

160 LIAISON SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

160 Liaison Squadron constituted, 23 Feb 1944
Activated, 1 Apr 1944
Redesignated 160 Liaison Squadron (Commando), 1 May 1944
Redesignated 160 Liaison Squadron, 25 Nov 1945
Inactivated, 20 May 1946

STATIONS

Brownwood AAFld, TX, 1 Apr 1944
Statesboro AAFld, GA, 31 May 1944
Cross City AAFM, FL, 19 Aug 1944
Drew Field, FL, 6-26 Oct 1944
Leyte, 1 Dec 1944
Calasio, Luzon, 31 Jan 1944 (detachment operated from Mindoro, Feb-May 1945)
Mabalacat, Luzon, 30 Apr 1945
Ie Shima, 15 Aug 1945
Seoul, Korea, 22 Sep 1945-20 May 1946

ASSIGNMENTS

II Tactical Air Division, 1 Apr 1944
I Tactical Air Division, 18 Apr 1944
3 Air Commando Group, 1 May 1944
308 Bombardment Wing, 25 Mar-20 May 1946

ATTACHMENTS

5 Air Liaison Group [Prov], May-Sep 1945
308 Bombardment Wing, 22 Sep 1945-25 Mar 1946

WEAPON SYSTEMS

L-5, 1944-1946
UC-64, 1944-1946

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Leyte

Luzon

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Evacuation, supply, and courier missions to support ground forces in forward areas of Southwest Pacific, Feb-Jul 1945

On 4 Nov 44 the 160th Liaison Squadron was transported to the San Francisco harbor and loaded on the General Hersey, a troop ship, headed for the south Pacific. The destination was still unknown except that it was going to be a warm climate indicated by the clothing that was issued.

At sea the orders were opened and it was learned that the 160th was headed for the island of Leyte in the Philippines. Since the General Hersey was not in a convoy she zigzagged all the way to New Guinea where the casual troops were unloaded. Since there was a constant threat from submarines a small convoy accompanied the Hersey the rest of the way to Leyte. 26 days after leaving San Francisco, the 160th Squadron unloaded on the beach of Leyte 1 Dec 44.

Because there was only one man in the area that knew that the 160th was coming, it resulted in spending several days on the beach without proper equipment. Men slept under the stars, on the ground and ate any place that food could be found. Much of the time it was "C" and "K" rations. Without transportation it was difficult to find anyone who could help the Unit out of its dilemma. Finally the 160th was assigned an area where tents were put up and everyone began looking forward to the mission in the Philippines.

Shortly after arriving on Leyte the island was secured and little flying was required of the pilots the campaign of the island of Luzon had gotten underway and the 160th soon moved to the big island by L.S.T.

There was a large concentration of Japanese on Luzon and much fighting was taking place. The Squadron finally located near Clark Field and began their first real combat duty. The pilots were constantly called on to evacuate the wounded from the front lines, courier service, taxi service for military personnel, observing and directing artillery fire by the Army and Navy and pinpointing some of the bombing attacks by the Air Corps. Several of the pilots and a few airplane mechanics were put on detached service or temporary duty with ground forces so they could assist them in various ways. Those with whom these men worked were quite complimentary of the skill and talent demonstrated by the pilots.

When the enemy was defeated on the island of Luzon, the 160th along with the Fighter Squadrons and Troop Carrier Squadron moved to the island of Ie Shima. This was the staging area for the invasion of Japan. The ground echelon moved by LST and while still in the harbor of Okinawa the Bomb was dropped on Japan. This appeared to be the end of the war with Japan. The next day the 160th landed on Ie Shima where they remained until peace was assured.

When the 160th ground echelon left the Philippines the air echelon with all of the pilots remained on Luzon. An effort was made to have the enlisted pilots fly the L-5s to Ie Shima, a great distance and all over water. Since they had enough points to go home and after considering risks involved, they decided to go home. This caused some problems for the Commanding Officer but after an explanation to higher authorities, everything was worked out and the officers later joined the rest of the squadron on Ie Shima.

While on Ie Shima the Squadron had the privilege of seeing the Japanese peace envoy make their first landing on American held real estate on their way to Gen. McArthur's headquarters in Manila. The envoy came in a two white Betty bombers with green crosses painted on each side. A flight of P-38s met them in the air and provided an escort for their first landing on American held soil. When the short Japanese Officers unloaded they looked very apprehensive and unsure of what to expect. They were quickly transferred to a waiting C-54 for the remainder of their flight.

With the war over the remainder of the 160th moved to Korea where they were attached to the 308th Bomb Wing. (September 1945)

There was little activity in Korea during the next few months except to survive the winter weather. By the end of 1945 most of the Squadron personnel had enough points to go home and processing began for return to the USA. Some remained until early 1946 but for the most that was the end of the 160th Liaison Squadron.

In late 1945 and early 1946 new Army of Occupation troops began to replace the rotating original personnel. The army's 24th Corps was the occupation unit of Korea and as it began to

organize for occupation duty, the 160th became an important part of Korea's occupation. Much of the communications, between the remote occupation units and their Headquarters was conducted by the 160th Liaison Squadron. Medical personnel, mail, military government personnel and emergency supplies were constantly being shuttled to the scattered troops and communities throughout all of Korea. Yes, and even the favored candidate for president of South Korea, Sigmund Rea, was flown to many political rallies throughout South Korea by 160th personnel.

By mid-summer of 1946, South Korea's military government was shaping up and began to assume the occupation responsibilities of the 24th Corps. By midsummer the mission of the 160th was once again greatly diminished, and the unit was inactivated in 1946.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.