

165 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

368 Fighter Squadron constituted, 20 Dec 1942
Activated, 15 Jan 1943
Inactivated, 10 Nov 1945
Reconstituted, redesignated and allotted to the KY NG, 24 May 1946
165 Fighter Squadron (SE) extended Federal Recognition, 16 Feb 1947
Redesignated 165 Fighter Interceptor Squadron
Redesignated 165 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 8 Nov 1950
Redesignated 165 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955
Redesignated 165 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 15 Jan 1958
Redesignated 165 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 8 Jan 1989
Redesignated 165 Airlift Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Westover Field, MA, 15 Jan 1943
Grenier Field, NH, 7 Apr 1943
Republic Field, NY, 26 May 1943
Westover Field, Mass, 24 Aug-2 Oct 1943
East Wretham, England, 19 Oct 1943-4 Nov 1945
Camp Kilmer, NJ
Louisville, KY

ASSIGNMENTS

359 Fighter Group, 15 Jan 1943-10 Nov 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-47

P-51

F-84

F-51, 1952

T-28, 1956

F-86, 1956

RB-57, **1958**

RF-101, 1965

RF-101

RF-101, 1972

RF-4, 1976

C-130, 1989

Support Aircraft

B-26

C-47

T-6

COMMANDERS

Maj Robert Moore, 1946-1947

LTC Philip P. Ardery, 1947

Maj Lee J. Merket, 1947-1949

Maj Albert E. Clements, 1949-1950

1Lt Billie Williams, 1952

Cpt Charles Wilson, 1953

Cpt Jean DeConstant, 1953

Maj Cecil K. Walker, 1953-1956

Cpt L. A. Quebbeman, 1956-1957

Maj Cecil K. Walker, 1957-1958

LTC Robert K. Hendricks, 1958-1963

Maj James C. Pickett, Jr., 1964-1965

LTC L. A. Quebbeman, 1966

Maj William J. Semonin 1966-1968

LTC L. A. Quebbeman, 1968-1969

Maj William J. Semonin, 1968

LTC James F. Arnold, 1969-1970

LTC Richard L. FrymXXXX, 1970-1972

LTC James F. Arnold, 1972-1973

LTC Billy Yeiser, 1973-1974

LTC James S. Long, 1974-1975

LTC John L. Smith, 1975-1977

LTC Austin P. Snyder, 1977

Maj Joseph L. Kottak, 1977

LTC Mark R. Kraus

LTC George Scherzer

LTC William J. Semonin

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Germany, 11 Sep 1944

EMBLEM



Over and through a yellow disc, the head of a white unicorn proper, shaded gray (outline and shadow); holding a red thunderbolt between the teeth, with the points of the thunderbolt extending through the rim of the disc on both sides. The insignia will face forward toward the front of the aircraft. The unicorn, symbolic of dauntless courage, portrays the squadron's speed and evasiveness, and the position of the head indicates its aggressiveness. It's one horn indicates that the squadron flew single-engine planes. The thunderbolt is synonymous with the

P-47 aircraft previously used by the squadron. (Approved July 6, 1943)



On an Air Force disc or, palewise, a Kentucky Colonel proper in uniform, boots sable, beard, mustache, eyebrows and helmet all argent, with goggles of azure. In fighting spirit he rides standing on the wings of a stylized aircraft, fesswise of the third, with cone beneath of the last in reconnaissance for the mission. He holds forward a blue flag in chief displaying thirteen white stars in circle and three yellow fleur-de-lis. Beneath the disc a yellow scroll blank and surrounding the whole achievement a bordure blue. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem reflects the Squadron's history and general function. The Kentucky Colonel, shown in uniform (black boots and white helmet) is riding in standing position astride the wings of a white stylized aircraft in flight. Beneath the plane radiates a white cone shape to symbolize the photographic reconnaissance mission. The Colonel looks ahead in profile view with a determined, aggressive expression, holding the left hand upon his hip and in his right hand the staff of an ultramarine blue flag depicting thirteen white stars in circle and three fleur-de-lis. The moving flag is significant in local history and the Kentucky Colonel is well known as a symbol of the state. The elements of design are shown upon a field of yellow, the squadron's traditional color, which is repeated in a blank scroll below the disc, and on which will be placed the squadron designation. The insignia has a border of ultramarine blue.



165 Tactical Airlift Squadron emblem

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The demand for fighters to escort bombers over enemy territory saved strategic bombing, and it was just such a mission that brought fame to the 359th Fighter Group. The group was created at Westover Field, Mass., Dec. 20, 1942, and activated Jan. 15, 1943. , the unit was not manned until March 1943. It moved from Westover to Grenier Field, N.H., in April and to Republic Field at Farmingdale, N.Y. in May 1943. From August until early October they were again at Westover Field and from there they processed through Camp Kilmer, N.J., for shipment through the New York Port of Embarkation for movement to England aboard the U.S.S. Argentina.

They arrived in the British Isles on Oct 17, 1943, where they became part of the Eighth Air Force. The 359th Fighter Group with its three squadrons-the 368th, 369th and 370th entered combat in mid-December. Some of the pilots had already flown combat missions with another fighter group.

By May 1944 the squadrons of the 359th Group were expanding their area of operations to provide bomber escort that struck rail centers in Germany and oil targets in Poland. They supported the D-Day invasion of Normandy in June, patrolling the English Channel, escorting bombardment missions to the French coast and dive-bombing and strafing bridges, locomotives, and rail lines near the battle area.

From July 1944 until February 1945, the units were chiefly engaged in escorting bombers to oil refineries, marshalling yards, and other targets in such cities as Ludwig-shafen, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Berlin, Merseburg, and Brux. They all received a Presidential Unit Citation for

operations over Germany on Sept. 11, 1944, when the group protected a formation of heavy bombers against large numbers of enemy fighters.

In addition to its escort duties, the group supported campaigns in France during July and August, 1944. They bombed enemy positions to support the airborne invasion of Holland in September and took part in the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 and January 1945. They flew missions to support the assault across the Rhine River in March. They escorted medium bombers attacking various communications targets from February through April 1945.

First assigned to the VIII Fighter Command, the group was switched to the 1st Bombardment Division Sept. 15, 1944, and assigned to the 67th Fighter Wing. They were moved back into the 3rd Air Division of the VIII Fighter Command Aug. 12, 1945. For their combat record the 359th Fighter Group and its three squadrons were entitled to battle credits for the Air Offensive of Europe, Normandy Campaign, Northern France Campaign, the Ardennes Campaign, Central Europe Campaign, and Rhineland Campaign. The 359th Fighter Group and its squadrons departed from South Hampton, England on Nov. 4 aboard the Queen Mary and arrived at the New York Port of Embarkation Nov. 9, 1945. The next day at Camp Kilmer, N.J. the units were inactivated and transferred to control of the War Department. Concurrent with the inactivation the 368th, 369th and 370th Fighter Squadrons were relieved from assignment to the 359th Fighter Group.

The 359th Fighter Group and the 368th Fighter Squadron were redesignated as the 123d Fighter Group and the 165 Fighter Squadron and allotted to the National Guard, effective May 24, 1946.

Having been allotted the colors and battle credits of their predecessors, the 123d (later to become the 123d Wing) and the 165 Squadron are entitled to display these battle honors from World War II, and the men and women assigned to these units of the Kentucky Air National Guard to wear the ribbon of the Presidential Unit Citation.

Following the close of World War II, overtures were made to the states by the National Guard Bureau (NGB) in the War Department concerning establishment of Air National Guard units. Circulars from NGB reached Kentucky where Gov. Simeon Willis began to give consideration to the proposals. The circulars were first routed to the attention of Henry Meigs III, a veteran of Air Force combat duty in World War II. Meigs had been in Kentucky since the summer of 1945 and had accepted a position part-time as staff air officer with the rank of lieutenant colonel, which he held while attending law school at Lexington. In the process of looking into the NGB proposals, Lt Col Meigs also conferred with an uncle, Col Paul Meyers, who was in the Air National Guard of New York. Several rounds of correspondence were exchanged between Maj Gen Butler B. Miltonberger, the chief of the NGB, and Gov. Willis through the adjutant general of Kentucky,

Brig Gen Gustavus H. May. In the fall of 1945 the governor directed Meigs and Col Al Near, director of Louisville airports, to go to Washington and confer with Miltonberger. The

correspondence which followed led to allotment of the 123d Fighter Group (formerly the 359th Fighter Group) to the state of Kentucky, effective May 24, 1946. Also allotted to Kentucky were the 165 Fighter Squadron (Single Engine), formerly the 368th Fighter Squadron, and the 165 Utility Flight.

The search for a location for the Air National Guard units drew appropriate attention and a subsequent offer of help from Gen Miltonberger on March 29, 1946. Standiford Field in Louisville was selected as the site for the units, and a hangar with suitable parking aprons was located where they could be placed at Standiford.

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After World War II, community leaders began to acknowledge the tremendous potential for commercial aviation. Increasing airline passenger counts left no doubt that 400-acre Bowman Field could not continue to handle the needs of air passengers forever.

An aerial survey during the 1937 flood pointed to an unaffected area that had the potential to be the home of a new airport. This survey showed a large, dry area of land, which was later to become Standiford Field. (The airport was named for Dr. Elisha David Standiford who, as a businessman and legislator, played an important role in Louisville transportation history and owned part of the land on which the airport was built.)

In 1941, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers built one, 4000-foot, north-south runway. the War Department delayed turning over the new airport to the community until the conclusion of World War II, as it was an integral part of both airfield operations and aircraft manufacturing. In fact, Curtiss-Wright and Consolidated Vultee both built aircraft for the War Department at Standiford Field during the war. Then, in 1947, the Federal Government turned the airport over to the Air Board, at which time all commercial flights moved to Standiford from Bowman Field.

Another letter from Miltonberger to Gov. Willis listed the Air National Guard Units being allocated to Kentucky. These included the Headquarters Detachment, 223d Air Service Group and Detachment A, plus the 165 Weather Station (Type A), in addition to the 123d Fighter Group and 165 Fighter Squadron, with its 165 Utility Flight.

There were obvious problems in finding the personnel to organize the units, as several extensions of the original authority were granted by NGB. A significant occasion was held Nov. 15 when 32 officer candidates appeared before a federal recognition board in Louisville. Presiding at the board was Lt Col Joseph Ambrose, an active duty officer. Appearing as one of the first group was Lt Col Philip P. Ardery who had been named commander of the group headquarters by the adjutant general. The 32 officers, who had considerable combat

experience, were confirmed. Col Herbert A. Bott was the first Air Force senior adviser and Maj James L. Doyle the first squadron adviser, working out of 11th Air Force.

Federal recognition of the 123d Fighter Group and other units was extended Feb. 16, 1947, by authority of the War Department. Along with the many requirements and problems came a money shortage. Gov. Willis was informed June 18 that federal recognition of the fighter group would be withdrawn, effective June 30. The acting chief of the NGB, Col Edward J. Geeson, informed the governor that the Bureau had to accept a moral obligation to reimburse the men who had worked so hard to establish the units. Eighteen of the staff of Group Headquarters were transferred back to the 165 Fighter Squadron, including Ardery who temporarily became commander of the fighter squadron. By Sept. 20 the problems had been solved and federal recognition was given once more to the 123d Fighter Group Headquarters. The organization was on its way once more.

Ardery, was named state air officer in the Office of the Adjutant General on Dec. 9, 1946. He was named commander of the 123d Fighter Group on the eve of federal recognition in February 1947.

The story of the Kentucky Air National Guard now began in earnest as Lt Col Philip Ardery and his 123d Fighter Group gained federal recognition. As noted earlier, this status was extended to the Kentucky units Feb. 16, 1947. Unfortunately, there was a shortage of funds for federal support and recognition for the 123d Fighter Group was withdrawn temporarily. A special order from the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs on June 30 reassigned Ardery as commander of the 165 Fighter Squadron and inactivated the Fighter Group headquarters.

During May 1947 their attention were diverted to better news as 25 F-51 arrived at Standiford Field to be flown by the 165 Squadron. The aircraft came from stations in Michigan, Minnesota and Illinois. Thus began the nine-year span, 1947-56, when the story of the Kentucky Air National Guard could be captioned "The Mustang Years." Prior to arrival of the F-51s, the KyANG had four B-26s, three C-47s, two AT-6s, and a pair of L-5s.

With some experience in politics and a great deal of instinct about human nature, Ardery used the Mustangs to good advantage for strengthening the units. Plans were soon initiated for conducting air shows at various community functions throughout the state. Kentucky would learn through many means that the Commonwealth now had its first elements of the Air National Guard.

An interesting sidelight of the early history of the KyANG is reflected by the roster of enlisted members included on Special Order No. 1, dated Feb. 17, 1947. Of the individuals listed, several are still connected with the Air National Guard at this writing. Col Douglas McGill is completing his final statutory tour of duty in the Pentagon; CMSgt Morris Ward is still a member of the 123d CAM Squadron, SMSgt Samuel Duncan is a member of the 123d Communications Flight, and both are still Air National Guard technicians; SMSgt James Jackson and MSgt Paul Bronger have retired as air technicians but are still members of the 123d CAM Squadron.

By Sept. 20, 1947, the NGB was again ready with adequate financing and federal recognition was restored to the 123d Fighter Group headquarters unit and Ardery resumed command of the group. Here is how the KyANG looked at that time:

Headquarters, 123d Fighter Group
Headquarters Detachment, 223d Air Service Group
Detachment A, 223d Air Service Group
165 Fighter Squadron (S.E.)
165 Utility Flight
165 Weather Station

In addition to these Kentucky units, four out-of-state units came under the organizational structure of the 123d Fighter Group:

Detachment B, 223d Air Service Group (W.Va. ANG)
Detachment C, 223d Air Service Group (Ohio ANG)
167th Fighter Squadron (W.Va. ANG)
167th Utility Flight (W.Va. ANG)

The 123d Fighter Group was a part of the 55th Fighter Wing (Ohio ANG). The 167th Fighter Squadron was awarded the unit lineage of the 369th Fighter Squadron of World War II, which was part of the same 358th Fighter Group as the forerunner of the 165 Squadron, the 368th Fighter Squadron. Originally, the facilities secured for the KyANG were one-half of the large wooden hangar located on the east ramp of Standiford Field. The Air Guard also obtained sufficient ramp space adjacent to the hangar. This wooden structure had been constructed during World War II by the Vultee Corp. where modifications were made on the B-24. Training drills for the newly-formed KyANG were held on Wednesday evenings, as well as on weekends.

The Year 1948; Camp at Columbus, Ind. The major emphasis throughout 1948 was on recruiting enough men to get the units better organized and functioning properly. One of the first things to happen, , was the tragic death of Capt Thomas Mantell. It is also one of the interesting stories, unique as it was odd. Mantell was killed in January near Franklin, Ky., in an F-51 crash. He had been on a routine training mission when he reported seeing an unidentified flying object (UFO). Despite efforts by his wingman to call him back, he chased whatever he thought he saw farther and farther up. It is assumed that he lost consciousness for lack of oxygen, because he did not attempt to use his parachute prior to impact. It was the first flying casualty suffered by the KyANG and claimed the life of a veteran and highly-decorated pilot with World War II combat experience. It was later learned the UFO was probably a "Sky-Hook" balloon released by the Navy that day.

In July the 11th Air Force Headquarters was inactivated and supervision of the training of the KyANG was assumed by 1st Air Force. The units held their first field training (almost always referred to as "summer camp") at Atterbury AFB, Ind., a World War II induction center for the Army. The dates for the field training were Aug. 24 through Sept. 4, and the units of the group

from West Virginia participated in the encampment. By all indications, the summer training was a success, especially because the 167th Fighter Squadron and Utility Flight and the West Virginia detachment of the 223d Air Service Group could attend.

As the 123d Fighter Group with its squadrons from Kentucky and West Virginia completed the first "summer camp," a special "Governor's Day" was staged. The luncheon was held at Columbus, Ind., with Gov. Earle C. Clements (Ky.), Ralph F. Gates (Ind.), and Clarence W. Meadows (W. Va.) as guests. Air Guardsmen encamped at Atterbury Field numbering about 600, the adjutants general of the states including Maj Gen Roscoe L. Murray of Kentucky, and invited guests including the commander of 1st Air Force, Maj Gen Robert M. Webster, the head of NGB, Maj Gen Kenneth F. Cramer, and Brig Gen E. H. Zistel, commander of the parent 55th Fighter Wing.

In 1948 there was no medical unit of the KyANG as such. the first two doctors were federally recognized for appointment to the unit. Maj Byron Garner, a flight surgeon, was assigned to Headquarters, 123d Fighter Group, and Maj Bradford Bissell to the Headquarters Detachment, 223d Air Service Group. Maj Bissell was injured fatally in 1949 and was later replaced by Capt Jerome Cope who became the first commander of the 123d Medical Group. Actually, Dr. James Skaggs seems to have been the first medical person to be a member of the KyANG, a dentist from the year 1947. Skaggs was replaced by Capt Samuel Cooper in 1950; Dr. Cooper, then a dentist but now a physician, is still serving the KyANG as a medical officer with State Headquarters, now a lieutenant colonel.

In the early days the Air National Guard base at the Vultee Hangar was operated mainly under the direction of the senior air adviser, Col Herbert A. Bott. Accordingly, a request was forwarded by the Kentucky Adjutant General to the National Guard Bureau in Washington, D.C., for a base detachment Commander. Maj Lee J. Merkel was named the first detachment commander, effective Oct. 11, 1948. It is interesting to note some of the salaries paid to the full-time "caretakers." Lt Col Henry Meigs had reported earlier that two jobs for mechanics paid \$2,520 and \$2,190, while the post of aircraft maintenance officer offered \$4,900 and a supply officer job paid \$3,395 per year.

A reorganization by the Air Force resulted in 1st Air Force being moved from Air Defense Command to the Continental Air Command (ConAC). As the result, the 123d Fighter Group was reassigned from the 1st to the 9th Air Force in February of that year.

The days of having to almost literally "Shanghai" recruits to come to drill meetings were becoming a thing of the past. The pilot vacancies had been, for the most part, filled with World War II veterans. Many of them had combat experience in the Mustang, and in filling the slots in the unit many of them voluntarily accepted demotions. It would be only the next year that many of these same Air Guardsmen would be recalled to serve another tour of extended active duty holding ranks lower than those in which they had previously served.

The units were able to attend field training at New Castle County Airport, Wilmington, Del., in

the summer of 1949, from July 8-24. Later some of the members of the unit recalled that the facilities were those of a former prisoner of war camp from World War II. The guard towers of the prison camp were still there. Another member of the unit recalled the men were warned to beware of ticks alleged to carry "yellow fever," although there were apparently no such casualties reported.

A news dispatch from New Castle said the Kentucky Air Guardsmen at New Castle County Airport were "winging through mock sky battles near here, 'defending' the East Coast against hypothetical bomber attack." Some 370 members of the Louisville-based units trained with West Virginia and Ohio Air Guard pilots. They were involved in an aerial defense problem which assumed an aggressor nation had made successful amphibious landings in Iceland and Newfoundland.

About 40 Mustangs from Kentucky and West Virginia squadrons were sent to intercept "enemy aircraft" over Reading, Penn. Gunnery film was used to record hits on the enemy, who were in reality Air Guard aircraft from other units in the area. The Kentuckians also were put through gunnery practice with live ammunition about two miles off the Delaware coast. They fired at tow targets with the .50 cal. machineguns of the Mustang fighters.

The Year 1950— Recall to Active Duty the 1950s were ushered in with the Kentucky Air Guard continuing to fly the Mustangs as tactical aircraft. The T-6 Texans, the B-26 Invaders and the C-47 "Gooney Bird" were the support aircraft being used. Annual field training was held Aug. 6-20 at Lockbourne AFB, Columbus, Ohio, with the entire 55th Fighter Wing together. This brought units from Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio to the same place for the first time. The 55th was commanded by Brig Gen E. H. Zistel of Cleveland. The Korean conflict, which had erupted almost without warning, provided a more serious background for these activities. News media representatives were given an aerial tour of a mock intercept near Lancaster, Ohio, and the air-to-air gunnery range over Lake Huron.

The 165 Fighter Squadron, commander by Maj Albert W. Clements Jr. of Louisville, was selected for award of the Spaatz Trophy during competition held among squadrons of the 55th Fighter Wing. Consideration was given to flying safety, flying proficiency, personnel programs and maintenance and supply standards. Presenting the trophy Aug. 14 to Clements was Maj Gen Earl S. Hoag, deputy chief of the Air Force Reserve.

On Sept. 25 an advance detachment of the 123d Fighter Group of the KyANG was called together in anticipation of more extensive recall orders. Just prior to activation 10 F-51s were flown to the West Coast where they were placed aboard the aircraft carrier, "U.S.S. Boxer." Public notice of the recall came Sept. 9.

The big move came on Oct. 10 when the entire 123d Fighter Group, less Detachment C of the 223d Air Service Group, was recalled to federal service, at the direction of the President, Harry S. Truman. They were ordered up for a period of 21 months unless sooner relieved. Col Ardery announced that the 123d was one of four Air Guard units called to active duty as fighter-

bomber groups. Air Force officials also noted that the Kentucky units would be consolidated with the West Virginia Air Guardsmen at Godman Field, Ft. Knox, between Oct. 11-21. Even though there was advance notice of the activation, it must have been hectic for all concerned-orders placing the Kentucky Air Guardsmen on active duty as individuals were published Nov. 29.

"We are proud to be among the first Air National Guard units to be called," Ardery said. The announcement from the Air Force said that nationally 5,000-7,500 men were affected by the recall, together with about 250 aircraft, taken on active duty at the same time as the KyANG. Also included in the 123d Fighter Group were the tactical squadrons from Kentucky (the 165), Charleston, W.Va. (the 167th), and additionally, the 154th Fighter Squadron from Charlotte, N.C., part of the North Carolina Air Guard.

Other units of the group were the 223d Air Service Group (except Detachment C of Ohio), the Utility Flights, and the 165 Weather Station. Their equipment included 25 F-51Ds, four B-26s, two C-47s, and six T-6s. On Oct. 13 the units of Kentucky were ordered to move with existing strength to Godman Field at the earliest practicable date.

On Oct. 19, amid much fanfare and publicity, the mobilized units were mustered at Standiford Field at 7 a.m. to make the short journey to Ft. Knox. They did not start leaving until 10:05 a.m. when support personnel started loading into trucks or their own automobiles. Some planned to commute daily to Godman Field. The Courier-Journal reported that the men were an odd-looking mixture in their uniforms, some in the new Air Force blues, others in woolen Army uniforms, some in cotton khakis, and still more in fatigues.

The pilots, of course, left Standiford Field in their F-51s. Before turning toward Godman Field they flew over the center of Louisville and "buzzed" the field at Standiford. Pilots from the Utility Flight took the C-47s to their new destination. One of the newspaper photographs depicted four members of one family, the Cash brothers, who were all leaving for Ft. Knox. An aspect of the story which was not noticed in 1950 was the fact that they had another brother, an unknown country singer named Johnny Cash.

As of Oct. 26 a new order was published creating the new 123d Fighter-Bomber Wing Headquarters, renaming the 123d Fighter-Bomber Group, creating a 123d Air Base Group and a 123d Maintenance Group and creating or renaming squadrons under each group. With this came the merger of personnel and a number of job reassignments with Col Ardery taking the role as wing commander. The tactical squadrons were the 156th Fighter-Bomber, 165 Fighter-Bomber, and the 167th Fighter-Bomber. The entire process severed the previous ties with the 55th Fighter Wing forever.

The Year 1951 — Replacement Training To start off the year, the weather at Ft. Knox brought activity to a standstill as the temperature dropped to minus -19 degrees. Many members of the units on leave were stranded by the temperature and snow, particularly those in West Virginia.

An accident Jan. 28 severely injured the pilot and co-pilot of one of the C-47s assigned to the unit. While there were no fatalities, considering the amount of damage to the Skytrain, the fact that none of the 31 passengers was seriously hurt was a near miracle.

Pilots often say tragedies come in "three's." On March 30 Capt. Merlin R. Kehrer perished in the crash of his F-51 near Leesburg, Va., while he was returning to Louisville from Boiling AFB, D.C. At Eglin AFB, Fla., where the unit was involved in extensive air-to-air gunnery exercises, a West Virginia pilot was fatally injured in a taxiing mishap. Three days later a C-47 carrying nine officers and 12 airmen from West Virginia to the funeral of the F-51 pilot where they would have been an honor guard, crashed on an instrument approach at Charleston, W.Va. Most of them were killed on impact and the remaining two died within nine days following. A plaque with the names of these Air Guardsmen of West Virginia was permanently placed in the ANG facility at Kanawha Airport at Charleston.

The units continued their firepower demonstrations at Ft. Knox and participated in Exercise Southern Pines in North Carolina. At Godman Field they participated in Operation Snowflake and Operation Longhorn as well.

Problems with the engines of the F-51s continued to occur, and a massive engine reconditioning program was initiated. Ninth Air Force provided much assistance for this process which greatly reduced maintenance headaches, although engine failures did not entirely disappear. April 15 saw an engine failure in a Mustang enroute to Pope Field, N.C., for Southern Pines. The pilot bailed out and was not hurt. Again, on May 27 a major accident occurred at Godman when the pilot attempted a cross-wind landing. On July 15, during a massive flight demonstration, two F-51s collided in mid-air. The mishap took the lives of Capt. George Conder of Louisville and 1st Lt. Clarence G. Combs of Parkersburg, W.Va.

During July, August, and September the squadrons performed many tactical support missions. Some of the Army units supported were the 28th Infantry Division, 33rd Infantry Division, 150th Infantry Regiment, the Artillery School, 38th Infantry Division, 42nd Infantry Division, 80th Armored Division, and the 3rd Armored Division. Other support maneuvers were conducted at Atterbury AFB, McNamara AFB, Ft. Sill, Ft. Campbell, Pines Camp, N.Y. and Ft. Jackson.

At the same time the basic mission of the 123d Fighter-Bomber Wing at Godman Field was training replacement pilots for Korean action. A number of unit pilots served with various other units in Korea on temporary duty. Five Kentucky Air Guard pilots were killed or declared dead after being missing in action, including Capt John W. Shewmaker of Harrodsburg, for whom the Air National Guard base in Louisville was later to be named.

In anticipation of movement orders for overseas, extensive training programs were initiated. Aircrews and maintenance personnel were given high priority in this training. By September, 21 pilots had completed transition training at Alexandria, La., and were ready to fly the F-84. Maintenance mechanics were thoroughly versed in working on the J-35 engines which were the power plant for the F-84. Others went to schools in intelligence, communications, budget and

fiscal management, aeromedical, food service and clerk-typists.

The first combat casualty from the 123d claimed the life of 1st Lt Eugene L. Ruiz, who was shot down in Korea July 2. In October Shewmaker was lost in action and in December 1st Lt Lawrence B. Kelly was also lost in combat.

The long-awaited movement order was received Sept. 18 when the wing was alerted for shipment to Europe. On Oct. 12 the order came for the advance detachment to move overseas through Westover Field, Mass., with movement by air. Two C-124s came to Standiford Field to load 140 men and equipment under the command of Lt Col Edward F. Cook, who took the advance party to England. The detachment arrived at Manston Royal Air Force Station near Margate, England, on Nov. 10.

Preparation for the overseas movement presented a number of new difficulties, while compounding old ones. New equipment lists for England were hard to obtain. Some of the persons designated to stay at Godman to handle supply procedures were ordered overseas as soon as they had been so designated. The aircraft all required transfer inspections and the packing and crating of equipment had to be done while "normal" activities continued. Later on ferrying the aircraft to new locations became a very real problem. Replacement personnel included maintenance mechanics with multi-engine backgrounds and pilots with similar kinds of mismatched experience.

Finally, on Nov. 15 the main body of men and equipment left Godman Field for Camp Kilmer, N.J. After a brief stay there they moved through the New York Port of Embarkation for shipment overseas aboard the U.S.S. Hershey. After a stop in the Azores Islands, the main detachment arrived at Manston RAF Station ready to settle down in new surroundings. They were dismayed on that Dec. 7 day to find the airmen's quarters were tents with inadequate heating. No on-base quarters were available for officers at all and the Florence Hotel in Margate was used for a BOQ.

While the main body of the wing was preparing for overseas, the advance detachment had been trying to transfer the new aircraft from Strategic Air Command to the 123d Fighter-Bomber Wing. Very few of the F-84E Thunderjets were flyable and lack of familiarity with the equipment was a real puzzle for the supply personnel.

In spite of any other concerns, Christmas was fast approaching and some of the families nearby the RAF Station were obviously in greater need. The members of the wing collected over \$400 to be distributed to the inhabitants of an area called Thanet. The newspaper in East Kent carried the story, "Americans Play Santa." Vanks and their English cousins were learning the importance of community relations.

The Year 1952. Thunderjets and Deactivation By early 1952 the 123d was well on its way toward operational status with the recently-acquired F-84s. Personnel of the maintenance squadron had performed amazingly well in bringing the Thunderjets to flyable condition. The

Manston RAF Station was a British base and some essential functions were carried on by RAF personnel such as the operations tower. The 123d Fighter-Bomber Wing was assigned to the 3rd Air Force based in London.

When the 123d Wing arrived on base, the 3917th Air Base Group (SAC) of the U.S. Air Force remained with the thought of operating housekeeping functions, as designated by SAC. At the same time the 123d had its own housekeeping personnel qualified in such areas as Motor Vehicle Squadron, Maintenance Squadron, and Supply Squadron. The SAC unit not only was determined to operate base functions, but to have personnel from the 123d attached to it with full powers of supervision and command. This included, for instance, making officer efficiency reports. The solution worked out was to assign members of the 123d to the 3917th for duty only, and the arrangement was made to suffice for the rest of the stay.

The mission of the wing in England was to give ground support to NATO units and provide air defense for the United Kingdom. In the air defense capacity, the wing was integrated into the RAF Metropolitan Sector Control of the RAF Fighter Command. Later Col Ardery was to praise Group Capt James Rankin of the RAF for helping make the coordination possible. "This tie-in gave the 123d Fighter-Bomber Wing an opportunity to perform many operational missions in support of British surface units and provided valuable training in air defense with units of the Royal Air Force," Ardery wrote.

The wing participated in joint operations with other NATO units in "Grand Alliance" at Neubiberg, Germany, "Blue Alliance" at Furstenfeldbruck, Germany, "Main Brace" at Wiesbaden, Germany, and "Castinets" at Tripoli, Libya.

It was during a redeployment from Tripoli that one of the C-47s assigned to the wing was forced down at Marseille, France, by engine problems. As was usually the case, the crew had very little money among them and engine parts were needed, as well as meals and quarters. The pilot was forced to "borrow" money from the American Embassy to meet the expenses involved.

Once more engine problems began to plague the Ken-tuckians. At Manston it was the J-35 engine of the F-84E. A total of 26 aircraft were lost from November 1951 to November 1953! British engineers were called in to assist with investigations. Finally, it was determined that a 2 percent reduction of maximum RPM, along with an improved emergency fuel system would solve most of the problems. In the meantime, a number of American pilots were fished from the North Sea by hover planes, motor launches, and even a Dutch tanker. Among those dunked in the drink was Capt Ken Walker, whose Thunderjet exploded in midair. The Margate pilot boat Foreness won the race of craft going to Walker's rescue.

During the first months of 1952 dependents began arriving, as well as American automobiles. Housing for the families was adequate, partly because Margate was a resort town on the sea, not far from the famous White Cliffs of Dover. Soon the Americans were established in Margate, Ramsgate, Cliftonville, Westgate and other nearby places. Many of them stayed on up into 1953.

As of July 9, the unit designation of the 123d Wing was returned to the Kentucky Air National Guard, less men and equipment. On July 10 the 123d Fighter-Interceptor Wing was federally recognized as an Air National Guard unit once more. The personnel and equipment stayed in place at Manston RAF Station where it became the 406th Fighter-Bomber Wing. Commanders of the 123d units became the commanders of the new organization.

By that time some key personnel including Lt Col Lee J. Merkel, Capt Douglas McGill, and Capt William Beck were returned to Louisville to re-establish the Kentucky Air National Guard. As they arrived home, they found that Standiford Field's main runway (1-19) was in the process of being extended, a project long in being completed. By July 23 all of the reconstituted KyANG units had at least some officers and airmen assigned and the arduous task of rebuilding strength was begun.

Merkel became, temporarily at least, commander of the 123d Fighter-Interceptor Wing while Col Ardery was still in England. In August 1952 he wrote Ardery saying, "Everything is coming along fine, with the normal confusion as may be expected under the circumstances." By this time they had a new adjutant general, Maj Gen Jesse Lindsay, and a new senior air adviser, Col Cy Kitchens. At that point Gen Lindsay was establishing the Air Section in Frankfort once more and expected Kitchens to stay there. A Maj Westwood remained as squadron adviser in Louisville, but was already expected to be replaced in October.

The runway extension problem at Standiford Field was making little headway between the Air Board and the L&N Railroad which owned land the airport wanted to use. "Negotiations are still going on," Merkel reported, "and I hope we will have the matter settled by Oct. 1." Air Guard officials were concerned enough to begin considering what they would do in the event the problems were not solved. Acquisition of 200 acres of the L&N golf course helped greatly.

At the time the 123d Fighter Group moved out of the Bremner Hangar area of Standiford Field, the 486th Air Reserve Wing switched from Godman Field to the old Air Guard location. Now, with the Air Guard units returned to Louisville, the Air Reserve units were disbanding. Merkel, Beck and McGill wasted no time in "scrounging" equipment and parts. Merkel reported "we did fairly well by their departure. We have all of their vehicles and they turned over to us numerous useful items ranging from partitions to aircraft and plumbing supplies."

Seven tactical pilots were assembled to make the 165 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron function. Again, publicity in Louisville and Frankfort newspapers was used to recruit new personnel, and the Louisville Chamber of Commerce gave its influence as well. With one C-47 and one T-6 to fly, the key officers released from England in July were finally released from active duty in August so they could become air technicians once more.

By September the negotiations between the Air Board and the L&N were becoming rougher. Condemnation proceedings had been instituted to claim land from the golf course of the railroad. The strength of the Kentucky units had climbed to 50 officers and 450 airmen by

October. Equipment was being obtained by any means anyone could think of.

Since the wing headquarters had been created while the units were on federal duty, the National Guard establishments of Kentucky, West Virginia and North Carolina all wanted control of the unit as a state asset. The Commonwealth of Kentucky finally won the contest because of a relative lack in the number of Army National Guard units in this state. The creation of a 123d Hospital on active duty also brought this organization back to Kentucky. The tactical squadrons from West Virginia and North Carolina were returned to their own states. Comparatively, Kentucky had moved in total strength from 615 spaces before the activation to a total of 1,121 spaces. The wing and its units were also returned to control of the Air Defense Command.

The recruiting drives of 1952 were enhanced by prizes awarded to individuals recruiting the most new members. It was reported that Albert Higgins, then a traffic policeman with Lynview, directed speeding motorists to report to the ANG base for enlistment instead of writing them a citation. In any case, Higgins won a trip to Miami as a recruiting prize for his efforts.

One of the quieter aspects of unit history is a brief episode involving a unit known as the 8165 Air Base Squadron. Formed during the Korean Crisis years, the 8165 existed only to take in new recruits while the KyANG was in active federal service. An Air National Guard unit on active duty can only lose strength as individuals are separated or discharged. Replacements from the USAF are only temporary as far as Air Guard strength is concerned; once the units were returned to state status, all "regular" replacements were sent elsewhere by ordinary "transfer" actions.

A clipping from the Courier-Journal of March 14,1952, shows a group of young airmen being sworn into the Air National Guard by Capt James H. Quenichet. The story explains the establishment of the 8165 Squadron at Bowman Field (the Vultee Hangar site now housed an Air Force Reserve unit). Among those first recruits were Robert L. St.Clair and Eslye Black—both of whom later became air technicians and valuable members of the military unit with St. Clair in accounting and finance (and civilian personnel) and Black in refueling and, later, supply.

The Year 1953— Rebuilding Although the wing technically was released from active duty July 10,1952, it was returned to the Commonwealth of Kentucky virtually without personnel. Most of the officers and men who went to England did not return to Louisville until 1953 because of the 12-month extended obligation which enabled them to be moved overseas in 1951. , from that point until July 1953, some of the officers and airmen continued to return and be reassigned to their old units. Concurrently, a very earnest recruiting program ensued to replace those who remained on active duty, were discharged, or who did not return for other reasons.

The adjutant general, Maj Gen Jesse S. Lindsay, was most concerned to restore the strength of the units, and get the KyANG functioning again as it had before the call-up. Lt Col Lee Merkel, base detachment commander, who had returned to Louisville in July 1952, temporarily assumed command of the wing until Col Ardery returned to his old job, effective Oct. 27,1952. As the unit came off active duty it was re-designated from a Fighter-Bomber Wing to a Fighter

Interceptor Wing (and the same was true for the 165 Squadron). Jan. 1, 1953, they were redesignated once more as Fighter-Bomber units, reflecting more of an "offensive" mission.

Other unit commanders included Lt Col Roy Osborne who replaced Maj Jack H. Owen in 1953, in charge of the 123d Fighter-Bomber Group. Coming off active duty the first squadron commander for the 165 was 1st Lt Billie Williams, followed by Capt Charlie Wilson and Capt Jean W. DeConstant, and finally by Maj Cecil "Ken" Walker, all in the 1952-53 period. DeConstant had served also in 1952-53 as commander of the 123d Fighter-Bomber Group, immediately prior to Owen.

The strength of the Air Guard June 30 was 71 officers and 472 airmen, with a discharge rate of 30 percent. The 1953 civilian payroll and other budget totals including field training allowance, service schools, repair, transportation, and maintenance came to \$356,943.02.

Field training in 1953 resumed after the war years as the units traveled to MacNamara AFB at Grayling, Mich. Also taking part at Grayling was the 167th Fighter-Bomber Squadron of the West Virginia Air National Guard. Field training was marred by a mishap which injured Lt William P. Cast and Capt Frank Troutman. A rupture in a cooling line in their "piggy back" F-51 caused them to crash on takeoff.

Years later Cast would look back on the accident and laugh at his efforts to leave the plane. But the heroic rescue effort of an airman, James P. Evens of the Medical Group, enabled Cast and Troutman to escape the wreckage. As a reward for his effort, Even's request to go to pilot training was granted, he received his wings and commission and remains with the Air Guard today, now serving in the rank of major.

An event of even greater heroic significance took place Sept. 28 when a chartered C-46 carrying soldiers crashed at Standiford Field. Going into the wreckage and braving the hazards of fire were four Kentucky Air Guardsmen who just happened to be a little late leaving work that day. Included were Walter Carter, Howard A. Curtis, Charles W. Simmons, and Jessie C. Brown. They not only were cited for the Soldiers Medal, but also won the first Kentucky Medals for Valor ever struck.

The year 1953 brought to a close the effects of the active duty period of 1950-52 which had decimated the Air Guard of Kentucky. Now, back in F-51s once more, the Kentucky units were once again building strength to regain spirit and manpower they had held in early 1950. They left behind the memories of England and vacation trips to the continent, and most of all they left behind the first "jet period" of their history, the years with the F-84 Thunderjet, which they all wanted very much to forget forever.

The Year 1954— First AFT at Savannah Still under command of Col Philip P. Ardery, the Kentucky Air Guard continued to build strength. The Fighter-Bomber Group command changed from Roy Osborne to Lee Merkel while the 165 Squadron continued under Ken Walker.

In terms of antics, it was difficult to outdo the "Super Cat," Maj Jackie Carwell, now of Bowling Green. Carwell was landing his F-51 at Standiford one day and his wheels failed to come down. Without the landing gear to stop the descent, his propeller blades struck the runway, bending all four at the tips. He may have used one of his "99 lives" but the props were bent so evenly all around that he was able to regain altitude, go around, and this time make a safe landing. To the further surprise of everyone, it was found that no damage had been done to the shaft or engine, and that replacement of the propeller blades was the only repair really needed.

In the history of the Air Guard, no single person holds an equal place with Capt Robert J. "Bob" Griswold. Griswold, undoubtedly one of the most colorful pilots ever to belong to the KyANG, was briefing a large group of squadron pilots one day on how they were to navigate to Miami, Fla. It was prior to an extensive cross-country training mission. "The way you get to Miami," Griswold said, "is to fly due east 'til you come to the ocean, then turn right." At this time Griswold is in Puerto Rico practicing law, having retired from the Puerto Rico Air Guard, where he had also become a legend in his own time.

In April the KyANG received a pair of F-84s at Standiford, the first jet aircraft to be received in Louisville. They were, used only on the ground for training purposes in areas such as maintenance. Ardery, Merkel and others were dreaming of the day when Kentucky would be assigned jets that they could fly.

All through the year a controversy seethed over whether or not Standiford Field's runways would be lengthened for the jets. There were many who wanted another airport built further out of town if jets were going to come to Louisville. Officials of the Air Guard worked diligently to convince others that the jet concept should be accepted and alterations begun on the Standiford runways.

Brig Gen Winston P. Wilson from the NGB came to Louisville to explain the Air Guard could settle for an extension of 2,800 feet. It would have brought the runways to a length of 7,800 feet.

Annual field training was held at Travis Field, Savannah, Ga., in 1954-the first of many times the KyANG would go to Georgia. They would return to Savannah in 1955, 1956, and 1957 consecutively.

The Year 1955— Ardery Makes General It was Jan. 24 that word was received that Philip Ardery had been promoted to brigadier general. While the popular young attorney was not the first Kentuckian ever to pin on a star, he was the first of the Air National Guard in this state to achieve the distinction.

Lee Merkel continued to serve as group commander and base detachment commander during 1955. Talk of jets continued, pending the resolution of the problems with lengthening the runways.

Effective July 1, the units were redesignated once more as the 123d Fighter-Interceptor Wing and Group and the 165 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. Merkel still headed the group and Walker the 165 Squadron. Field training to Savannah was by train, a memorable experience to all who have made "troop train" trips. Lt Col Harold Graves replaced Maj Harold Kleinert as hospital commander, Col Robert C. Brown succeeded the veteran Col Cy Kitchens as senior AF adviser, and Maj Charles W. Hodson, the squadron adviser, moved on to other duties.

Always part of community efforts, the KyANG participated in the fight against infantile paralysis by distributing polio vaccine to various locations.

Still, the most important thing in the minds of Air Guardsmen was the flying mission. On Oct. 20 Lee Merkel announced publicly that the Air Guard was about to receive its first flyable jets, T-33 that were a transition to things to come. Two of the T-33s arrived Nov. 10 and a third 11 days later. Also aiding in the process of transition were the T-28s.

The year 1955 seems to have been pivotal in terms of the strength of leadership from its NCOs. While space renders impossible naming all who have contributed, here emerge such names as the Marks brothers, the Bronger brothers, Charlie Johnson, Norman Thomas, Tom Rodgers, Al Fredericks, Vince Michelena, and so many others. In all, it has been men such as these who have been a backbone strength to the Air Guard.

Another story on the "Super Cat," relates that once Maj Carwell was flying out of summer camp at Savannah. Jackie's F-51 developed an oil leak, and he was forced down in the Georgia swamps. When his rescuers finally reached him, Carwell was lying on the wing of the plane with a fishing line tied to his big toe. At least, so the story goes!

The Year 1956—End of the Mustang Era In retrospect it seems an oddity that one who fought so long to usher in the jet age should have died without seeing it happen. , on Jan. 31 Lee J. Merkel was killed in the crash of an F-51 10 miles north of Bedford, Ind., the third pilot to die while on Air Guard status. The veteran flier was known as a "hot" pilot. He had once served as wing commander, and as an air technician had been the first base detachment commander, as well as commander of the 123d Fighter-Interceptor Group.

With their three T-33s and six T-28s, Kentucky Air Guard pilots continued to prepare for jets as tactical aircraft. Work was begun in April to extend the runway 1-19 to a length of 7,800 feet so that jets could use Standiford Field.

Selection of a replacement for Lee Merkel took place June 1 when Lt Col Verne M. Yahne became the new base detachment commander. He had been a member of the military unit for some time and was formerly on the faculty of Lindsey-Wilson Junior College at Columbia, Ky. Yahne also took command of the 123d Fighter-Interceptor Group.

Field training in 1956 at Savannah marked the end of the trail for the F-51s, maybe not too soon. Maj Don Burch earlier had made a crash landing north of Bowling Green and Capt Ronnie

Peterson lost an F-51 near Parris Island, S.C., at summer camp. Peterson had been well briefed on the capabilities of a Mustang forced down in water. The air scoop under the fuselage caused the F-51 to sink faster than a lead sinker. In his eagerness to get out, he opened his "Mae West" life jacket and pulled the inflating device on his rubber raft too soon. The F-51 had come to rest on the bottom, as expected, but in only three feet of water!

Another tale of the era involves a weekend cross-country trip from field training at Savannah down to Miami, Fla. The flight surgeon, Maj Harold Kleinert and his able pilot, Maj Elmo Burgess were flying back in the C-47. Burgess took off from Miami, but when he reached altitude the two days without sleep in Miami took their toll. Burgess told Kleinert to "fly" the aircraft, but the physician had no more sleep than his pilot friend. When one of them finally awakened, the warning lights of their nearly-empty fuel tanks were blinking a message no pilot wants to read. Luckily, they were just off the coast near Savannah and were able to bring the plane home safely.

The fiscal year budget of 1955-56 brought a boost of \$3.3 million to the economy of the Louisville area. It was also at this point that individuals such as Capt Charles C. Sauer, base personnel officer, Maj William H. Beck, the chief of maintenance, and Maj Charles Sellins begin to make their skills helpful to the KyANG. All too often men like these may go unnoticed, but their daily efforts make the Air Guard run smoothly.

One more story of the humorous and ridiculous brings to a close the colorful years of the Mustangs. Once again, it was the illustrious Griswold who flew one day to an unknown destination for a load of turtle meat. He returned with his exotic cargo stuffed into every inch of space available in the Mustang, including ammunition storage spaces. For some unknown reason, when Griswold returned to Standiford he left in such a hurry that he forgot to tell anyone about the turtle meat. Several July days later the technicians discovered the source of the mysterious odor. There is a version of the story which holds that Griswold's Mustang was buried somewhere, too ripe with the smell of rotten turtle meat to be sent back for scrap with the rest of the Mustangs!

As the F-86 Sabres began to arrive, the unit's F-51s were flown to Sacramento, Calif., where they were put into "mothballs."

The KyANG flew the T-6 as one of the early proficiency aircraft, and continued using them for support flying even after the Korean recall period of 1950-52.

Some of the earliest aircraft possessed by the Kentucky Air National Guard were several A-26. Later the A-26 was also called the B-26, thereby causing some understandable confusion. The Invaders furnished the KyANG with a twin-engine aircraft for proficiency flying by members of the 165 Utility Flight and the Headquarters, 223d Air Service Group. Its real value lay in its use in towing "sleeve" targets for air-to-air gunnery by Mustang pilots in practicing marksmanship.

Work on the runway extension for 1-19 at Standiford had begun in April 1956 to accommodate

jet travel, both commercial and military. All tactical pilots had busied themselves with transition to jets, using both the T-33, a version of the T-28 and the T-28. The Air Guard was getting ready for the "Sabre Years."

The F-51 were ferried to California to be scrapped, with the last one leaving Standiford in October. The first of the F-86A Sabres to arrive came in Sept. 13, with the full compliment of 25 of the jets scheduled to arrive by Oct. 15. Maintenance personnel were trained and ready for the Sabres by the time they arrived. One more T-33 arrived Nov. 20 to aid in the transition of pilots. By the end of the year there were eight T-28s, the C-47A and one C-45A.

The F-86s had to wait for a time on the ramp while the runway project was completed, but by the end of January 1957 Standiford 1-19 was ready for takeoffs. Meanwhile, bids for a \$1.8 million expansion of Air Guard facilities at a new location across the field were let Dec. 18 to the Robert Simmons Construction Co. by the Corps of Engineers. Included were the hangar, parking ramp and taxi ways, supply and armament storage, a motor pool, a crash house, and a fuel storage area located on a 51-acre tract on Grade Lane.

The intensive program which ushered in the change to jets was designed to supplement the air defense of a 300-mile sector around Louisville. Four pilots were kept on duty during daylight hours, standing runway alert. Within three minutes of sounding a horn, the F-86 pilots were to be airborne. This, of course, required special arrangements with the Standiford Tower for takeoff clearance for the Sabres, in search of some target identified by the Air Defense Command.

Before the runway alert took place, the squadron pilots went to Gulfport, Miss., for air-to-air gunnery practice. This brief training period, in addition to field training in 1957, was unique. Efforts to obtain the results of the gunnery are still classified or unavailable, but perhaps this is just as good for the unit.

Another crash of a civilian airliner at Standiford Field occurred March 10, and again four Air Guardsmen were active in rescue of the passengers. Jean W. DeConstant, Malcolm T. Bowen, James P. Lovelace, and James R. Mack were presented Soldiers Medals and Kentucky Medals for Valor at ceremonies held June 17 at Savannah where the Ky ANG was attending field training.

Construction in 1957 was worth about \$4 million, technician pay was almost \$790,000, and military payroll and expenses added another \$5 million, making the Air Guard worth about \$10 million to the Louisville and Kentucky economy.

Flying the F-86 turned out to be a dangerous business. On Jan. 28, 1957, 2d Lt. Owen W. Turner was killed in an air crash of a T-28 over Alabama. On Oct. 30, 2d Lt Richard L. Hudson was killed in an F-86 during an Air Defense Command scramble.

It wasn't all that dangerous. 2d Lt Bob Byrd, who had gone off to flight training just prior to the

jet era, was the first Kentucky Air Guardsman to "punch out" of a jet. Taking the Sabre on a test hop, he was alarmed by heavy engine vibration and a fire warning light on the instrument panel. Byrd did what he had been trained to do, ejecting from the F-86 which went down in Bernheim Forest, burning about 10 acres of trees but hurting no one there. Byrd himself was scratched and bruised as his parachute pulled him through the trees, but he made his way to a telephone and rode back to Standiford Field.

A couple of farmers issued a question or two to the Air Guard when they found fuel tanks in their fields. A 2d Lt William P. Cast had reportedly experienced an electrical malfunction in the F-86 he was flying. The belly tanks were a clean miss, hurting nobody. Other Air Guardsmen got their names in the papers from time to time for antics in the F-86, including the time that Capt R. E. Simpson decided to "buzz" the airstrip at Sturgis, Ky., his hometown.

The advent of the jet era in the Air National Guard was the end of another. In 1957 the KyANG took its last trip on a "troop train" to Savannah. This was an experience that would linger long in the memories of those who were lucky enough to take part. It was 24 hours of fun, laughter, card-playing, drinking and companionship. Meals were served in the regular dining cars by Pullman personnel, and were enjoyed by everyone, especially the food service section from the Air Guard who would be cooking for the next two weeks. By June 30 the KyANG had an authorized strength of 995 persons and 855 of these were actually assigned. The 1957 budget was just over \$5 million. The Tac Hospital had grown to 69 slots, including four nurses. Maj William A. Clampett came as squadron AF adviser in January 1957.

A 123d Air Base Group came into being from July-November with Lt Col William "Dick" Senn in command. During that time Lt Col Sam Martin took charge of the old 123d Maintenance and Supply Group but the Air Base Group was shelved again (it had existed during the 1952-53 period) and Senn resumed command of the M&S Group. As late as 1959 Kentucky and Arkansas were still disputing which state should have control of the 123d Air Base Group. Eventually, Maj Gen Winston P. Wilson, the chief of NGB, decided in favor of Arkansas, thus ending the discussion.

The "Canberra Years" ushered in the concept of tactical reconnaissance, beginning Jan. 15, 1958, and extending through part of 1965. Effective in the middle of January, the Kentucky Air National Guards was given a new mission, that of aerial photographic reconnaissance. Not only did it signal the end of the fighter-bomber or fighter-interceptor era, but the beginning of a stable relationship with the Tactical Air Command (TAC).

Among the changes was the redesignation as tactical reconnaissance units, but also there were formidable changes in other groups assigned to wing headquarters. Under the 123d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing were: 123d Tactical Reconnaissance Group (Kentucky) 117th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (Kansas) 154th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (Arkansas) 165 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (Kentucky) 123d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron (Arkansas) 195th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (California) All of the Tac Recon Squadrons were to be equipped in the near future with RB-57. Assignment of the California squadron was

only temporary, because it did not convert to B-57s and remained a fighter-interceptor unit.

The primary missions of the new wing and its subordinate units were bomb damage assessment, anti-submarine warfare, and penetration of the Air Defense zones of the United States in conjunction with radar evaluation of Air Defense units. Public announcement of the change was made Feb. 15, including a strength in Kentucky of 840 officers and airmen. The reorganization was completed March 25 by reassigning the wing from 1st Air Force, Mitchell AFB, N.Y., to 14th Air Force, moving out of ADC into the TAC numbered air force at Robins AFB, Ga.

The transition to RB-57B resulted in sending three pilots to training in the new aircraft. As these three were checked out they became instructors and began a long process of training the other tactical pilots. It was a slow task because only one dual-control aircraft was available; in all, 34 pilots were each given three transition rides, an instrument check, a night check, and a standardization check ride, using only the one dual B-57.

It was during this year that the Kentucky Air National Guard moved to its present location at Standiford Field. To the newly-constructed hangar and other facilities it was also announced that a new Operations and Training (O&T) Building would also be constructed. Taken with the other recent improvements to the 51-acre tract, it brought the total value of the physical plant to an estimated \$5.3 million.

"We're delighted with this new mission," Gen Ardery said. "This way we can stay in business longer, and we're anxious to stay in business," he said. Ardery explained that fighter-interceptor missions for manned aircraft were becoming scarcer as guided missies were developed.

The addition of the twin-jet Canberra's was estimated to increase the value of plant and equipment to over \$27 million. As a bomber the B-57 was a two-place aircraft, but the RB version of the Canberra was operated by one aircrewman. Someone calculated it took 35 support personnel on the ground (from mechanics to cooks) to keep one Canberra flying. Sixteen of the RB-57s were assigned to the 165 Tac Recon Squadron of Kentucky.

While the Mustangs and Sabres had been armed with guns, the Canberra was stripped of defensive armament. For the first time, pilots began to learn not only the art of reconnaissance flying, but to adjust also to the notion of performing a mission unarmed. As Gen Ardery explained, "without armament on the aircraft, we can be sure the pilot will bring home information, not tarry to be destroyed."

After four straight summer camp excursions to Savannah, this year the organization went to Gulfport Municipal Airport in Mississippi. It was unique for another reason-pilots of the 165 Squadron utilized both the F-86 and the RB-57. Lt Col Eugene Kinnaird flew an F-86 to Gulfport and an RB-57 back to Louisville.

The goal for 1959 was to complete the transition and qualifying of all tactical pilots. As the

aircrews became familiar with the "57s" they discovered the maneuverability and the "forgiving nature" of the Canberra.

The National Guard Bureau called a meeting to assist the Air Defense Command with the RB-57 jets. It was to become an extensive commitment, with the mission to penetrate ADC zones, testing the radar and interceptor squadrons of ADC. The mission was dubbed "Eye Opener" and the ADC missions took the Canberra's to McChord AFB, Wash., Tampa, Fla., Battle Creek, Mich., and Cold Lake and Saskatoon, Canada.

On May 1 the contract was let for resurfacing the main north-south runway of Standiford Field with a four-inch coating of asphalt, and using ANG funds. Later, May 4-10, the wing underwent the first federal inspection since receiving the Canberra's. The result was the best rating the wing ever had received.

Field training was conducted at Gulfport, Miss., again Aug. 15-30 and by late August the transition to the RB-57 was completed. The results of summer camp were termed "highly successful."

On Dec. 23 as the administration of A. B. Chandler was replaced by that of incoming governor Bert T. Combs, Col William D. Ott, a member of the Kentucky Air National Guard since its organization, was named assistant adjutant general for air. Col Ott had commanded the 223d Air Service Group and the 123d Air Base Group, as well as serving as wing vice commander.

By the end of 1959 the wing completed its flying with 3,410 hours of jet time and 931 hours of support time. There were no accidents, and as result of this accomplishment, Lt Col Robert K. Hendricks accepted for Kentucky a certificate of accomplishment. The award was presented at the Commanders Conference at Ellington AFB, Tex.

With the start of a new decade came a number of important changes in the organization and operation of the KyANG, and some of the older facets disappeared forever. The annual report of the adjutant general of Kentucky reported that construction for 1958-60 had come to a total of \$1.5 million, placing the units in modern facilities with adequate space for the first time.

Operationally, the commitments to "Eye Opener" continued with the Canberra's throughout the year as the squadrons accepted wider and wider photo reconnaissance commitments. One of the construction items which had recently been accomplished was a runway barrier cable suitable for arresting the jets if they should overrun the normal landing strip area of the runway. It was installed at a cost of \$34,000.

The first overseas operation since the Korean recall came for the KyANG when six B-57s and one C-47 flew to Bermuda for ADC exercises under "Eye Opener." The aircraft left Bermuda in close intervals, and flew penetration against air defenses along the Atlantic Coast at 40,000 feet before coming non-stop back to Louisville.

On other exercises, one B-57 was sent to Anchorage in October to make a base survey in preparation for "Operation Willow Freeze" in Alaska. "Operation Down South," staged from Ogden, Utah, and Louisville, involved 15 sorties and 45 hours' flying. Other classified missions for the USAF added another 60 hours. These missions actually were completed in February, 1961.

From July 23-Aug. 6 annual field training was held at Alpena, Mich., for the first time. Joining units of the 123d Wing were the 117th Tac Recon Squadron of Hutchinson, Kan., and the 154th Tac Recon Squadron of Little Rock, Ark. They used the new operations center concept to control all flying activities at Phelps Collins Field.

Gen Ott replaced Gen Ardery temporarily, acting as the wing commander for the time being. The 165 Tac Recon Squadron was picked as one of nine ANG units designated as "outstanding" for operational readiness. The unit was commanded by Lt Col Robert K. Hendricks.

Two more RB-57s and one C-47 went to Alaska to support "Operation Willow Freeze" during January. They photographed 210 square miles of Alaskan territory for a drop zone area and other maneuvers. Seven more Canberra's followed in February to take part in the actual Willow Freeze exercises. While there they also furnished Alaskan Air Command with photos of remote radar sites and compiled 200 hours' flying time before they ah1 returned.

The 192d Tac Recon Squadron of Reno, part of the Nevada Air National Guard, was assigned to the 123d Tac Recon Wing, effective April 1. The same month eight RB-57s from Kentucky deployed to Puerto Rico for action in an ADC exercise. Another operational commitment this year sent three Canberra's to the Christmas Islands in the Pacific Ocean for 90 days during atomic bomb tests.

Other special missions included filming 78,000 acres of Oak Ridge, Tenn., in color for the Atomic Energy Commission, and "Project Alamac" completed for the USAF.

July 22-23 the Wing Operations Section placed its command post in operation for the first time during "Operation Big Sweat." The post was equipped with multiple telephones, other communications equipment, and large status boards to chart unit operations. Other procedural improvements included the establishment of an Analysis, Records and Reports unit under the Maintenance Branch and the addition of a card punch system for operations. Included in the latter were flying time, landings, and types of missions, allowing" the wing to compare units and develop trend analyses.

Field training took the units to Gulfport, Miss., Municipal Airport for the third time. The summer camp took place Aug. 5-20 with transportation by C-97 jet transports for the first time, allowing two extra days of actual training. At the same time, eight Canberra's and more than 60 men were sent to Shaw AFB, S.C., to take part in a joint exercise called "Operation Swift Strike I". The Army paratroops were staged from Shaw also and Kentucky's NCOs quickly learned it was dangerous to walk under the trees near the NCO Club.

Late in January a veteran member of the KyANG, Lt Col James Pickett, assistant director of wing operations, had a close call on landing his RB-57. A stuck landing gear caused him to have to circle Standiford Field about two hours burning up fuel and allowing the crash crew to lay a coating of foam on the runway about 2,000 feet long. He bellied in on the foam and slid to a stop in about 1,400 feet, damaging the Canberra very slightly; only a small strip of metal was peeled from the bottom of the RB-57.

Field training was conducted Aug. 2-16 at Phelps-Collins ANGB at Alpena, Mich., and for the first time all four flying squadrons were present at summer camp. Available ramp space made precision scheduling mandatory, with 52 RB-57s and 25 multi-engine cargo aircraft on the parking area at the same time. Despite the crowded conditions, the 165 Squadron was able to deploy through Selfridge AFB, Mich., to Harmon AFB, Newfoundland.

The 123d Tac Recon Wing was completely reorganized, effective Oct. 15, into a double-deputy structure, which reinstated the 123d Tac Recon Group with a commander, and under him, a deputy commander for each of the areas of operations and materiel. Also created were a 123d Materiel Squadron (combining the Supply and CAM Squadrons) and a 123d Combat Support Squadron (which merged the A&E Squadron and the Transportation Squadron). At the same time the Wing Headquarters, the 165 Tac Recon Squadron and the 123d Tac Hospital were also reorganized, and the total changes reduced the KyANG strength by 185 spaces. The new group commander was Col Eugene F. Kinnaird Jr.

The other state Air Guard organizations with units assigned to the Kentucky wing were also affected. The changes created a 189th Tac Recon Group at Little Rock, 190th Tac Recon Group at Hutchinson, Kan., and 152d Tac Recon Group at Reno. All of these group headquarters were now assigned to the 123d Tac Recon Wing, plus the 123d Tac Recon Group of Kentucky.

In September, flying to the National Guard Association convention at Denver, hailstones seriously damaged a C-47 from the KyANG. The pilots, Lt Col James Upchurch and Col Jack H. Owen, were protected against shattering windshield glass by SSgt James Poole, the crew chief, who held a flight jacket to protect them. The 13 delegates to the NGA proceeded to Denver after 90 minutes of flying without a windshield.

Aircraft maintenance personnel had been consolidated into one unit by the recent reorganizations. It eliminated problems in control of maintenance personnel and cut out paper work.

Numerous special missions for various commands were flown throughout the year. Two of the larger exercises were "Big Blast Papa" in May and "Apache Opal" in June. These were ADC projects and were staged from Kindley AFB, Bermuda. Big Blast Papa included 24 RB-57s (6 from KyANG) from units of the wing; they departed from Bermuda at midnight for a pre-dawn penetration of the coastal areas of the Atlantic shores. Making the jaunt were Col Yahne, Lt Col Hendricks, Maj Jim McClure, Capt Carl Black, Capt James "Mick" Gannon, Capt A. W. "Dub"

Shean, and 1st Lt J. L. O'Loughlin.

Apache Opal took four KyANG Canberra's (of a total of 21 RB-57s) and was a daylight penetration. Pilots involved were Col Webster, Col Yahne, Lt Col Kinnaird, Maj Lawrence Quebbeman, and Maj Cliff Sachleben. The unit also was assigned a special TAC project to do photo recon for the maneuver area which would be used for Swift Strike III. It required extensive work Aug. 10-24, going on concurrently with field training. Headquarters 2d Army asked for photo coverage of Camp Pickett, Va., and to their surprise the mission was completed and delivered within three days.

Field training was held at Gulfport, Miss., Municipal Airport concurrently with Swift Strike III. Kentucky units in the field at Gulfport Aug. 9-24 were joined by the Arkansas Air Guard's 189th Tac Recon Group and 154th Tac Recon Squadron.

Also begun in August, and to last for quite some time, the first of six RB-57A aircraft were received for reconditioning at Shewmaker ANGB. The objective to restore a photo recon capability to the aircraft was carried out by a contract maintenance team under local supervision. This renovation of the B-57A involved about 6,000 man-hours per aircraft. The maintenance program also began a "phase" type of inspection on the aircraft, 18 phases spaced over intervals of 75 flying hours on each RB-57. It required twice as many inspections, but reduced "down time" considerably. It yielded a system which would "turn around" the aircraft in a short time, thus reducing the possibility of not having it ready to fly a mission on short notice.

Due to budgetary limitations, the KyANG suffered a net loss of two officer and 87 airman spaces. Despite the losses, a general inspection by TAC Jan. 9-15 again confirmed the C-I combat readiness rating once again. It was noted that flying experience levels in KyANG aircrews exceeded that found in similar Air Force units. Partially as a result of the high experience levels, the KyANG was able to sustain its safety record of 23,000 flying hours without major accident.

Field training was held at Otis AFB, Falmouth, Mass., Aug. 1-14, and the Kentucky units were joined by the 152d Tac Recon Squadron of Reno, Nev. The deployment, one of the longest in the record of either Kentucky or Nevada while on Air Guard status, tested the airlift capability of ANG troop carrier units in New York and Pennsylvania. In all, 455 men and 89,000 pounds of cargo were sent to Otis. On the field training at Otis, the flying unit managed to maintain an in-commission rate of 95 percent and to fly 397 hours. As usual, the maintenance crews were responsible for more of their usually unsung miracles. The contract maintenance crew working on conversion of the RB-57 As had completed two and was working on the third of six by July 1.

During the field training period, working at Shewmaker, the Civil Engineering Section replaced a portion of pavement in the Motor Pool, designed second-story alterations to the Hangar, and repaired a number of plumbing and electrical lines.

For 11 days in January, an around-the-clock effort by KyANG technicians modified all of the B- and C-model Canberra's for their return to the Air Force. The B-57 supply had run almost completely out and the medium bombers were in demand in Southeast Asia. The maintenance men removed camera equipment, installed armament, changed engines in seven instances, and put five of the Canberra's through phase inspection.

It was made public Feb. 16 that the Air Guard would be switching the Canberra's for the RF-101 by about October. The news did not appear to cause much of a stir in Louisville, since the reconnaissance mission would not be changed. The Falls City had already become accustomed to jets, even though the Voodoos would be capable of breaking the sound barrier and the Canberra's were subsonic in speed.

The 123d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing and its flying units in Arkansas and Nevada moved into the era of supersonic jets in 1965. From that point until 1976 the Kentucky Air Guard would identify with the RF-101 Voodoo as its mission aircraft, and would continue in its aerial photo reconnaissance mission.

Unlike 1958, the change in aircraft did not signal a realignment of units in other states. Although Kansas and its 190th Tac Recon Group retained the RB-57, the 190th Group and the 117th Tac Recon Squadron, both of Hutchinson, Kan., remained assigned to the headquarters at Louisville. Notice of the changes came Feb. 16.

As the KyANG readied to receive the RF-101s, the maintenance crews worked furiously to complete the conversion of the B- and C-model B-57s for return to Southeast Asia. In April and May they completed three more of the Canberra's as other efforts turned toward the conversion to Voodoos. An article in the Louisville Times suggested that part of the reason for recall of the Canberra's was related to a Viet Cong raid on Bien Hoa on Nov. 1, 1965. There, caught on the ground, the B-57s of the 3d Medium Bomb Wing were blown up in the raid.

At this time the Kentucky Air Guard was running way ahead of previous years in terms of manning percentages. In his annual report for the previous fiscal year, Maj Gen A. Y. Lloyd reported that the KyANG had led the nation in strength percentage. With 117 officers and 607 airmen assigned, they had all pilot positions filled.

At an open house held at Shewmaker ANGB May 22, Armed Forces Day, the community had its first close look at a static display of the RF-101. Flying at speeds of mach 1.5 (about 1,170 mph), the Voodoo was almost twice as swift as the Canberra, which operated at a top speed of mach .84 (about 600 mph). Mach is the speed of sound at sea level-780 mph. Col Yahne predicted that the speed on takeoff of about 200 mph and the ability of the 101 to climb would take it up and away from the congested housing areas around Standiford Field. He said it might actually reduce jet noise problems, and that the change would give the unit an up-to-date airplane. Yahne said the RB-57s are "now obsolete in reconnaissance missions."

The switch to Voodoos came as the first such conversion in the Air National Guard, affecting the

165, 154th, and 192d Tac Recon Squadrons, all assigned to the 123d Tac Recon Wing. The Voodoos, due in October, would be F-101s being used as fighter-interceptors and would require extensive modifications to convert them to recon models.

The first Voodoo actually arrived at Standiford Field from Bentwaters, England, where the F-101s had been in use for air defense purposes. At this point aircrews already had gone to Shaw AFB, S.C., where Yahne was first to solo. Others in the first transition class under the 4414th Combat Crew Training Squadron included Lt Col James H. McClure, of Louisville, and Lt Col Lawrence O. "Doc" Savage and Maj Robert L. Byrd of the 189th Tac Recon Group, and Lt Col Steven R. Wilkinson, AF adviser to the Little Rock group. By July 1 Col Kinnaird and Lt Col Hendricks of Louisville also had completed transition.

As the first Voodoo was received at Shewmaker July 6, Col Yahne was reassuring the public about jet noise, saying that a suppressor shield would be erected to cut down on engine noise.

At that stage it was decided that field training would be held at Shewmaker because of a shortage of aircraft or pilots who could fly them. With one assigned aircraft and two other borrowed Voodoos, the KyANG stayed at home Aug. 7-21. About 60 members of the units commuting from over 50 miles were quartered in the Standiford Motel. The changes involved major training programs for Air Guardsmen, from the pilots and mechanics to the supply technicians. The number of supply items was doubled; it took about 32 man-hours to fly a Voodoo for one hour, as compared with about 17 for the Canberra.

Now, the four checked out in Voodoos trained the other tactical pilots. "Going from an RB-57 to an RF-101 is about like stepping from a Model-T into a modern automobile with very sensitive power steering," said Jim McClure. Yahne had another analogy: "The RB-57 has fairly long wings, is a glider," he said. "At 40,000 feet you can cut its engines and glide 100 miles. But with the RF-101 you would come down about 10 miles down the pike. It's all engine.

Voodoos in use in 1965 were all made between 1954 and 1956, but were first-line equipment of the Air Force, actually in use in Southeast Asia throughout the Vietnam War for daylight reconnaissance. "Flying the 101 gives the satisfaction of being able to get somewhere in a hurry. It also gives the satisfaction of being able to fly such a complicated plane." Yahne said.

From October to November the remainder of the Voodoos continued to arrive. Models A and D were modified to become G and H models and the KyANG acquired 24 in the process.

An interesting sidelight came up when the tragic explosion occurred in August at the DuPont plant in Louisville. Reported in "Joe Creason's Kentucky" on Aug. 28, the article said an irate woman called Shewmaker complaining about the noise. "My house has just been shaken by your F-101s breaking the sound barrier," she complained. "You said you wouldn't do that and you've broken your word!" That puzzled SMSgt Russell Brown, who replied, "I don't know what you're talking about. All of our planes are on the ground." At that instant another explosion from the DuPont plant occurred, rocking the Air Guard hangar. "Lady," Brown replied hastily, "I

don't know what it is, but we've got a big problem!"

On Nov. 26 a problem of a different sort erupted. The Federal Aviation Agency and the Louisville-Jefferson County Air Board, which operates Standiford Field, refused to allow the KyANG to install a barrier cable on the runway. The Air Guard needed the barrier to arrest the Voodoo in much the same way as landing cables are used on aircraft carriers. With the Voodoos coming in at speeds around 200 mph, AF regulations required the barrier cable. While the argument ensued over whether this would be allowed, the KyANG was forced to move the Voodoos.

In order to keep the pilot transition program going, flying operations were switched first to Ft. Campbell, Ky., briefly, and then to McGhee-Tyson ANGB at Knoxville, Tenn.

While the Air Guard and NGB negotiated with the FAA and Air Board, flying continued from the other facilities. Kentucky pilots were ferried, almost daily, to Tennessee while the ground crews remained away for two-week periods. A second C-47 and a third T-33 was assigned to the KyANG to help support the interim program.

Despite several negotiation attempts, the controversy dragged on, amid much publicity. At the basis of the argument was an FAA regulation which would not allow any obstacle to protrude above the surface level of the runway of a civilian airport within 400 feet of the landing strip. Military regulations, on the other hand, required a barrier for anything short of 10,000 feet and the Standiford runway 1-19 was only 7,800 feet long. A feature in the Louisville Times showed pictures of Capt Carl D. Black practicing his flying in a \$1.5 million "flight simulator." This complex electronic device duplicated all kinds of normal and abnormal flight conditions and was installed on the second floor of the Hangar Building. MSgt Howard A. Curtis was shown creating simulator problems for Black to solve under the "hood" on the device. The inside was identical to the cockpit of the Voodoo. One of the headlines read, "Only way the Kentucky Air National Guard pilots are flying these days."

The Year 1966—Owen Assumes Command Despite all obstacles presented by the barrier dispute, the pilot transitioning program continued at McGhee-Tyson Field at Knoxville. In the face of the problems, 28 tactical pilots were put through transition training during the time Standiford was closed to normal RF-101 flights. The matter was finally solved Jan. 28 when the FAA agreed to allow the landing barrier devices to be installed off the end of the runway itself on areas called blast pads where jets paused to "run up" their engines prior to takeoff.

In the meantime, RB-57 operations came to an end, too. Some of the last Canberra recon missions were flown to provide RB-57 data for USAF headquarters, since the Canberra's were now being used extensively in Vietnam. The last RB-57 was flown to Martin Aircraft Co. in January 1966, ending more than seven years in which the KyANG operated the twin-jet Canberras without a major accident.

Personnel strength in the KyANG was, for the most part, not a problem. On March 12 Maj Gen

A. Y. Lloyd, the adjutant general, was quoted as saying increased quotas for military manpower through the Selective Service system resulted in waiting lists for those wanting to join the state Air or Army National Guard. One problem that did exist, , was pointed out by Col Yahne, the base detachment commander, who said commercial airlines had taken four part-time Guardsmen pilots within the previous year.

April 26 the Voodoos began returning from McGhee-Tyson as the landing barrier construction was nearly completed.

The next day announcement was made of a major change of command. Brig Gen Jack H. Owen became wing commander, replacing Brig Gen William H. Webster, who retired. Owen, 46, had been serving as chief of staff in State Headquarters and was replaced in that position by Col Verne M. Yahne. Yahne, who had been vice commander of the wing, was followed in that slot by Col Eugene F. Kinnaird Jr., but the former continued to serve as base detachment commander on a full-time basis. Kinnaird was followed as commander of the 123d Tac Recon Group by Lt Col Lawrence A. Quebbeman. Kinnaird and Quebbeman both were air technician officers, while Owen was an executive and owner of several businesses related to tobacco at Cynthiana, Ky.

The KyANG went to field training June 4-18 at Travis Field in Savannah, Ga., only to be interrupted by Hurricane Alma. No injuries or serious damage resulted, but the storm forced the Voodoos to return to Shewmaker. The units took 635 men, 14 RF-101s, three T-33s and two C-47s to camp. The traditional parade and review the middle Saturday morning went off as scheduled, although the Voodoo flyover was staged from Louisville. Lt Col Quebbeman later remarked, "The scheduling was a little tricky." The 10-ship formation of Voodoos arrived right on time with a perfect low-level pass over the parade. They returned to Savannah to resume flying as scheduled in Georgia after the three-day interruption.

In September a long love affair was ended when the unit's ever faithful C-47 (Tail No. 48101) was called to active duty. Called a "subsonic 101," the Gooney Bird had been with the Kentucky Air Guard since the very early days. It was sent through a modification to become an AC-47, like the first Air Force gunships introduced in Southeast Asian combat in 1965. It was replaced in the KyANG by another C-47 from the Tennessee Air Guard, and finally by a C-54.

The Year 1967—Voodoo Training Continues The commander of TAC paid a visit to Shewmaker Jan. 14 to present personally the Air Force Association's "Outstanding Unit Award" for 1965. The visit by four-star Gen Gabriel P. Disosway was a milestone for the unit, which had never hosted either a full general at the Guard base, nor been visited at home by a commander of TAC. Gen Disosway presented the silver cup to Lt Col James H. McClure, deputy group commander for operations.

By Feb. 24 10 of the unit's RF-101 had received a coat of dull brown and green paint, part of a TAC program to have all of its aircraft camouflaged. Eventually all of the recon models were painted in the camouflage colors, with the two TF-101F "duals" left their original gray color.

This year saw a continuation of the upgrade training in the RF-101, with completion of the \$60,000 runway barrier (BAK 12) project. The increased photographic capability of the Voodoo also required a major rearrangement of the Photo Labs. Two new Versamat film and print processors were added, bringing about a complete redesign of the laboratory area. Two separate projection printing rooms also were set up to allow for making aerial and still photo prints at the same time.

On March 28, 2d Lt William M. Irion was attempting to take off at Standiford when he experienced power failure. He aborted, released his drag chute and dropped his barrier hook. The Voodoo ran off the end of the runway, dragging the two 50,000-pound anchor chains to within 500 feet of the Watterson Expressway. He escaped unhurt only seconds before the aircraft, loaded with 13,000 pounds of fuel, caught fire. Air Guard crash and fire crews battled the fuel for half an hour before putting out the fire. The Voodoo was a total loss.

Annual field training was held at Savannah again in 1967, as the Kentuckians trekked to Travis Field June 2-17. Tuesday of each week eight aircraft were launched on deployments to the West Coast. Each flight of four was required to accomplish two mid-air refuelings with the Voodoos, with the flights returning again on Thursdays. While the number of RF-101s remaining at Savannah was thus reduced, those remaining at Travis Field continued with normal photo recon and proficiency flying.

Immediately after summer camp the unit was committed to Operation Guard Strike, starting June 19. The 123d Tac Recon Group was committed to fly two photo sorties each morning and a pair again each afternoon. This went on seven days a week for nearly a month, and all done in addition to other flying. At the end, the Kentuckians had amassed 62 RF-101 sorties (104 hours and 40 minutes flying time).

In addition, the KyANG pilots picked up recon film taken by RF-84s of the 181st Tac Recon Group of Terre Haute, Ind., developed the footage and printed the photographs from that film, as well as that of the KyANG. The final products were air-dropped by T-33 couriers going from Standiford Field to Campbell Army Field (Ft. Campbell, Ky.) or Bakalar AFB, Columbus, Ind. The T-bird sorties added 32 support missions to the KyANG Guard Strike commitment (30 more hours).

The Photo Lab processed almost a mile of recon film from Voodoo sorties, and 1,094 feet more from the Thunderjets. Exposures from the RF-101 film resulted in 1,064 photo enlargements and the RF-84s produced another 218 prints used for interpretation of Guard Strike missions. The Guard Strike operation was manned entirely by the National Guard.

For another two and a half months the KyANG furnished two RF-101s, six maintenance men, and two officers to Shaw AFB to help upgrade crews of the regular Air Force preparing for Vietnam duty. During this same period, joining with forces from Wing units at Little Rock and Reno, the combined sorties for the Shaw commitment totaled 168. The combined maintenance

personnel worked so effectively that not a single sortie was lost during the Shaw deployment. The officer pilots not only performed test flights to keep the aircraft operational, but assumed administrative responsibility for the enlisted members of the detachment as well.

The Year 1968— The Pueblo Recall With the Vietnam War raging in Southeast Asia and U.S. manpower resources strained accordingly, an incident off the coast of North Korea proved to be instrumental in causing the recall of the 123d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing to federal service Jan. 26, 1968.

Orders for the 123d Tac Recon Wing and all other units of the Ky-ANG (except for State Headquarters) called for 24 months' active duty, unless sooner relieved. Kentucky units affected by the call (with their gaining commands in parentheses) were: Hq, 123d Tac Recon Wing (TAC) Hq, 123d Tac Recon Group (TAC) 165 Tac Recon Squadron 123d Tac Hospital 123d Combat Support Squadron 123d Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron 123d Supply Squadron 123d Communications Flight (AFCS) 165 Weather Flight (AWS-MAC)

The no-notice recall brought 104 officers and 650 airmen of the Ky-ANG to active duty abruptly, giving them no time to adjust their civilian responsibilities or home lives. Nonetheless, within 24 hours, all of the members of the Kentucky units had reported for active duty—some from as far away as Madison, WI, Chicago, IL, and Washington, D.C.

Not recalled among units assigned to the Wing Headquarters previously was the 190th Tac Recon Group of Hutchinson, Kan., which was flying the RB-57 with a different mission assignment. The Pueblo call-up marked the turning point in this relationship also, as the 190th was not rejoined with the 123d Wing thereafter.

By Jan. 29, the shock of the initial recall leveling off, the units launched into serious training efforts. The readiness rating of the Ky-ANG at the time of recall was C-3 because of many factors related to modification of the RF-101s, shortage of parts and equipment, and the priority which had been assigned to the unit while it was still on Air Guard status.

The 123d CAM Squadron and 123d Supply Squadron were particularly important in the process of upgrading unit readiness. Individual training of part-time Air Guardsmen by the full-time technician force was given high priority. (It was not easy for responsibilities to be abruptly shifted.) The CAM personnel were faced with the needs of the Voodoos, installing newly-acquired cameras and electronic navigational components. Each aircraft had to be carefully checked out to insure the proper operation of each system.

"Fortunately we were assigned high priority for procurement of equipment," Gen Owen said, "and Tactical Air Command moved quickly to bring our materiel status to required standards, particularly in the areas of cold and hot weather uniforms, war-readiness supply kits (WRSK) equipment and cameras for our RF-101."

One area of concern was a shortage in manpower allocation. Faced with major reorganizations

dictated by TAC early in the call-up, the prior limits which had been set by TAC on programmed strength as an ANG unit now meant the 123d Wing was immediately faced with personnel shortages. There were no replacements at all for the first six months of the call-up.

Soon after the activation the aircrews were sent in increments to SEA Survival School at Homestead AFB, Fla., and to tactical training at Shaw AFB, S.C., the location of the Tactical Air Reconnaissance Center (TARC). Other deployments for training included personnel in camera repair, aircraft maintenance, photo processing and interpretation, and intelligence debriefing. All of the things which hadn't happened before because of Vietnam shortages were now directly affecting the units' combat posture.

If the heart of the Wing mission was flying, the lungs were its photo processing capability. That was greatly enhanced by a new Versamat processor (the third one), and completion of work on the photo processing cell (PPC). Once readied, the PPC was exercised completely.

Vietnam draft pressures which had kept the KyANG high in percentage of authorized strength also meant that men who were recalled were often heartily disgruntled. They had joined the Air Guard to get away from something that now they were doing 24 hours every day. Personnel who were too far from home to commute (50 miles) were given rooms in a newly-completed Holiday Inn motel. Some newspaper publicity given to that with tongue-in-cheek backfired with bitter and resentful retorts from the activated Air Guardsmen.

While the aircrews worked and worked through phase training at Shewmaker, some of the support functions received attention, too. The Comptroller Section automated all pay records through the Air Force Accounting and Finance Center in Denver. This action greatly improved handling of paychecks while the units were on active duty. The computers calculated pay, allowances, deductions for taxes, and then issued the checks and earnings statements.

During April and May, flying from Shewmaker, the Louisville unit completed a wide variety of photo reconnaissance sorties in all parts of the central United States. These were largely "recce" assignments which had been left undone because available crews and aircraft were either committed to training, or gone altogether because of SEA.

Some things people say provide a laugh or pass the time in the name of humor. One pilot quipped, "we fly up the river one day, the next day we fly down the river." It reflected the status of morale by the end of the first six months of the recall—Guardsmen were wondering why they had been recalled. There would not be much longer they would have to wait.

May 28 the unit was alerted it would "be moved to Richards-Gebaur AFB, Mo., located south of Kansas City at a little town called Belton. An advance party soon boarded a C-54 to scout the new location. There were no bands at the air strip to greet the party and when they arrived at the office of the base commander it became clearer why. The base was not aware the move had been approved and no arrangements had been made for their arrival.

At that point it also became clear that a number of members of the KyANG would not be moved to Richards-Gebaur with the Wing. The Group Headquarters would be shelved for the time being, the 165 Tac Recon Squadron would be greatly enlarged as an "augmented" squadron, and the 123d Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron would be reorganized and redesignated as a Field Maintenance Squadron. The Combat Support Squadron, Weather Flight, Communications Flight, Tac Hospital, and Supply Squadron would all be inactivated "for the duration."

This meant that a large number of the personnel of the KyANG would be relocated worldwide to other Air Force assignments. Not even then was it realized how big a problem this would eventually cause when the 123d Tac Recon Wing arrived at Richards-Gebaur AFB.

June 30 the logisticians loaded 55 sorties of cargo aboard C-130s bound for Missouri. Also dispatched were 18 commercial trailer vans full of equipment hired to haul the unit to "R-G."

On July 9 there were "farewell ceremonies" at Shewmaker for the departing units. Representing Governor Nunn was the Kentucky Adjutant General, Maj Gen Allen K. Carrell. Speeches of farewell were made and several medals were given-two of which went to members of the KyANG who were already retired: Brig Gen William D. Ott and Maj Floyd Sherman, former comptroller and finance officer. Lt Col Robert Mansfield won a Kentucky Medal for Merit and the wing commander, Brig Gen Jack H. Owen, was presented a Kentucky state flag to carry with the unit to Missouri.

On July 12 the aircraft from the tactical squadrons at Louisville and Reno were deployed in flights destined for Richards-Gebaur AFB. They spanned the distances and were received at their new home in Missouri the same day. There the 123d Wing, minus the 189th Tac Recon Group and 123d Recce Tech Squadron, assembled for the next moves.

Richards-Gebaur remained assigned to Air Defense Command and also was the location of Headquarters, 10th Air Force (ADC-NORAD). Many times the needs and demands of the TAC-gained 123d Wing would seemingly fall on deaf ears, even though the combined units from Louisville and Reno far outnumbered any other single organization.

By July 14, back at Shewmaker, personnel from the inactivated portions of the Kentucky Air Guard were beginning to leave for other assignments. The 381 officers and airmen who went to Missouri were equaled by 131 Kentuckians who were reassigned to 30 separate bases in the continental United States, and 173 who were sent overseas. Of those leaving the country, 156 went to six bases in Korea, 14 to two bases in Japan, one to South Vietnam and one to Libya.

The main part of the personnel assigned to Richards-Gebaur reported July 22. The advance party had opened facilities there July 18 in preparation, such as they were. Once on station with regular Air Force personnel, Air Guardsmen found themselves set apart in a number of ways, some subtle, some not. Dates of rank were recomputed, housing priorities shuffled, and always the quiet but meaningful discrimination borne by the label, "those Air National Guard people."

Two other major operational commitments did not involve Arkansas. One was the "Coronet Sombrero" deployment to Howard AFB under the Southern Command in the Panama Canal Zone. The other was "Cool Optic II" to Elmendorf, AFB, Alaska, under the Alaskan Air Command. First to go to Panama was a detachment from the 192d Tac Recon Squadron, which launched from Richards-Gebaur Aug. 8.

The 165 Squadron sent its party to Elmendorf on Aug. 16 where the Alaskan Air Command had requested help. Work days of 12 hours were the rule as the 165 dug into a backlog of work. Despite unfavorable weather, the Louisville pilots flew all 15 strip mapping areas requested. Seventeen of 18 jobs called for continuous coverage of wide areas, and 136 of 146 other jobs called for pinpoint accuracy. Weather scrubbed only six missions.

Cameras of the 165 exposed five miles of aerial photographs during the expedition. They flew 133 sorties and logged 170 hours of flying time. With maintenance crews working overtime to keep the Voodoos aloft, film was processed at the end of each day and was sent immediately to Alaskan Command headquarters.

Maj Gen Thomas E. Moore, commander of the Alaskan Air Command, stressed the significance of the support: "Cool Optic II provided us with valuable information about one of the most strategic parts of our country. The 165 has done an outstanding job and made a great contribution to providing top cover for America." The Kentucky unit returned to Richards-Gebaur Sept. 26, full of stories of the high prices and breathtaking scenery of the 49th state.

One fable which survived the call-up was related by members of the "broken up" Communications Flight. Just before they left Shewmaker for Korea, Sam Duncan, communications superintendent, loudly proclaimed, "Don't worry, men, we'll have that boat (the Pueblo) back before you get there!" When the rest of the contingent from Louisville arrived at Seattle, Wash., for processing overseas a week or so later, who should they find but Sam Duncan and company. The COM men reported they had been visiting the World's Fair site in Seattle, and having a very fine time!

As the activated Guardsmen departed, the State Headquarters unit remained behind. Headquarters and a Holding Detachment were the sole remnants of the Kentucky Air Guard. The nine officers and 28 enlisted men remaining concentrated on recruitment to replace anticipated losses on demobilization, and keeping Shewmaker in running condition. With a goal of 100 new recruits, the small staff worked hard and made their goal on time. Nearly 200 prospects were screened to meet the requirements for various AF specialties.

By Oct. 16 the rotation of personnel in the detachment at Howard AFB was due and a contingent from the 165 departed for Panama. There they relieved the men of the 192d Squadron of Reno to continue "Coronet Sombrero." South of the border they worked with the 24th Special Operations Wing of Southern Command, performing recon jobs for the Army as well as the Air Force. The journey took four and a half hours with mid-air refueling by KC-135

tankers.

On Nov. 20-21 the 154th Tac Recon Squadron returned to Little Rock AFB to prepare for deactivation. Ceremonies were held Dec. 20 at Little Rock to return the Arkansas units to state control, including the 123d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron with all of its resources of film processing and photo interpretation.

Aircrews and support personnel from the Wing's 165 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron participated in a rotational deployment to the Panama Canal Zone from October 1968 to January 1969. participating in mission "Coronet Sombrero". A total of 312 targets was accomplished. One hundred twenty-six missions were flown for a total of 234.7 flying hours.

Two aircraft and crews of the 165th staged out of Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina on 4 October 1968 to provide reconnaissance support for the 82d Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, S.C. Two fraged missions were flown per day for a total of 21 flying hours. Several thousand feet of film was exposed and pilots completed 10 sorties.

On 14 November 1968 two pilots flew aerial photography of target impact areas at Fort Campbell, Kentucky for the 4th Battalion, 39th. Artillery, Fort Bragg, N.C. in support of Operation "Boldshot/Brimfire I". More than 2000 feet of film was processed and printed.

Two pilots, one photo intelligence officer, two crew chiefs and one photo maintenance specialist of the tactical squadron deployed to Puerto Rico on 29 November 1968 to accomplish early intelligence and photographic work for exercise "Boldshot/Brimfire", to include vertical strip photography of the landing zone area on Vieques Island. Two pilots flew 12 sorties for a total of 26 flying hours and the photo specialists directed the processing of more than 4,000 feet of film. While in the Caribbean, the 165 also photographed vertical coverage of Puerto Rico International Airport and Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico and forwarded oblique coverage of Ramey Air Force Base.

On 15 January 1969, Lt Col Quebbeman, Commander of the 165 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (Augmented), deployed with an advanced party via C-141 aircraft to Itazuke Air Force Base, Japan. The remainder of the squadron was airlifted to Itazuke in four loads, completing the deployment on 2 February, 1969. The squadron mission was to accomplish reconnaissance study targets within South Korea on a priority basis. During its deployment phase of operations in the Far East the 165th completed 1,195 sorties and compiled 1,580 hours of tactical flying. Its precision processing laboratories produced 78,951 feet of aerial film and made 3,350 prints for using agencies, of good to excellent quality. The squadron completed redeployment to the United States on 22 April 1969, including the movement of all RF-101 aircraft and mission equipment which had been originally moved to Itazuke by the 154th Tac Recon Sq in July 1968.

The Year 1969— Japan, Korea, and Home The continued rotation of squadrons to the Far East came due for the 165 Squadron in January. On Jan. 15 the advance detachment left from

Richards-Gebaur on board a C-141 bound for Itazuke AB, Japan. Leading the detachment was the squadron commander of the 165, Lt Col Lawrence Quebbeman. The remainder of the squadron was airlifted to Japan in four more loads. Aircraft were already there, the same ones taken originally by the 154th Squadron from Arkansas.

The Nevadans rotated back to the Wing Headquarters at Richards-Gebaur on Feb. 2, after being relieved by the 165 at Itazuke. No sooner had they returned than a surprise ORI was pulled by 12th AF, with results about as might be expected with that much movement of men and equipment back and forth.

They flew 18 sorties per day routinely as directed by the operations center at Osan AB, Korea. Most were bridges, railway complexes, communications facilities, airfields, and radar sites. One of their biggest jobs was pre-strike photography for Exercise "Focus Retina," the longest airborne assault in history, which took place in Korea in March.

From Japan the unit returned once more to Richards-Gebaur, bringing not only the men and equipment they went with, but also the aircraft left by the Arkansas squadron. They redeployed April 22 with 11 C-141 loads of equipment weighing about 50,000 pounds each, plus a DC-8 and two C-130s loaded with people. Behind most of that logistical feat was Maj Edward C. Martin, a laundry operator from Bowling Green, Ky.

The Voodoos were flown back with air-to-air refueling, making two stops before reaching Hickam Air Base, Hawaii, for crew rest. Finally they launched again across water and the Western United States for Richards-Gebaur.

From May 18-25 the Kentucky and Nevada contingents departed from Richards-Gebaur to return to their Air Guard bases. They packed and shipped home the TAG mobility boxes and cases which had come so far and seen so many climates in 17 months of duty.

During the recall period of 17 months, after several major reorganizations including the inactivation of Group Headquarters July 18, 1968, together with most of its component units, the entire Wing compiled an enviable record. They piled up 19,715 tactical flying hours from a total of 11,561 sorties. The 165 Squadron alone processed 257,200 prints, 284,251 feet of film, and flew 4,438 recon sorties totaling 7,192 hours.

When they went onto active duty they had 20 RF-101s (G and H-models), two TF-101Fs, one C-54 and three T-33s. They acquired one additional C-54 while on active duty and lost one RF-101 in Missouri in a crash which took the life of Capt Robert W. Sawyer.

A total of 69 members of the Kentucky Air Guard were discharged on expiration of enlistments during the recall. Only five of these were released for hardship reasons-an outstanding record of sacrifice and service.

From that point for many months, thanks to the continued draft pressures from Vietnam,

recruitment continued to be a bonanza for the Air Guard. The coming months would be spent trying to return to a state of normalcy, following the frenetic period of active duty. There was no summer camp in 1969 because of the recent deactivation.

Now back on state status, the inactive units were placed back in service once more. The 123d Field Maintenance Squadron, created in the move to Richards-Gebaur, was replaced by the CAM Squadron once more. On Oct. 18, recognizing the value of the work provided by the section during active duty days, the 123d Civil Engineering Flight was created. They were very soon instructed to form a "Prime Beef" team as part of the intensified training they would undergo.

Following deactivation the prime task for maintenance personnel became that of realigning aircraft, equipment and supplies belonging to the various Air Guard organizations of Kentucky, Nevada, and Arkansas. Aircraft were reshuffled so each state organization had the same aircraft returned it had possessed before activation.

An aircraft reconditioning program also was instituted. The program included thorough inspections, careful comparison of tech orders and requirements, and other physical repairs. Extensive sheet metal repair work as needed' on airframes, replacement or reconditioning of hydraulic systems, adjustment of engines to exact specifications, calibration of electrical and electronic equipment, and correction of many minor problems placed the Voodoos back in order.

The pilots from the KyANG had a busy time with a number of operations commitments. These included "Corona Harvest," for which the 123d Wing was responsible for all reconnaissance activities performed by the Air Guard. Col Yahne and Lt Col Quebbeman had been to South Carolina to witness a TAC "bare base" demonstration the ultimate in T AC's mobility concepts. Aerial coverage was completed on Ft. Knox for the Army. Various strips were done on bridges, factories, and other facilities for the Ohio Air National Guard. A strip map was done of the Ohio River. They also worked with a new type of film for the camera testing facility at AFLC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

A command change occurred May 16 when Brig Gen Jack Owen moved to the position as chief of staff in State Headquarters and was replaced as wing commander by Col Verne M. Yahne. Yahne had been state chief of staff and assistant AG for air during the Pueblo recall period. He also continued as base detachment commander.

Annual training was held at Savannah, Ga., where Gov. Louie B. Nunn visited for the awards ceremony. Held June 13-27, summer camp was spent mainly preparing for an anticipated ORI in mid-July which already had been scheduled. The governor made his visit to camp in a dual-seat TF-101F, looking very sporty in a flight suit. While at summer camp word was received of the death of Col Thomas F. Marshall, of Frankfort, who died June 26 after hospitalization with a malignancy. He had recently been named assistant adjutant general for air, but the action was pending federal action at the time of his death. Marshall had been instrumental in securing the

original tract for Shewmaker ANGB as deputy adjutant general for air under Gov. A. B. Chandler.

Strength of the KyANG was increased considerably in the fiscal year ending June 30. The units gained 12 officers and 160 airmen since the previous August. Assigned strength was 880, which was over 100 percent of programmed strength authorized by NGB.

On Nov. 3 the Secretary of the Air Force announced that the entire 123d Tac Recon Wing had won the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for accomplishments from the Pueblo recall, 1968-69. Included were the 189th Tac Recon Group at Little Rock AFB, Ark., 123d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron of Adams Field, Ark., and 152d Tac Recon Group of Reno, Nev., and their subordinate units. The special order, dated Nov. 3, stated that the award was made for "exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations from 26 Jan 68 to 9 Jun 69." Supporting evidence submitted to the Air Force was substantially gathered prior to deactivation by Maj Donald L. Armstrong, wing information officer. Additional efforts of significant importance were made by Lt Col Robert K. Hendricks and Maj Carl D. Black subsequent to deactivation. The award nomination was started with Brig Gen W. E. Davis, commander of the 835th Air Division (TAC) at McConnell AFB, Kan., and submitted through channels.

The Year 1971 — KyANG Recovers From Activation In January the recently-formed 123d Civil Engineering Flight was the envy of all when they went to Hawaii for field training. Commanded by Maj William D. Seiber, the engineers went to Barking Sands on the island of Kauai Jan. 9-23. Airlifted by C-124 transports, the Kentuckians spent 12 days constructing two complete wooden structures to be used as open bay barracks at the field training site. They came home saying they'd lived in tents and eaten out of a field ration mess hall.

By this time the KyANG had nearly recovered from personnel and equipment shortages brought about by demobilization from federal duty. Taking in large numbers of untrained replacements for persons lost immediately on deactivation of the unit, large amounts of training were needed to restore mission-capabilities.

Construction, which had virtually been shelved during active duty, began to pick up once more. Projects completed during the fiscal year included an addition to the Engine Shop, an addition to the Motor Pool, a new POL Building and major interior remodeling for the Photo Labs in the Hangar Building.

The period of 1970-71 was an outstanding one for flying operations. A rigorous ORI was taken and passed in July 1970 right after summer camp. As of Dec. 1 the Wing received a new Group, with the assignment of the 188th Tac Recon Group of Ft. Smith, Ark., which was making a conversion to the RF-101C and taking on the reconnaissance mission. In March 1971, the KyANG took and passed a Management Effectiveness Inspection (MEI), also given by Air Force personnel.

In addition to normal training, the Voodoos were used for extensive aerial photography for the Army at Ft. Bragg, Ft. Knox, Ft. Campbell, and Indiantown Gap, Pa. More than 30 projects were

flown for the NGB, Massachusetts Air Guard, and Grissom AFB, Ind. The unit photographed "before and after" coverage of the move of the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to a new location. Also aided were the Louisville Fire Department, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, and other civilian organizations.

It was an extremely busy year for the 123d Tac Recon Group. Operational exercises included "Punch Card XV" and "Ember Dawn HI," which began Aug. 17 at Eielson AFB, Alaska, in which a simulated aggressor force attacking Alaska. Also held in August was the Boldshot/Brimfire exercise at Ft. Campbell, lasting three days and involving 14 Voodoo sorties. Flyovers were provided for military funerals, summer youth camp, and at graduation for the NCO Academy at Knoxville.

Tragedy struck the unit Sept. 14 when Capt Roger M. Sanders, an Air Guardsman pilot, was killed in a takeoff accident at Standiford Field. Two Voodoos apparently bumped slightly on takeoff and Sanders did not have enough altitude to survive as he ejected from his aircraft without room for his parachute to deploy.

In October a single U-3A and the T-33 were ordered back to the Air Force. The action left the base with one C-54.

From the beginning, the 165 had assigned to it both the G- and H-model RF-101s which had been received for modification into reconnaissance craft. In December the unit began to transfer its seven G-models to the 154th Tac Recon Squadron at Little Rock and received 17 H-Models from the 192d Tac Recon Squadron at Reno. The transfer activity resulted in a fleet of 28 H-model Voodoos at Louisville.

The Year 1972— Semonin Commands The Wing (Not A-37s) In January 1972 an announcement was made by NGB that the 123d Tac Recon Wing and 123d Tac Recon Group at Louisville would undergo a change in mission and assigned aircraft. Supposedly to take place early in Fiscal Year 1973, the change would have involved the A-37. The mission would have changed to close air support of ground forces, but worse than that, the KyANG would have lost 180 military and 27 ANG technician spaces in the conversion. Naturally, the proposal was firmly opposed by members of the Kentucky Air National Guard, and by the leaders in particular. Gen Frymire led the discussions at higher echelons, as the negotiations continued in these matters for some time.

In April seven of the H-model Voodoos were declared excess to allowable limits for unit aircraft. They were ferried to Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., to be placed in dry-weather storage. The transaction reduced the Voodoo fleet of the 165 Squadron to 20 RF-101Hs.

Annual field training was conducted at Travis Field in Savannah, Ga., June 10-24. Over 700 attended summer camp with 125 airmen transported to Georgia in C-124. During the first week training went as planned. The second week Hurricane Agnes changed the schedule considerably, prompting Lt Col James H. McClure, the group commander, to return over half

the aircraft to Louisville. The remaining Voodoos were sheltered from the storm in local hangars.

While the group troops were at Savannah several logistics and maintenance officers performed their annual training by visiting Europe. They were members of groups that were given concentrated orientation tours of materiel activities at Ramstein AB, Germany.

Also in June Gen Frymire announced that Kentucky's Air National Guard would not be switched to A-37s and would not change missions from reconnaissance to close air support. It was also announced that the KyANG would keep the Voodoos for the time being.

July 15-19 the 123d Group participated in "Operation Sentry Canecutter III," staged out of Roosevelt Roads NAS, Puerto Rico.

Col Verne M. Yahne, for 17 years base detachment commander and wing commander since 1970, announced his retirement in July. Col William J. Semonin was named to replace Col Yahne July 17 as commander of the 123d Tac Recon Wing and Lt Col John B. Conaway was selected as the new base detachment commander to replace Col Yahne Oct. 15.

On Aug. 3 the Air Force formally notified the U.S. Congress that the A-37 conversion affecting the KyANG was being withdrawn. It was also clarified that no personnel cuts would be exacted, and of course, no change in mission. Instead, there would be a switch to the reconnaissance version, or C-model, of the Voodoo.

A dozen RF-101Cs were received by the KyANG in July 1972 to replace the H-model fleet. The C-models, created originally for reconnaissance, were slightly different in appearance. They offered improved reconnaissance capabilities because of the way their cameras were installed, and because of their optical viewfinder. The latter was a device which assisted the recon pilot to sight his actual target before attempting to film it. By August 19 were on hand and in September the last of the 20 C-models had been received.

The H-models, so recently acquired in the trades with Reno and Little Rock, were ferried to Davis-Monthan AFB for storage. The C-models had come to the KyANG from the Air Guard of Michigan, located at Selfridge ANGB.

Beginning on Nov. 30 for the first two weeks of December the KyANG sent three Voodoos to Shaw AFB, S.C., to assist the 363d Tac Recon Wing in a U.S. Readiness Command joint training exercise, "Brave Shield III." Under simulated deployment conditions at Shaw, they provided pre-exercise photography and tactical reconnaissance for the operation. Despite bad weather, the "fair weather" RF-101s of the KyANG got their targets and delivered the film. Participants included the squadron commander, Lt Col Fred Arnold, and Captains Joe Kottak, Stew Byrne, Bill Leslie and Jake Counts. Also along were Sgt Fred White and Sgt Stuart Dunaway who helped process 3,920 feet of recon film and about 1,600 prints during the two weeks.

The Year 1973— Runway Problems, Wright-Patt Deployment The factor which dominated the operations for the 123d Tac Recon Group during most of 1973 was a runway repair project at Standiford Field on runway 1-19. The repairs forced the KyANG to find a new base of operations at Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio.

In March the CBPO (Consolidated Base Personnel Office) acquired a new computer system called "BLMPS." That stands for base-level military personnel system, and it hooked Shewmaker to a B-3500 computer at Wright-Patterson AFB also. Card decks of data processing software provided input as well as a typewriter keyboard and a high-speed printer which received as well as transmitted requests.

On April 2, 16 Voodoos were deployed to Wright-Patt as Standiford shut down 1-19. Aircraft shuttles aboard the C-54 went daily from Louisville to Dayton to support the deployment, which continued until the end of the year. Crews and other personnel were shuttled 130 air miles to and from by the expanded "KyANG Airlines," which was allotted a second C-54 to help bear the traffic of men and parts. No passenger comforts were overlooked by the cabin crew. Doing most of the piloting were Lt Col William P. "Willy" Cast and Col Gene Kinnaird.

Personnel rotated on assignment to perform maintenance, supply, and other essential support functions. The strain on the technician detachment, which stayed in motels and provided themselves with their own entertainment, was finally relieved by a "Texas Plan" summer camp which placed part-time Air Guardsman in a position to take their field training as they were needed. Because of this, no specific summer training program (AFT) was performed as a unit in 1973 aside from the Wright-Patt commitment.

An improved aircraft arresting system (BAK 12/14) was installed at Standiford during the runway improvements project. It attracted national attention because it was the first of a more modern kind of arresting cable to be installed on a joint-use (civilian/military) airfield such as Standiford. The BAK 14 system was about the same as the BAK 12, but with the added capability of retracting the arresting cable into the runway, located in a groove. The BAK 12/14 would be necessary if the KyANG were to be assigned more modern jets.

Curtailment of flying ended Jan. 15 with an abatement in the fuel situation. Regardless, the KyANG had successfully maintained its C-2 combat readiness rating, with flying hour allocations slightly reduced.

On Jan. 1, Col Lawrence A. Quebbeman, a veteran member of the technician staff for many years, became wing commander. He replaced Col William J. Semonin, who moved to the post of assistant adjutant general for air, effective Jan. 17. Quebbeman had been commander of the 123d Tac Recon Group and the enlarged 165 Tac Recon Squadron during the 1968-69 recall period when the group was temporarily shelved.

A series of tornados struck the state April 3 with the most devastating effects, destroying property worth many millions and bringing with it death and injuries throughout Kentuckiana.

Responding to the needs of people, the Kentucky Air and Army National Guard helped in many ways. Some of the more significant aerial photos ever taken by the unit were made in April in support of the recovery following the tornados.

Another change about the same time effected a modernization of procedures in the CBPO. The personnel data flow was connected with an Air Force-wide system terminating at the Military Personnel Center at Randolph AFB, Tex. It meant for the first time that data on all Air Guard, Air Reserve and active duty personnel were available instantly throughout the Air Force.

The number of persons attending field training at Savannah, Ga., this year, June 1-15, was curtailed sharply because of the energy crisis. Honored with medals were Col Robert P. Coombs, the senior air adviser who was leaving, and Lt Col Samuel A. Blythe, a pilot of many years. Service plaques were also awarded during the year to 10 officers and 14 non-commissioned officers who had 30 years or more of total service, and 31 officers and 83 enlisted personnel with 20 or more years of service.

Five major construction projects during the year were completed at a total of \$630,000. The prime project was completion of a concrete pad for installation of one-half of a WS-430B air - mobile photo processing van complex. It consisted of 13 metal vans worth about \$760,000, which need only water and power to operate a complete photo processing and intelligence complex. It was a piece of equipment long desired to complete a modern capability under TAC recon guidelines.

The Year 1975—Combat Rating Is Confirmed The Kentucky Air Guard now entered its final full year flying the RF-101. Operationally, the 123d Tac Recon Group had previously forecast itself as C-I, the top combat readiness rating. No other unit flying the reconnaissance mission, whether on active duty, Air Guard, or reserve status, was C-I. All that remained was an ORI to confirm that claim.

A team of Air Force inspectors from 12th AF, Bergstrom AFB, Tex., arrived at Shewmaker on April 4 to evaluate the management, organizational and mission capability of the Wing Headquarters and its subordinate units. Most of all there was the test of the C-I readiness rating of the 165 Tac Recon Squadron, to see if the unit's own estimates would be confirmed.

After four days of rigid inspection, the inspectors declared the ORI was satisfactory and that the C-I rating was verified. It was a high moment for the KyANG, and their hard work and long hours had been realized. Certainly credit would be due to many, many persons for the accomplishment, but none more than Col Carl D. Black who had worked on the operations firing line for months to bring this to fruition. It was a cherished dream, too, of Maj Gen Richard L. Fry-mire, Col Fred Bradley, and Col John Conaway, and so many more. Never was there a sweeter triumph in the history of the Air Guard of Kentucky!

In May the C-I KyANG sent its Voodooos to Shaw AFB for a two-week exercise called "Solid Shield." It was an extensive commitment which exercised tactical warfare capability of the

Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. The RF-101Cs of Kentucky flew 94 pre-strike and post-strike sorties with excellent results.

Through coordination with NGB it was decided to test the capability of the KyANG to operate from a remote (almost "bare") base for field training in 1975. From June 15-29 the unit took 15 Voodoos and 400 members to Volk Field near Mauston, Wis., testing the air mobility and operating capacity of the WS430B. Within six hours of their arrival at Volk Field, the 430B was in operation, processing film and yielding photo intelligence.

Many of the members of the Air Guard who enlisted during the Vietnam era to escape the draft were now coming to the ends of their enlistments. In a year's time the KyANG experienced a progressive exit of members who had been "obligors" under the old system. Now, without a national Selective Service draft, recruitment became the only way to obtain new members. There were no more waiting lists, and retention of existing members of the Air Guard assumed even greater importance.

By this time it was realized that the days of the Voodoo were coming to an end. With the 192d Tac Recon Squadron at Reno, Nev., already making the transition to RF-4C, and the Boise group now part of the Wing, it was only a matter of a short time.

The switch finally came in the early part of 1976 when another unit refused a transition and the NGB called upon the 123d Tac Re-con Wing (the 165 Squadron) to make the change. As it was, the change was abrupt and without any time for adjustments as normally required.

The Years of the Voodoo came to a close after about 11 years, 1965-1976, with the G- and H-models, then with the C-model of the RF-101. The last of the RF-101Cs were flown to desert storage at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., with the final one leaving Standiford Field on April 29, 1976. There they joined the older Voodoo models already taken to the "bone yard" several years earlier.

The venerable Voodoos in those 11 years had served for a total of 43,569 hours in the air, flying half-way around the world and back again in support of the mission of the Air Force and Air National Guard. Two of the H-models were retained for permanent static display, one at the Air Guard Base on Grade Lane, the other at Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort.

In the end, 20 months of C-I combat readiness were brought to a close, something that was hard to see ended. The Voodoos had done a real job, and for their high speed and sometimes violent antics, they were steeds worthy of the best.

OLD SOLDIER GOES TO WAR: Of all of the C-47s ever built, and there were more than 10,000 manufactured, none was more dearly loved than one which served the KyANG from 1947-66. All aircraft, of course, have different "tail numbers" which identify them. And this is the story of No. 4348101, a C-47.A built in 1943. This sturdy old bird first flew in the China-Burma-India theater during World War II where it logged 2,500 hours "flying the Hump" over the Himalayas

between China and India for the Army Air Corps. In 1950 it was called to war again, flying with the Air Guard on active duty and returning to Kentucky in 1952. Lt Col William H. Beck, chief of maintenance of the KyANG for many years, estimated the Goon had flown over 25,000 hours. It had been used to haul ground crews of mechanics, electricians and other maintenance personnel, Army and Air Guardsmen on their ways to schools and meetings of all descriptions, and occasionally "VIPs" like the adjutant general or the governor. Only one time in its long service career was it ever in trouble—on its way to a National Guard Association convention in Denver. It encountered a heavy hail storm which tore holes in its aluminum skin and broke holes in its windshield. "It looked like it had been beat up with a ball-peen hammer," Beck said. When the Air Force decided that it would recall C-47s from the ANG, No. 4348101 had to go. It was put through modifications by Air International at Miami, Fla. where they added armament of three 7.62mm miniguns. In Vietnam the gunships operated above 3,000 out of range of most small arms fire. Used mostly at night, the camouflaged AC-47s carried flares of 2-million candlepower to light target areas before a strike.

The official announcement from the Pentagon was made March 11, although ground school for many of the aircrews had begun the latter part of January. The Phantoms had two seats, instead of one as in the Voodoos. Thus a new member of the aircrew was added, the weapons systems officer (WSO). One task of the conversion to RF-4s would be to recruit 27 or more WSOs (popularly pronounced WEE-zohs). Col Conaway and the base detachment had much to do, WSOs were only one of the specialties to recruit.

The conversion brought in mobile training detachment (MTD) personnel to assist in the transition. Classrooms were set up in all available locations on base, from the existing spaces such as the supply classroom, to the mess hall. Mock-ups and training devices were everywhere to be seen, with additional power units set in place to run the equipment.

Recruitment of the new specialty areas and finding WSOs went on apace. By the end of June, eight WSOs were combat-ready and there were 20 who had been inducted into the unit. New support personnel included 70 military spaces and 25 more full-time air technicians, which now were authorized for the KyANG. One effect of the added manpower was to drop the percentage of strength to about 90 percent.

The first RF-4C arrived Feb. 27, and the pilots were already heading for Shaw AFB for transition in the Phantoms, although a few already were familiar with them from tours of duty in Vietnam. The 165 Squadron received a total of 19 Phantoms, transferred from Alconbury RAF Station, England. A detachment led by Maj Edgar Schulz had gone there earlier to check out the aircraft from the maintenance standpoint.

By March 15 with the departure of the Voodoo fleet and the influx of the new Phantoms, the C-rating of the 165 Squadron dropped to the lowest rung, C-4.

The use of the name "Shewmaker" to designate the ANG Base in Louisville was discontinued, for the most part, in 1976. Based on world-wide listings of airfields, most standard references

used the designation Standiford Field. Mailing addresses and stationery were gradually changed to refer to the base as "Standiford Field (ANG)."

The usual concept of annual field training was shelved in 1976 as inadequate. Because of the conversion summer camp plans for Gulfport, Miss., were cancelled and the units were placed on "Texas Plan" or year-around training so that Air Guardsmen could attend classes or undertake training as necessary. The pilots had sent their first group to Shaw on Jan. 27. Those who had completed transition flew the Phantom, and those who had not continued flying the Voodoo until their turn came for transition. By June 30 there were 19 pilots and eight WSOs combat ready

By the close of the fiscal year June 30, the unit flew the Phantoms more than 850 hours, counting from March 2 when the first local flight in an RF-4C was made. The 3,612 hours flown in 1975-76 with the Voodoo had placed tactical training well on its way to completion when the conversion began to take hold. During the months of April and May air technicians and maintenance specialists from CAM Squadron attended 9,015 manhours of instruction given by the Air Force FTD faculty. Some 3,340 hours more were held during June.

January was marked by the most severe cold weather in the history of the state, particularly inconvenient with the energy shortages. The maintenance crews were forced to cancel 76 scheduled sorties because of the snow and cold. The 123d Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron command had changed from Winfred L. Appleby to Lt Col Norris C. Delph the previous October. Delph had been commander of the 123d Communications Flight and was followed by Maj Henry S. Youd in that capacity. Appleby moved up to State Headquarters where he and Billy J. Yeiser were advanced to the rank of colonel.

Other consequences of the energy crisis saw the Air Guard Base cut off from natural gas as a source of heating fuel. Fuel oils were substituted and at one point the ice-covered roads halted deliveries altogether and at the most critical stage oil reserves were down to a two-day level. Temperatures in office and working areas were lowered to 63 degrees to further cut on consumption of fuel.

To avoid excessive exposure for pilots and WSOs, and for ground crews in the cold, many missions went South, overnight and back the following day, accomplishing two or three sorties on each trip. The revised operations approach resulted in more than 300 hours of mission time at about half of the exposure to cold weather. Aircrews were required to take vacation leave from their jobs, if they were part-timers, but the results were healthy for the mission.

February also saw an assault on night radar missions for the Phantom jets. A new approach incorporated a mission en route to a nearby base, where the aircraft would land. After a quick "turnaround," the aircraft would fly another low-level radar sortie on the way back to Standiford Field. Arriving at Louisville at nearly midnight, the aircrews and ground crews had spent a long and tiring day, but the radar night missions were brought up to desired levels. Other ops training included flights which simulated missile threats, anti-aircraft fire, and hostile

aircraft.

Also in February Lt Col John L. Smith, commander of the 165 Squadron, moved to the post of assistant wing operations director. Lt Col Austin "Pete" Snyder became squadron commander and Maj Joseph L. Kottak moved to the operations officer post in the 165. In June Snyder moved out-of-state and by July Kottak was elevated to squadron commander. Maj William M. Irion became squadron ops officer.

From May 14 to June 11 the flying operations were moved to Ft. Campbell Army Air Field near Hopkinsville. The move was necessitated by an improvement project at Standiford Field which involved installing high-speed turn-offs and resurfacing some taxiways. Nine aircraft, aircrews in two-day rotations, and about 20 ground crew members at a time supported the operations there. From that point the flying program switched to Savannah, Ga., June 11-25, for annual field training. The aircraft and some maintenance personnel stayed at Savannah where operations continued from July 5-10, and on July 13 the Phantoms returned to Louisville where normal flying resumed.

Even with the interruption, it was a year of intense training for the Phantom aircrews. Eight months after the onset of the conversion the unit had moved back to C-3, by the last of May the squadron was C-2, and their forecast was to reach C-1 (the top) by August, but probably sooner. During March 26 aircrews went through emergency procedures training in the flight simulators at Shaw AFB, S. C. Another kind of ground training called "illustrative tasking" teaches the crews how to fly the European and Asian theaters of operations, and then the pilots and WSOs go to Shaw for simulator exercises which allow them to practice what they have learned in this process.

Replacing Conaway as air commander of the full-time technician detachment was Col Carl D. Black, a former group commander and more recently deputy wing commander for operations. Col Black also assumed the post of vice commander of the wing. Following him as the deputy for operations was Lt Col John L. Smith, also a full-time air technician. Smith was a former commander of the 165 Tac Recon Squadron.

Field training for 1977 was held June 11-25 at Savannah, high-lighted by a reconnaissance competition. A challenge had been issued to other recce units, but only the 155th Tac Re-con Group at Lincoln, Neb., responded. The Kentucky boys defended their skill and won the competition in both day and night photography. Four aircraft from the Lincoln unit were engaged in a test of skill with four from Louisville. Judges of the events were members of the 123d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron of Little Rock, Ark., a part of the wing structure. The Civil Engineers had gone to Tyndall in January and Weather Flight pulled field training at England AFB, La., in June.

In May 1983 the unit reached another historic milestone when it earned the highest possible rating from Tactical Air Command during its Operational Readiness Inspection. On January 1, 1989 the unit was awarded its seventh Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

On January 8, 1989 the 123rd was officially redesignated the 123rd Tactical Airlift Wing and began conversion to the C-130B. By the end of the year, the unit had been involved in many worldwide airlift missions, including participation in exercise Volant Oak in Panama. The unit also participated in an airlift competition, Sentry Rodeo. The wing's first humanitarian airlift came in the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo.

Although the 165 Tactical Airlift Squadron was not federally mobilized for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, unit volunteers stepped forward to support the war effort. From August 1990 to March 1991, the 165 flew 1,240 airlift sorties worldwide in direct support of the Gulf War, the most for any Air National Guard unit. An additional 88 wing members were activated in support of Desert Shield/Storm.

1992 6 February A Kentucky Air National Guard Lockheed C-130B Hercules, 58-0732, of the 165 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 123d Tactical Airlift Wing, out of Standiford Field, Louisville Air National Guard Base, Kentucky, stalls and crashes into the JoJo's restaurant and Drury Inn at at U.S. 41 and Lynch Road at 0953 while practicing touch and go manoeuvres at the Evansville, Indiana Airport, when a supervising instructor-pilot, Maj. Richard A. Strang, simulated an engine failure. The pilot, Lt. Vincent "Rin" Yancar, 25, relatively inexperienced in the type, became distracted with checklists and air traffic control commands and let the airspeed bleed off as the C-130 climbed to 1,300 feet. When it dropped below the in-flight minimum control speed, the plane stalled and banked to port, into the dead engine. The IP took control and began to correct but had insufficient altitude for recovery. All five crew members and eleven people on the ground were killed. Several others were injured. The Hercules descended almost vertically on the rear of Jojos, demolishing the kitchen, and spraying burning jet fuel on the center north wall of the neighboring Drury Inn, which military officials later estimated at 6,000 gallons. Room 416, where 13 employees of Plumbing and Industrial Supply Company were conducting a quality-control seminar, was engulfed by the fireball. Only four in the room escaped, all but one with severe burns. P and I Supply lost a third of its workforce. Two restaurant employees were also killed, trapped under rubble. The Air Force paid out \$36.3 million to settle wrongful death, personal injury and property damage claims. "Military training exercises at Evansville Regional Airport using C-130 planes essentially stopped after the 1992 crash." Room 416 of the Inn is no longer publicly used.

The 123rd received the 2000th C-130 straight off the assembly line in May 1992 as it began conversion to the C-130H. Eight months later, the 123rd deployed to Mombasa, Kenya, to fly relief missions into Somalia for Operations Restore Hope and Provide Relief. Citizen-soldiers from the 123rd flew 150 sorties and transported 720 tons of relief supplies and 1,444 passengers into some of the hardest-hit areas in Somalia.

When the world's attention shifted to eastern Europe in February 1993, the 123rd responded again, deploying in support of Operation Provide Promise. The unit's all-volunteer force flew 1,082 airdrop and airland sorties and delivered 2,215 tons of food and supplies into war-torn

Bosnia-Herzegovina. The wing deployed 451 personnel into Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, over several rotations to support Provide Promise until May 1994.

In July 1994, the 123rd answered another call for help and deployed within 72 hours of notification to fly relief missions into Rwanda and Zaire for Operation Support Hope. Operating out of Mombasa, Kenya, unit personnel flew 147 sorties over 300 hours, transporting 652.5 tons of relief supplies to the beleaguered Rwandan refugees. Personnel from the unit's 205th Combat Communications Squadron also deployed to Haiti that year as part of Operation Uphold Democracy, providing satellite communications links for the theater commander.

In November 1994, the unit was granted its eighth Air Force Outstanding Unit award.

The wing returned to Bosnia in 1996 to provide airlift for U.S. and NATO troops who were protecting the fragile peace. More than 170 Kentuckians volunteered for the mission, which delivered 913 tons of cargo and transported 2,296 passengers.

The unit also made its presence felt overseas, offering civil engineering skills in Spain and airlift services in Saudi Arabia to support Operation Southern Watch, which enforces the no-fly zone in Southern Iraq.

In February 1998, the 123rd Airlift Wing received its ninth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, and it remains tied with the 116th Bomb Wing in Georgia as the most decorated unit in the Air National Guard.

1998 continued the 123rd Airlift Wing's tradition of global deployments with missions to Panama as part of Operation Coronet Oak.

The following year, the wing returned to Bosnia once more to provide theater airlift for the continuing peacekeeping mission, now called Operation Joint Forge. More than 350 Kentucky aircrew, maintainers and support personnel deployed for the operation. The C-130s flew nearly 500 sorties during the deployment, delivering 3,500 passengers and more than 1,000 tons of cargo to sites across Europe and inside Bosnia, including Sarajevo and Tuzla. The units also were tasked with helping stockpile equipment for what became Operation Allied Force, the NATO air campaign against Serbian forces in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Working around the clock with the 37th Airlift Squadron at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, the Kentucky and Ohio crews flew more than 70 tons of fighter support equipment from U.S. bases in England and Germany to bases in Italy. Shortly thereafter, the unit began planning for a 90-day deployment to Muscat, Oman, to again support U.S. troops enforcing the no-fly zone in Southern Iraq. More than 160 KyANG personnel support Operation Northern Watch. Together, the two units flew 345 sorties during their three-month tasking, delivering 895 tons of cargo and 1,122 passengers to destinations in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The mission, which was part of the Air Force's first-ever Aerospace Expeditionary Force, concluded in December 1999.

By April of 2000 the 123rd Airlift Wing had received its 10th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

More than 580 Kentucky Air Guard members deployed overseas from Dec. 2000 to March 2001 as part of Air Expeditionary Forces based in Germany and Southwest Asia. Other unit members were sent to South America to participate in drug interdiction efforts. The largest contingent of Kentucky forces—nearly 470 aircrew, maintenance and support personnel—operated from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in support of Operation Joint Forge, the multinational peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. While there, unit members transported approximately 2,500 passengers and 410 tons of cargo to locations like Sarajevo and Tuzla, Bosnia; and Tazsar, Hungary. Other KyANG members deployed to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey in support of operations Joint Forge, Southern Watch and Northern Watch. The latter two missions are responsible for enforcing no-fly zones imposed upon Iraq following the Gulf War.

In the first half of 2002, the wing received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award—the wing's 11th such honor.

165 AS Operation Iraqi Freedom Nov 04- 1 Scott AFB, IL (TACC)
165 AS Operation Joint Forge Mar-May 05 1 Ramstein AB, GE
165 AS Operation Joint Forge May-Jun 05 1 Ramstein AB, GE
165 AS Operation Enduring Freedom Sep (05) 1 Baton Rouge, LA
165 AS Operation Enduring Freedom Sep 05- 1 Southwest Asia

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 12 Oct 2010
Updated: 5 Apr 2021

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