 Mar 1970
1 Sep 1970-30 Jun 1972
31 Mar 1973-30 Jun 1974
1 Jul 1977-30 Jun 1979
1 Jul 1981-30 Jun 1983
1 Jul 1987-30 Jun 1989
1 Jul 1990-30 Jun 1992
22 Jan-12 Mar 1991
1 Oct 1992-30 Sep 1994
1 Jan-31 Dec 1994
1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999
1 Jun 1999-31 May 2001

Bestowed Honors

Authorized to display honors earned by the 20th Operations Group prior to 28 Jul 1947

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Central Germany, 8 Apr 1944

EMBLEM

Shield: Per fess azure and gules, a fess nebule or.

Crest: On a wreath of the colors (or and azure) a sun in splendor proper, radiating from the center thereof thirteen darts gules.

Approved on 18 Dec 1934 for Group and 31 Oct 1951 for Wing

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

The wing emblem is a shield bearing the colors of the wing: blue, gold, and red. The partition line of the fess is nebula - the heraldic symbol for clouds. It is still in its original form, first seen in October of 1951.

The insignia represents the "Pursuit Attack"—any direction in three dimensions (13 darts) from out of the blinding sun (sun burst) or through the clouds (cloud roll)—superimposed on the Group Shield which unites the power of the four squadrons of the group, 55th (blue) 77th (red), 79th (gold) Pursuit Squadrons, and Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron (Blue and Gold).

MOTTO

VICTORY BY VALOR

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Trained to maintain proficiency as a tactical fighter unit, 1947-1950. Provided P-51 training for Turkish officers, Feb-Apr 1948. Wing headquarters not operational, 25 Apr-10 Oct 1951. Moved to England in May 1952 with a mission of maintaining proficiency for tactical operations with conventional and nuclear weapons in support of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) operations in the European area. Conducted tactical exercises and firepower demonstrations. Operated from RAF Greenham Common, England, 29 Apr-17 Aug 1976. Added electronic combat mission in 1983. Participated in numerous tactical and electronic countermeasure exercises at many operating locations with other USAF and Allied organizations. Deployed aircraft and personnel to Southwest Asia and Turkey providing tactical and electronic combat operations against Iraq, 17 Jan-28 Feb 1991. Won the 1991 Gunsmoke tactical gunnery competition in the F-111 category. Relieved of electronic combat mission on 1 Jul 1992. Moved

without personnel and equipment from England to South Carolina on 1 Jan 1994, inheriting the personnel and equipment of the 363 Fighter Wing. Took part in training exercises and deployed squadrons periodically to Southwest Asia on rotation to enforce no-fly zones over Iraq during the 1990s. In 1999, wing elements took part in the Air War Over Serbia (Yugoslavia).

The 20th Fighter Bomber Wing made its second move, this time overseas to RAF Wethersfield in Essex, England, on 31 May 1952. Its fighter bomber group set up headquarters, along with the 55th and 77th Squadrons, at Wethersfield a day later. Restricted space there compelled the 79th Squadron to move into RAF Bentwaters in Suffolk, England the squadron moved to RAF Woodbridge, three miles southeast of Bentwaters, on 1 October 1954.

On 15 November 1952, the wing and group merged unofficially placing the flying squadrons directly under the wing's operational and administrative control. The group remained on the Air Force's active list until 8 February 1955 when the three fighter-bomber squadrons were officially realigned under the wing.

The Department of the Air Force temporarily bestowed the lineage and honors of the 20th Group on the 20th Wing in November 1954. That action was accomplished to facilitate the Air Force's adoption of a wing-base plan, making the wing the primary combat element of operational organizations. Consequent to the action of temporary bestowal, the 20th Tactical Fighter Wing laid claim to the lineage, honors, and history of the 20th Fighter Group. That bestowal has remained in effect ever since.

In June 1955, the wing started flying F-84F in addition to its F-84Ds and F-84Gs. The F-84G was phased out by June 1955 and the F-84F remained in the inventory until December 1957. Prior to the departure of the F-84 fleet, the 20th began conversion to F-100D and F-100F on 16 June 1957.

The 20th Fighter Bomber Wing established an operational detachment at Wheelus AB, Libya in February 1958. The flying squadrons dispersed on a monthly rotational basis to RAF Alconbury, RAF Woodbridge, and Nouasseur AB, Morocco, due to a RAF Wethersfield runway closure from May to August, 1958.

The wing first established its Blast Off (later named Victor Alert) capability in July, 1958. The first mobility plan was initiated on 1 January 1959. A year-round weapons training detachment was established at Wheelus AB, Libya, for monthly squadron rotations. Pilot survival and ski training began in Norway in February, 1959.

A military coup in Libya forced the closure of Wheelus AB in September 1969 and initiation of 20th TFW weapons training detachment operations at Torrejon AB, Spain in November, 1969. Detachment 1, 20th Tactical Fighter Wing was established at RAF Upper Heyford on 10 December 1969. All three flying squadrons rotated to Zaragoza, Spain for weapons training from January to March 1970. Headquarters, 20th Tactical Fighter Wing relocated from RAF Wethersfield to RAF Upper Heyford on 1 June 1970. For the first time since it left Virginia in 1952, all three of its flying squadrons were united on one base. Less than three months later, the

wing began converting to a new aircraft the F-111E. On 12 September 1970, the first two F-111Es arrived at RAF Upper Heyford. The last of the 20th's F-100s transferred to the Air National Guard on 12 February 1971 and in November of that year the wing's F-111s were declared operationally ready.

Operations shifted to RAF Greenham Common from May to August, 1976, due to runway repairs at Upper Heyford.

On 14 April 1986, 5 EF-111As and 20 F-111Es took off from RAF Upper Heyford as part of the attack force. They were used as an airborne reserve for the F-111Fs of the 48th TFW, RAF Lakenheath. Three EF-111s (two were spares and turned back) formed up with the 48th's F-111Fs and provided electronic defense during the attack on Tripoli. USAFE initiated the Project Power Hunter intelligence network in December 1987. The wing first tested the Durandal runway-buster bombs during Exercise Red Flag, in January and February 1988.

All three fighter squadrons deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey for Weapons Training Deployment (WTD) on Konya Range from March to May 1989. The first F-111E modified under the Aircraft Modernization Program (AMP) arrived at Upper Heyford in February 1990. On 15 April, 20th TFW air and ground crews undertook Weapons System Evaluation Program (WSEP) training during Combat Hammer 90-7 at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. The 870th Contingency Hospital, located at RAF Little Rissington, was assigned to the 20th TFW on 1 July 1990

The 20th TFW had aircraft deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey for a Weapons Training Deployment in August 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and Desert Shield started. As the start of the air campaign neared, the wing reinforced its presence as all US aircraft at Incirlik were incorporated into the 7440th Wing (Provisional), Operation Proven Force, for the duration of the war. The wing also deployed four 42nd ECS EF-111As and 80 personnel to Taif, Saudi Arabia, to support Operation Desert Storm. Desert Storm On 25 January 1991, the wing was once again up to four flying squadrons when the 42nd Electronic Combat Squadron was reassigned to the 20th from the 66th Electronic Combat Wing.

On 16 July, three units were attached to the 20th TFW-the 850th Munitions Maintenance Squadron at RAF Welford, the 7501st Air Base Squadron at RAF Greenham Common, and Detachment 1, 7501st Air Base Squadron at RAF Welford. Returning to normal operations, 20th TFW aircrews participated in the NATO Central Enterprise '91 exercise from 10 - 14 June 1991. Wing aircrews flew in support of Elder Joust from 10 - 12 September 1991.

On 15 December 1993, the flight line at RAF Upper Heyford was closed. On 1 January 1994, the 20th Fighter Wing inactivated at RAF Upper Heyford and reactivated without personnel or equipment at Shaw AFB, South Carolina





20 FBW



20 TFW

RAF Wethersfield, UK 1957-1970
RAF Upper Heyford, UK 1970-1971



20 TFW SC



1991 - Present



1951 - 1958



1958 - 1991

Sources

AFHRA

Unit history. 20th Fighter Bomber Wing. 1953.

Unit history. History of the 20th Tactical Fighter Wing. Sep 1989.