

9 ATTACK SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

9 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Twin-Engine, 25 Jan 1943
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 19 Feb 1944
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Two-Engine, 6 Nov 1944
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 8 Jan 1946
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Jet-Propelled, 1 May 1948
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, Jet, 10 Aug 1948
Redesignated 9 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Feb 1950
Redesignated 9 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 8 Jul 1958
Redesignated 9 Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Redesignated 9 Attack Squadron

STATIONS

Selfridge Field, MI, 15 Jan 1941
Morrison Field, FL, 22 May 1941–4 Jan 1942
Melbourne, Australia, 2 Feb 1942
Williamstown, Australia, 14 Feb 1942
Darwin, Australia, 17 Mar 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 10 Oct 1942
Dobodura, New Guinea, 6 Mar 1943
Gusap, New Guinea, 16 Dec 1943

Hollandia, New Guinea, 16 May 1944
Biak, 26 Jun 1944
Tacloban, Leyte, 24 Oct 1944
San Jose, Mindoro, 30 Dec 1944
Lingayen, Luzon, 26 Feb 1945
Okinawa, 16 Aug 1945
Atsugi, Japan, 15 Sep 1945
Chitose AB, Japan, 17 Feb 1946
Misawa AB, Japan, 26 Mar 1948
Itazuke AB, Japan, 27 Jun 1950
Misawa AB, Japan, 15 Aug 1950
Itazuke AB, Japan, 17 Sep 1950
Taegu AB, South Korea, 30 Sep 1950
Komaki AB, Japan, Dec 1952–10 Dec 1957
Etain/Rouvres AB, France, 10 Dec 1957
Spangdahlem AB, Germany, 25 Aug 1959–15 Jul 1968
Holloman AFB, NM, 15 Jul 1968

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Bitburg AB, Germany, 12 Sep–11 Oct 1970
Hahn AB, Germany, 9 Sep–7 Oct 1971
Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 13 May–5 Oct 1972
Bitburg AB, Germany, 4 Feb–15 Mar 1973 and 6 Sep–7 Oct 1975
Hahn AB, Germany, 22 Sep–21 Oct 1976
Ramstein AB, Germany, 10 Sep–10 Oct 1977

ASSIGNMENTS

49 Pursuit (later, 49 Fighter; 49 Fighter Bomber) Group, 15 Jan 1941
49 Fighter Bomber (later, 49 Tactical Fighter; 49 Fighter) Wing, 10 Dec 1957
49 Operations Group, 15 Nov 1991

ATTACHMENTS

Japan Air Defense Force, 17 Dec 1952–Nov 1953
49 Fighter-Bomber Wing, 17 Aug–6 Sep 1950 and 15 Apr–9 Dec 1957
36 Tactical Fighter Wing, 12 Sep–11 Oct 1970
50 Tactical Fighter Wing, 9 Sep–7 Oct 1971
36 Tactical Fighter Wing, 4 Feb–15 Mar 1973 and 6 Sep–7 Oct 1975
50 Tactical Fighter Wing, 22 Sep–21 Oct 1976
86 Tactical Fighter Wing, 10 Sep–10 Oct 1977

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-35, 1941
P-40, 1941–1943
P-47, 1943–1944

P-38, 1943, 1944-1946
P-51, 1946-1948, 1949-1950
F-80, 1948-1951
F-84, 1951-1957
F-100, 1957
F-105, 1962-1967
F-4, 1967-1978, 1992
F-15, 1978-1992

COMMANDERS

Capt Victor Pixey
Maj James C. Selman, 15 Jan 1941
Capt Ben S. Irvin, 19 Sep 1942
Maj Jesse C. Peaslee, 3 Nov 1942
Capt Sidney S. Woods, 22 May 1943
Capt Paul J. Slocum, 22 Aug 1943
Maj Wallace R. Jordan, 5 Sep 1943
Maj Gerald R. Johnson, 1 Oct 1943
Maj Wallace R. Jordan, Jan 1944
Maj Robert M. McComsey, Oct 1944
Maj Wallace R. Jordan, 1 Nov 1944
Capt William F. Williams (acting), 31 Dec 1944
Capt John R. Petrovich, 23 Jan 1945
Capt Herbert Blake, 17 Oct 1945
1LT John A. Willis, 31 Dec 1945
Capt Martin E. McCoy, Jan 1946
Maj Verne Bivin, 6 Oct 1947
Capt Bedford R. Underwood, 3 Feb 1948
Maj Daniel F. Sharp, 21 Dec 1948
Lt Col Charles H. Williams, Mar 1950
Maj Frank T. Ellis, 5 Sep 1950
Lt Col Charles H. Williams, 25 Nov 1950
Maj George G. Loving Jr., 7 Apr 1951
Lt Col James F. Sprinkle, 29 Jul 1951
Maj Eugene S. Williams, 14 Dec 1951
Maj Kenneth L. Skeen, 29 Jan 1952
Lt Col James R. Jarrell III, 28 Mar 1952
Lt Col William F. Georgi, Aug 1952
Unkn, Jan 1953-1954
Lt Col Deward E. Bower, Dec 1952-unkn
Lt Col Edmund G. Edwards, 1955-unkn
Lt Col Richard Cateledge, c. 1956
Lt Col Harford P. Jenks, c. Apr 1957
Maj Roy L. Garr, 10 Dec 1957

Maj Ray O. Roberts, 18 Dec 1957
Maj Wilson G. Hall, 15 Nov 1958
Maj Alvin R. Moorman, 1 Nov 1959
Maj James A. Eaglen, 20 Jul 1961
Maj Charles C. Botvidson, 12 Aug 1961
Lt Col Harry K. Evans, 16 Feb 1962
Lt Col James A. Eaglen, 20 Apr 1962
Lt Col Louis R. Vogt, 30 Jul 1964
Lt Col Richard H. Schoeneman, 15 May 1965
Lt Col Felix C. Fowler, Apr 1967
Lt Col Robert L. Larsh, by 30 Jun 1969
Lt Col Richard A. Housum, 19 Jan 1970
Lt Col Joseph L. Hutto, 1 Oct 1970
Lt Col James E. Tuck, 10 Dec 1971
Lt Col Richard P. Pearson, 11 Dec 1972
Lt Col Thomas L. Wallace, 25 Mar 1974
Lt Col Terry J. Guess, 27 Oct 1975
Lt Col Anthony S. Cushenberry, 24 Jun 1976
Lt Col Ross L. Meyer, 2 Jun 1977
Lt Col Richard K. Koehnke, 1 Dec 1977
Lt Col John M. Stover, 2 Jul 1979
Lt Col Thomas D. Allbee, 30 Dec 1980
Lt Col Jeffrey G. Cliver, 18 Jun 1982
Lt Col Jerry D. Hokkanen, 9 Dec 1983
Lt Col James E. Tims, 18 Dec 1985
Lt Col Richard B. Barnett, 22 May 1987
Lt Col Michael L. Gentrup, 17 Mar 1989
Lt Col Neil G. Kacena, 1 Mar 1991
Lt Col William Aten III, 25 Feb 1993
Lt Col David DellaVolpe, 25 Jun 1993
Lt Col Eric J. Rosborg, 1 Jul 1993
Lt Col Donald L. Hargarten, 30 Jun 1994
Lt Col William Crabbe III, 8 Jul 1994
Lt Col Gregory A. Feest, 8 Jun 1995
Lt Col Joseph A. Salata Jr., 13 Jun 1997
Lt Col Paul M. Carpenter, May 1999
Lt Col Philip W. McDaniel, 28 Apr 2000
Lt Col George D. Kramlinger, 23 Feb 2001
Lt Col David E. Wooden, 8 Jul 2002
Lt Col Ward F. Juedeman, 18 Jun 2004
Lt Col Kenneth Tatum

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II

East Indies

Air Offensive, Japan

China Defensive

Papua

New Guinea

Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific

Leyte; Luzon

Southern Philippines

China Offensive

Korea

UN Defensive

UN Offensive

CCF Intervention

First UN Counteroffensive

CCF Spring Offensive

UN Summer-Fall Offensive

Second Korean Winter

Korea Summer-Fall, 1952

Third Korean Winter

Vietnam

Vietnam Ceasefire

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Australia, [18] Mar–25 Aug 1942

Papua, [c. 15 Oct] 1942–23 Jan 1943

New Britain, 23 Oct–7 Nov 1943

Philippine Islands, 27 Oct–7 Dec 1944

Korea, 27 Jun–25 Nov 1950

Korea, 9 Jul–27 Nov 1951

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device

5 May 1972–6 Oct 1972

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Mar 1964–28 Feb 1966
1 Mar 1966–30 Jun 1967
1 Jan 1971–15 Apr 1972
1 Jun 1995–31 May 1997
1 Jun 1998–31 May 1999
2 May 2004–31 May 2005

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations

27 Jun 1950–7 Feb 1951

8 Feb 1951–31 Mar 1953

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

10 May–5 Oct 1972

EMBLEM



9 Fighter Squadron



9 Fighter-Bomber Squadron patches



9 Attack Squadron emblem: On a disc Ultramarine Blue, border Black, a Red bend surmounted

by a White, winged, knight's helmet, facing to dexter. (Approved, 24 Jan 1946)

Ralph Wandrey describes the old 9FS insignia as follows: "The knights' helmet with the closed visor represented readiness for battle. The red stripe was positioned for bar sinister which was for the blood we drew, and in heraldry represented a bastard - which we considered ourselves to be in the Army Air Force!"

The history of the 9FS insignia began at Darwin. Since the 49 had been under the command of the RAAF, it was thought the units should adopt a coat of arms insignia similar to the Australians' royal insignias of heraldry. South of Darwin at the Humpty Doo area cattle station, the 9 was nicknamed the "Fighters of Humpty Doo." Some said C. Selman may have been the first to draw a 9FS insignia. It's also been said that "The Flying Knights" design was drawn up by S. Woods and R. Blachly while the 9 was at Dobodura, and there it was refined to the patch form.

MOTTO

Fighters of Humpty Doo

The Iron Knights

The Tin Heads

OPERATIONS

The 9 Fighter Squadron was activated as the 9 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) on 15 January 1941 at Selfridge Field, Michigan.

Squadron received one PT-17 Stearman, one PT-13 Ryan Basic Trainer, three P-35 Seversky Advanced Trainer fighter aircraft and one P-40C Curtiss Warhawk for training purposes.

On 14 February 1942, the 9 Pursuit Squadron, under the command of Captain Selman, moved by train from Camp Darley, via Canberra to Williamtown airfield near Newcastle in New South Wales. Some of the men were billeted in Newcastle and the rest lived in the barracks at Williamtown.

After the large Japanese bombing raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942, General Brett ordered an advance team of the 49 Pursuit Group to Darwin. Sergeant Fred Quick and 16 men from the 9 Pursuit Squadron moved from Williamtown to Sydney and then were flown in a RAAF Empire Flying boat to Darwin via a one-night stopover on 21 February 1942 at Townshend Island? just off Townsville.

An 80-man team from the 49 Pursuit Group moved by rail to Amberley airfield west of Brisbane. This team was led by Lieutenant George Hermanson of the 7th Pursuit Squadron, Dick Illing of the 8th Pursuit Squadron, Lieutenant Fred Hollier of the 9 Pursuit Squadron and Lieutenant Paul Werner from the HQ Squadron. The P-40 Kittyhawks (Warhawks) were fitted out at Amberley.

Captains Nate Blanton and Bill Hennon, along with Lieutenant Lester Johnsen became new

flight leaders in the 7th Pursuit Squadron under Commanding Officer Morrissey. The 8th Pursuit Squadron welcomed new Flight Leaders Captain Allison W. Strauss and George Kiser. Lieutenants R.C. Dockstader and Jim Morehead joined the Squadron as new Element leaders.

Engineering Officer, Lieutenant Hollier, of the 9 Pursuit Squadron was recalled from aircraft assembly duties at Amberley, to organize the relocation of the 9 Pursuit Squadron to Darwin and on 6 March 1942, he and a ground crew contingent took off from Sydney in a RAAF transport aircraft headed for Darwin.

On 8 March 1942, Captain James Selman took off from Williamtown airfield with 25 Kittyhawks of the 9 Pursuit Squadron to traverse the "Brereton Route" headed for Darwin. They travelled via Brisbane, where Lieutenants Bud Howk and John Sauber were left behind with engine trouble. They arrived in Darwin several days later. The 23 remaining Kittyhawks staged through Charleville, where another two aircraft had mechanical problems. 21 Kittyhawks then pressed on for Cloncurry, being led by a B-17 Flying Fortress. There were two heavy landings at Cloncurry. Lieutenant Ed Smith's aircraft was written off. He was not injured and he then became a passenger on the B-17 for the rest of the journey.

Now there were only 19 of the 25 Kittyhawks left to continue the next hop to Daly Waters on 14 March 1942. During scattered thunderstorms, four Kittyhawks became separated and when low on fuel, they eventually landed on an isolated sheep station way off the "Brereton Route". These four aircraft were recovered later. The other 15 Kittyhawks managed to land at Daly Waters in between passing rain storms. They radioed Melbourne again and were reminded that they must reach Darwin as soon as possible. A three-day stopover at Daly Waters allowed much needed repairs to their weary aircraft.

On the 14 March 1942, the 7th Pursuit Squadron were involved in aerial combat following a Japanese bombing raid on Horn Island. They claimed 4 Zeros and 1 Japanese bomber. One P-40 Kittyhawk rammed one of the Zeros that crashed. This Kittyhawk subsequently made a forced landing at Horn Island with 3 feet of its wingtip missing. Another Kittyhawk got hopelessly lost and headed west for about 400 miles where it ran out of fuel off Cape Arnhem in the Northern Territory. The pilot, 2nd Lt. Sanford, bailed out. For more details on this raid and ensuing dog fight click on this link.

On 17 March 1942, Lieutenant Spehr was on a test flight. He attempted an aerobatic barrel roll at low altitude. Unfortunately his engine stalled and his Kittyhawk crashed to the ground and burst into flames not far from the airfield. Spehr was killed immediately and was buried in the small local cemetery that evening.

On 18 March 1942, the remaining 14 aircraft headed off for the final leg to Darwin. Yet another aircraft had mechanical problems and failed to take off. Hence 13 of the original 25 Kittyhawks finally arrived in Darwin at midday on 18 March 1942. They received orders to start operational patrols immediately.

On 19 March 1942, the four lost Kittyhawks who had landed at the sheep station, arrived in Darwin after a transport aircraft had brought them some fuel. After an assessment of the damage at Darwin airfield caused by the many Japanese bombing raids, it was decided to move the 9 Pursuit Squadron to Batchelor airfield, 50 miles south of Darwin.

After 22nd March 1942 more pilots and crews started to arrive directly from Amberley airfield in southern Queensland or from the training reserve team in Williamtown. The 9 Pursuit Squadron endeavored to have two teams of four aircraft in the air at all times with four on the ground in reserve.

The numbers in the 9 Pursuit Squadron by the end of March 1942 to 21 Kittyhawks and 25 pilots.

In the first week in April 1942, even more Java veterans and replacement pilots from the training reserve at Williamtown continued to arrive at Batchelor to join the 9 Pursuit Squadron.

By April the 9 Squadron was seeing plenty of action in the skies over Darwin. On 4 Apr, for example, fourteen P-40s of that unit shot down nine of 13 attacking enemy planes.

A new airfield at "34 mile" (later known as Livingstone Field), north of Batchelor, was almost complete and General Herring ordered the 9 Pursuit Squadron to move their Kittyhawks to the new airfield. They bivouaced in the bush surrounding the airfield and the first operational flight was eventually flown on 30 April 1942.

Captain "Bitchin" Ben Irvin joined the 9 Pursuit Squadron as senior flight leader and Lieutenants Joe Kruzal and Andy Reynolds became Element leaders. Reynolds went on to become a high scoring "Ace" during the Darwin campaign.

The 8th Squadron, having completed its conversion to P-38s, flew its first mission in those planes on 9 October, when it bombed the Kairotie airstrip on Ceram Island. The following day, 10 October, the 9 Squadron, staging through Morotai, flew fighter cover for bombers striking Balikpapan, Borneo, the important enemy oil center. The roundtrip flight of 1,600 miles was the longest escort mission flown in the Southwest Pacific up until that time. On 27 October the air echelons of the 7th and 9 Squadrons flew from Biak to Tacloban, Leyte. Their aircraft were the first American land-based fighter planes in the Philippines since early in 1942. After refueling, the 9 Fighter Squadron went up on patrol, and, to celebrate their arrival, the pilots shot down six enemy aircraft that afternoon.

Group Headquarters and the 8th Fighter Bomber Squadron were transported to New Guinea aboard the US Army Transport Seawitch, the 9 Squadron followed on 31 October.

3 November, the 9 Squadron spotted a long enemy truck convey on the road between Ormoc and Valencia. The convoy unable to leave the road because of the swamps on either side, was a perfect target for the

diving P-38's. In that mission it was estimated that 25-30 trucks were destroyed and 30-40 horses were killed, and tremendous casualties were inflicted on enemy personnel; according to Philippine guerilla forces, the number of Japanese killed or wounded in that attack amounted to 2,400

2 Sep 1944 The 9 Fighter Squadron completed a 690-mile flight to Davao, Mindanao, the longest mission attempted by the Group's P-38s.

10 Oct 1944 The 9 Fighter Squadron flew cover for bombers that struck Balkiapapan, Borneo, an important enemy oil center. The trip was 1600 miles round trip and was the longest escort mission flown in the southwest Pacific.

Fourteen aces served with the 9 during WWII, including Major Richard Bong, the top American ace of the war.

The 9 Fighter Squadron continued to operate from bases in Japan and Korea through the Korean War, flying the P-51 Mustang, F-80 Shooting Star, and F-84 Thunderjet. The unit moved to the European theater in 1957, first at Etain/Rouvres, France, and then at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, where the squadron participated in exercises and competitions in both Europe and the United States. Following conversion to the F-4, the 9 Tactical Fighter Squadron was reassigned to Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, in July 1968.

The squadron was part of the 49 Tactical Fighter Wing deployment to Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, from May through September 1972 to support combat operations over Vietnam. The unit earned the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor device and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross during this period. The squadron returned to its WWII mission of air superiority in 1978 with the conversion to the F-15 Eagle.

Portions of squadron deployed to Southwest Asia to fly combat air patrol for Coalition operations, 20 Jun–5 Dec 1991

F-4 training for German Air Force pilots, Jul 1992

The unit became operational in the F-117A Stealth Fighter in 1993. As one of only two operational Stealth Fighter squadrons, the 9 Fighter Squadron continues to support exercises around the world, as well as providing air show and public display support world-wide. The unit most recently deployed to Italy in support of Operation DELIBERATE FORCE over the former Yugoslavia, and to Germany during Operation ALLIED FORCE to conduct air operations over Serbia. For its continued excellence, the 9 Fighter Squadron earned its fourth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, awarded Aug. 31, 1999

The 8th and 9 Fighter Squadrons are the only two combat-ready F-117 squadrons in the world. They deploy worldwide as tasked by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, using special low observable

technologies to deliver precision-guided weapons against high-value, heavily defended targets. The 8th and 9 Fighter Squadrons provide the National Command Authority with a fully autonomous special combat capability for low-profile military operations.

10 May 1995 An F-117A , 85-0822, crashes 7 miles S of Zuni, New Mexico, while on a training mission. The pilot, Capt. Kenneth W. Levens, 35, of the 9 Fighter Squadron, was killed in the crash. The autopilot apparently disengaged, aircraft enters inverted near-vertical dive, impacts on the Zuni Indian Pueblo in a 70 degree dive with 120 degrees starboard bank at more than 600 mph at 2225 hrs, creating a 30 foot crater. A Kirtland AFB H-60 Blackhawk finds the impact site shortly after 0000 hrs.

Officials at Holloman AFB, N.M., activated the 9 Attack Squadron as the base's second MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft training unit. "MQ-9 training requirements have doubled," said SMSgt. James Howard, 9 AS superintendent. "By having two training squadrons, it enables us to train more students to meet that requirement," he added. The 9 AS stood up during a Sept. 28 ceremony. The unit will train half of the Reaper operators who receive their instruction at Holloman. The base's 29 AS will train the others. Both units will share the base's complement of MQ-9s, which currently stands at 11 aircraft. "Last year, the US Air Force trained more RPA aircrew than traditional pilots, and that is a trend that is likely to continue," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Patton, 9 AS commander.

The 49 Wing's remotely piloted aircraft squadrons at Holloman Air Force Base completed a five-day surge May 5, 2017, to measure the full capabilities of the Airmen and civilians involved in the RPA mission. The 6th, 9 and 29 Attack Squadrons completed 45 MQ-9 Reaper sorties and totaled more than 465 flight hours during the week, allowing RPA student pilots, sensor operators, and maintainers to discover and record limitations.

"While we are conducting surge operations you can see a flurry of activity that is happening across the base, and that is when we realize how integral of a team we are," said Lt. Col. Timothy Monroe, the 9 Attack Squadron commander. "There are a number of things happening on the flight line and in the flying squadrons; you can even see the broader impact around Holloman with our various mission support elements who are enabling pilots, sensor operators and maintainers to launch all of these aircraft." Surge week also provides commanders with the opportunity to exercise the system to accurately measure the proficiency, accuracy and competency of the squadrons. "We continue to see that what we do here is not simple," Monroe said. "It is not something you can do by yourself; it takes a very well built and well trained team to accomplish the mission."

Personnel supporting surge operations included air traffic controllers, aircraft maintainers, schedulers, flight safety, fuels and munitions specialists, and range control operators who worked long hours to keep pace with the RPA mission. Sometimes shifts are utilized to keep the aircraft in working order. "A typical duty day on swing shift is waiting for the MQ-9 to land so that we can get control of the Ground Control System and aircraft, that's when the real hard work starts, getting your fingers dirty, that kind of stuff goes on," said Airman 1st Class Bryton

Pollock, a 49 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron communications systems technician. "Any kind of problems the plane has, we get told about it. We go out and figure out how to fix it. We get the parts and the tools we need and we put in the man hours to fix whatever problem it has."

Aircraft maintenance was critical during the surge in operations, when both aircraft and simulators were utilized to the maximum extent possible for student training. "Our simulators are operating on the order of 18 hours a day or more," Monroe said. "Right now we are launching aircraft that will stay airborne for 10, 11 or 12 hours, and it takes a very fine-tuned sequence and schedule in order to execute launching those operations."

A key component to the Holloman team are instructor pilots who help students to develop skills that will prepare them for future roles of providing combatant commanders with crucial situational awareness and strike capabilities. "You develop a much deeper appreciation for how hard everyone is working on the flight line every single day," Monroe said. "From maintenance personnel, the aviators that are operating the aircraft and all of our various mission support partners that help us to accomplish our mission. You develop an appreciation for just how great of a team we are for producing students and airpower capabilities here."2017

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 16 Jun 2020

Updated: 26 Apr 2024

Sources

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Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit history. *49 Tactical Fighter Wing, History in Review. 1940-1972.*