

## 119 FIGHTER SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

5 Aviation School Squadron, organized, 5 Jun 1917

Redesignated 119 Aero Squadron, 2 Sep 1917

Detachment No, 11, Air Service, Aircraft Production, 31 Jul 1918

Demobilized, 29 May 1919

119 Observation Squadron activated, 30 Jan 1930

Detachment No. 11, Air Service, Aircraft Production reconstituted and consolidated with 119 Observation Squadron, 1936

Ordered to active service, 16 Sep 1940

Redesignated 119 Observation Squadron (Medium), 13 Jan 1942

Redesignated 119 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942

Inactivated, 18 Oct 1942

Activated, 1 Mar 1943

Redesignated 119 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter), 2 Apr 1943

Redesignated 490 Fighter Squadron, 11 Aug 1943

Disbanded, 1 May 1944

Reconstituted, 21 Jun 1945

Redesignated 119 Fighter Squadron (SE), and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946

119 FS (SE) extended federal recognition, 29 Jan 1947

Redesignated 119 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Sep 1952

Redesignated 119 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955

Redesignated 119 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Nov 1958  
Redesignated 119 Fighter Interceptor Squadron 27 Jan 1973  
Redesignated 119 Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

## **STATIONS**

Hampton, VA, 5 Jun 1917-29 May 1919  
Newark Aprt, NJ, 30 Jun 1930  
Ft Dix, NJ, 27 Mar 1942  
Hyannis Mun Aprt, MA, 26 Aug 1942  
Grenier Field, NH, 10 Oct 1942  
Birmingham Mun Aprt, AL, 18 Oct 1942  
Ft Myers, FL, 1 Mar 1943  
Thomasville AAFld, GA, 12Apr 1943-1 May 1944  
Newark Airport, NJ  
McGuire AFB, Feb 1956  
NAFEC Atlantic City, Aug 1958  
Egg Harbor Township, NJ

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Unkn, 1917-1919  
New Jersey NG (divisional aviation, 44<sup>th</sup> Division), 30 Jan 1930  
Second Corps Area, 16 Sep 1940  
First Army, 3 Oct 1940  
II Army Corps, Mar 1941  
First Army, Jun 1941  
I Air Support Command (attached to 59th Observation Group), 1 Sep 1941  
59 Observation Group, 29 Mar-18 Oct 1942  
59 Observation (later Reconnaissance; Fighter) Group, 1 Mar 1943-1 May 1944

## **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

### **Mission Aircraft**

Unkn, if any, 1917-1919  
PT-1  
BT-1  
O-2  
O-17  
O-38  
O-46  
O-49, 1941  
O-9, 1941  
O-58, 1942  
P-39, 1943  
P-47, 1947  
F-51, 1952

F-51D, 1954  
F-86, 1955  
F-84, 1958  
F-86, 1962  
F-100, 1965  
F-105, 1970  
F-106, 1972  
F-16, 1988

### **Support Aircraft**

### **COMMANDERS**

Maj Kellogg Sloan, 30 Jan 1930  
Maj Robert L. Copsey, 27 Jan 1931  
Maj Chester A. Charles, 31 Jul 1939  
Lt Col Kerry M. Gentry May 2003-Sep 2006

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

Antisubmarine, American Theater

#### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

#### **EMBLEM**





On a blue disc a rising sun with ten rays within a diminished border all orange, two white wings displayed overall the crest of the New Jersey National Guard proper. (Approved, 7 Nov 1941)

#### **MOTTO**

Jersey Devils

#### **OPERATIONS**

Experimental work for Airplane Engineering Division, Bureau of Aircraft Production, 1917-1919.

The 119 Observation Squadron, Air Corps, New Jersey National Guard, had its beginning in September, 1928, when the War Department assigned First Lieutenant Kellogg Sloan and Sergeant Robert E. Malony to organize a National Guard Aviation unit for the State of New Jersey.

Prior to 1930, these men, with the assistance of many of the Squadron's original officer personnel, completely formed the unit; and the close of the year found the 119 Observation Squadron ready for Federal recognition. This was extended on January 30, 1930.

The designation of the squadron as the 119 Observation Squadron perpetuated the history of the 119 Aero Squadron of World War days, the present unit being its reconstitution and consolidation by order of the Adjutant General of the Army. Headquarters was established at Newark Airport, and an administration building and hangar were constructed to house the unit's airplanes and equipment.

During the ensuing years, O-2H, O-17, O-38E, O-38B, O-46A, O-47A, O-47B and BC-1A airplanes successively formed the squadron's equipment. An additional hangar was constructed in 1932. In those same years, the 119 Observation Squadron was rapidly earning its laurels as an important part of the New Jersey National Guard. Early in 1931, Major Kellogg Sloan relinquished command to Major Robert L. Copsy, who was succeeded by Major Chester A. Charles, the present Commander, in July, 1939.

Cooperative missions were flown with practically all branches of the 44th Division, and active participation was taken, in the 1931 Mass Air Corps Maneuvers, the 1935 First Army Maneuver, the 1939 First Army Maneuvers, and the 1940 First Army Maneuvers.

Since its inception, the 119 Observation Squadron has participated in many humanitarian services beyond the call of military duty most notably during the Morro Castle disaster of 1934. Immediately after the first "flash" that a vessel was burning at sea off the New Jersey coast, and despite a low ceiling and rough seas, airplanes of the squadron flew to the scene and spent many hours directing rescue ships to groups of survivors struggling in the water. For this work many of the officers and men received high commendation. The winter of that year saw an airliner lost in the Adirondacks, and again the squadron gave signal service in locating and bringing aid to its passengers.

During the First Army Maneuvers of 1939, the squadron reached a high standard of efficiency and received many commendations for its work. Acting as Brigade, Division, Corps, and Army Aviation, successively, all missions were successfully carried out with complete liaison and coordination between the other arms and services.

Immediately after the beginning of World War II in September, 1939, the War Department ordered the unit into the field for a week of intensive training at Camp May, New Jersey. Despite great personal inconvenience and freezing weather, more than 90 per cent of the squadron reported for duty. During that week, every day was utilized for flying, and every type of military mission was flown by all personnel on flying status.

The Squadron was activated in 1940 for World War II and upon cessation of hostilities, reorganized in October 1946 as the 108th Fighter Group and 119 Squadron, at the same location. The unit was now equipped with P-47D. The Group now designated a Wing, was called into active duty for the Korean Conflict in March of 1951 less the 119 Squadron, but joined by the 141st Squadron, NJANG, from McGuire AFB. They relocated to Turner AFB, GA and joined the Strategic Air Command to augment the fighter requirements. Returned to the state in November of 1952, both New Jersey fighter squadrons were then equipped with the P-51.

On 31 August 2000, at 1537 Local, an F-16C aircraft, S/N 83-1138, impacted the Atlantic Ocean 11 miles East Southeast of Atlantic City International Airport. The aircraft assigned to the 119 Fighter Squadron, 177th Fighter Wing, Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, New Jersey, was on a routine Air Combat Tactics (ACT) training mission. The pilot ejected safely from the aircraft and sustained only minor injuries. Shortly before impact, the pilot was performing normal pre-engagement operational checks in an over water Warning Area. In level flight, at approximately 16,000 feet above mean sea level, the pilot experienced a series of vibrations and immediate deceleration. The engine compressor stalled and oil pressure went to zero. The pilot initiated emergency procedures and turned back towards the coast and the nearest landing airfield. Weather at the nearest airfield was below required flameout landing minimums and the pilot was unable to maintain usable engine thrust to divert to a suitable alternate airfield. The pilot elected to maneuver the aircraft away from land and ejected over water at approximately 1,700 feet above

mean sea level. There is clear and convincing evidence that the primary cause of the mishap was failure and subsequent liberation of a turbine blade from the third stage turbine section of the engine, resulting in damage to the oil system. Loss of engine lubrication and collateral engine damage to the low pressure turbine resulted in insufficient thrust to make a normal approach. Unable to sustain sufficient thrust to reach the alternate airfield, the pilot elected to eject over water. Evidence shows the blade failure was not detectable by the required engine borescope inspection. The inspection is designed to detect and prevent this failure mode and was properly accomplished the evening before the mishap.

On 15 May 2007 at 1408 hours Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), the pilot of an F-16C (F-16), serial number (S/N) 83-1148, deployed several MJU-7A/B flares during flight training maneuvers at the Warren Grove Range (WGR), a detachment of the 177th Fighter Wing (177 FW). The mishap pilot (MP) was the wingman in a flight of two F-16s assigned to the 177 FW, New Jersey Air National Guard. During this training mission, each pilot of the flight conducted a "show of force" maneuver, as requested by the WGR range control officer (RCO). While executing this maneuver, the MP deployed multiple self protection flares below the WGR minimum release altitude of 500 feet above ground level (AGL).

Several of these flares contacted the range while still burning and ignited fires. One of these fires spread rapidly beyond the boundary of the WGR due to extreme environmental factors and consumed between 15,500 and 18,000 acres. Reports have indicated the fire destroyed four homes, damaged other structures and vehicles, and resulted in injuries to two individuals. The accident investigation board (AIB) president found by clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap fire was pilot error, committed when the MP deployed flares at an altitude that allowed the flares to contact the range while still burning.

The AIB president also found certain factors substantially contributed to the mishap. The lead pilot (LP) for the flight did not communicate with the MP concerning the MP's intended use of flares and therefore failed to properly coordinate with the WGR concerning the MP's intent to use flares. Furthermore, there should have been no flare deployment on the WGR on the afternoon of 15 May 2007 based on the extreme environmental factors at the WGR. The RCO failed to convey this additional restriction concerning flare use to the pilots of the mishap flight prior to the mishap. The MP was unaware of any additional imposed restrictions on the range for the flight and indicated if he had known of additional restrictions concerning flare use at the range, he would not have used flares at all during the flight at tire range.

Finally, the RCO requested a show of force maneuver, an event that led the MP to perform a low altitude simulated bombing pass that was not planned or briefed prior to the flight. The failure of the LP to communicate with the MP concerning the use of flares and to properly coordinate the MP's intent to use flares during the flight substantially contributed to the RCO's failure to convey additional restrictions concerning flare use to the pilots of the flight. Further, the failure of the RCO to convey additional restrictions concerning flare use to the pilots of the flight substantially contributed to the MP's lack of information concerning additional restrictions on flare use. The MP's lack of information concerning additional restrictions on flare use that were in place on the WGR substantially contributed to the MP's deployment of flares during the mishap flight. Finally, the MP's performance of the unplanned show of force maneuver substantially contributed to the MP's low altitude flare deployment.

New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine has authorized the New Jersey Air National Guard's 177th Fighter Wing to begin limited operations on the Warren Grove Gunnery Range, beginning Oct. 1, according to an Aug. 15 release from the governor's office. Earlier this month, Sen. Frank LoBiondo (R) sent Corzine a letter, complaining that the wing was still not permitted to use the range a year after a widespread fire caused by an F-16 training flare. Initially, Corzine has limited the range use to the 177th FW, so the unit can verify its new safety procedures. Following that validation, he will authorize use of the range, after Nov. 1, to other units. Corzine said, "The resumption of operations will be predicated on the thorough education of all units" on the new rules, and he wants an independent inspection to "ascertain continue adherence to the [new] protocol." That inspection is to take place by July 1, 2009, and would be followed by another before January 2010. After that, Corzine wants inspections done every six months or annually depending on the findings of the first two.

The men and women of the 177th Fighter Wing recently participated in Red Flag Alaska 11-2, a 10-day air combat training exercise sponsored by the United States Pacific Air Forces and held at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. Red Flag Alaska 11-2 featured a coalition force including the Royal Australian Air Force, Japanese Self Defense Force, along with the Singapore, and Thailand Air Forces. The training included air-to-air combat against Air Force Aggressor Squadrons, as well as air-to-ground missions in support of infantry personnel. 2011

A 12-ship of F-16s from the New Jersey Air National Guard's 119 Fighter Squadron and the District of Columbia Air Guard's 121st FS deployed to Kunsan AB, South Korea, along with some 200 airmen. The units will train alongside airmen with the 8th Fighter Wing and their South Korean allies. The deployment makes up a theater security package, which arrived at the base in late May and will fly from Kunsan through August. The integration thus far has been "exceptional," said Lt. Col Tim Hassel, the commander of the 119 FS in a release. The TSP deployment helps keep the number of jets on the peninsula at a steady state, and the ANG units fully integrate with Kunsan's 8th FW to prepare for any contingency on or off peninsula. "This is an amazing opportunity," said Lt. Col. John Cosgrove, the 119 Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit officer-in-charge. Cosgrove said the TSP deployment gives air guardsmen the opportunity to work 40-60 hours a week on jets, rather than just weekends back home. 2014

New Jersey Air National Guard F-16s recently participated in multinational Exercise Thracian Star hosted by the Bulgarian air force at Graf Ignatievo AB, Bulgaria. "We came over here primarily to do air-to-air training in basic fighting maneuvers and tactical intercepts," 119 Fighter Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Timothy Hassel said in a July 27 release. Thracian Star gave the pilots "a chance to fly against an actual MiG"—both MiG-21s and MiG-29s—and practice interoperability with allied aircraft from Greece, Poland, and Romania, according to a Hellenic Air Force release. A total of eight F-16s and 150 pilots, maintainers, and support personnel from the ANG's 177th Fighter Wing at Atlantic City deployed for the exercise, July 13-24. 2015

Two New Jersey Air National Guard F-16s were scrambled on Wednesday afternoon to track an Army Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System aerostat that broke

free from its mooring station in Maryland and floated into Pennsylvania. The jets, assigned to the 177th Fighter Wing at Atlantic City Air National Guard Base, monitored the aerostat and kept local air traffic clear before the aircraft was lassoed and landed safely near Bloomsburg, Pa. The JLENS aerostat, which is about 243 feet long and carries radar and communications payloads, was stationed at Aberdeen Proving Ground north of Baltimore and broke free around noon, according to NORAD. Approximately 6,700 feet of the aircraft's metal tether dragged behind the wayward craft, severing power lines and causing power outages in Pennsylvania before it landed near Moreland Township about four hours later. 2015



119 FS F-51



119 FS F-16





119 FS F-16

---

AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 2 Dec 2020

Updated:

Sources

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit History. *National Guard of the United States, State of New Jersey, 1940.*