

757 RADAR SQUADRON (SAGE)



MISSION

LINEAGE

Redesignated 757 Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
Redesignated 757 Radar Squadron

STATIONS

Blaine AFS, WA

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Maj William E. Field, #1954
LTC Alfred J. Naigle, #1963

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

757th Radar Sq (SAGE): assigned 1 Jan 51 at Paine Field; WA, assigned to 505th AC&W Gp; moved to Birch Bay, WA by 15 Aug 51; transferred to 25th AD 6 Feb..52; transferred to 4704th Def Wg Jan 53; site redesignated Blaine AFS, WA, 1 Dec 53; transferred to 25th AD 8 Oct 54; transferred to Seattle ADS 1 Mar 60; redesignated from ACF1W Sq to 757th Radar Sq (SAGE) 1 Apr 60; transferred to 25th AI 1 Apr 66; redesignated 757 Radar Sq 1 Feb 74; inactivated 30 Mar 79.

To maintain Radar Surveillance and to conduct active Air Defense Operations within the assigned sub sector of responsibility to continuously train for the effective accomplishment of this mission

Eighty acres of what was once rolling farm lands make up the main squadron area. Supplemented by three additional acres at the nearby Ground to Air Transmitter and Receiver (GATR) site is Nestled in the resort community of Birch Bay WA was once a Air Force Radar Station and here's its story:

USAF saw the need for more protection with radars in certain sectors. The choice was to construct small units that could fill in those sectors throughout the Northwest area and Alaska. Birch Bay was chosen because of the near sea level advantage that certain radars needed to effectively scan long range. The 757th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron (AC&W) was activated at Paine Air Field near Everett, Washington, on November 27 1950. The initial cadre arrived at the Birch Bay site March 14th 1951 with the presence of a pair of AN/FPS-10 radars. Later in 1953, the Birch Bay site was designated Blaine Air Force Station, taking its name from the nearest incorporated town.

The 757's command was the 25th air division (defense) from McChord AFB near Tacoma WA. The base could house up to 200+ airmen in 5 barracks and at least 20 some officers in the BOQ. Staffing

fluctuated in the first few years of the unit, it was sometimes difficult to man a certain posts. March of 1952 the MARS Military Amateur Radio Station was initiated.

One of the other efforts was to beautify the station and make it more livable. "Operation facelift" was inspired by the CO. Food services on base were limited to a full service dining hall and NCO club. Shopping on base was limited to a BX -"base exchange". Entertainment and recreation on base was limited on base to a wood hobby shop that was very popular with the airmen. Some of the projects were small boats which could be launched in nearby Birch Bay. Cabinet projects were designed by the airmen and were utilized in their barrack rooms. Leather making and Photo developing also proved popular. The base also had a movie theater and motor shop. Outdoor amenities include golf passes to the nearby golf courses.

The 1960's saw changes of the role that the 757 played. The radar were changed to the AN/FPS -20 search radar and the AN/FPS-6 and 6-A height finder radar. In April 1st 1960 the site began providing data to the Seattle Air Defense Sector based out of McChord AFB near Tacoma. Also at the same time it was re-designated the 757th Radar Squadron. The 757 also had acceptance of a smaller site called a GAP FILLER P-46A, it basically provide a fill in the radar gaps. GAP FILLER P-46A was apparently located near Anacortes WA, it had either an AN/FPS-14 or AN/FPS-18 short-range radar? The 757th in 1966 became the first Back Up Interceptor Control (BUIC) Center. it provided a back up to the SAGE- Semi Automatic Ground Environment. Three years later its mission as BUIC was deleted and the site reverted back to its roll as a long radar range (LRR) unit.

Then later in the 1960's the base also switched to the new AN/FPS-24 search radar. Earlier in the 60's the 757 saw growth of the station. Twenty one housing units were dedicated in 1960. Included in the expansion of the base was the construction of the gym and recreation area. The gym even had a steam room and exercise rooms. In 1969 the base gained a 2 lane regulation bowling alley in the bottom level of the recreation and family services building. As quoted from one airman, "Nobody wanted to get into trouble or cause problems, they didn't want to have free time taken away or even worse by reassigned to other units." The 757 had become bestowed on many occasions to be the best station to be stationed at due to it recreational amenities.

The 1970's saw even more changes in the roll of the unit. The AN/GSA-51 Radar Course Directing Group was the interface that was used . The stations mission saw the reestablishment of LRR Long Range Radar. The GAP FILLER P-46A was decommissioned

The growth of the base grew by leaps & bounds due to the staffing issues so crucial to the mission of being a back up station if the SAGE ever went off line. The seventies saw the enlistment of women, there was an estimated dozen or less women stationed at the 757. Women quarters were in the bottom level of BAQ 518.

In 1972 the station gained more off station housing near Bellingham when the Naval Security group activity station near Marietta closed. It could house an estimated 20 families

The Bowling alley was converted from the old personnel and family services building. With the

upcoming growth in the satellite communications, the military decided that the radar was not as useful and satellites. Satellites could covertly scan the skies for the enemy. The Radar Bases around the northern part of the continent were closing at this time. At the time of site closure, it was still operating all three radar's : AN/FPS-24 long-range search radar, and the AN/FPS-6A and AN/FPS-26A long-range height finder radar. Finally the word was given in 1978, the base would close in January of 1979. The bases personnel slowly was stationed elsewhere. Leaving a skeleton crew to disassemble radar equipment and pickling buildings, "to cut off all utilities and to maintain only a shell". Orders were given to keep the dining hall intact, so potential buyers could use it in some manner. So January 1979 rolled around and the base slipped into history forever.

757th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron

Located: 1951, Blaine, Washington

Subordinate to: 1951, 505th Aircraft Control and Warning Group

Personnel: 1951, 22 Officers and 211 Enlisted

Commanders:

1951, Major Bob O. Austin

The 757th AC&W Squadron began operating a pair of AN/FPS-10 radars at Blaine in January 1952. In 1959 this squadron switched to operating an AN/FPS-20 search radar and AN/FPS-6 and AN/FPS-6A height-finder radars. The site began providing data to the Seattle Air Defense Sector SAGE Center in February 1960. By 1963 this site had converted to an AN/FPS-24 search radar, and had received an AN/FPS-26A height-finder radar which replaced the AN/FPS-6. The 757th Radar Squadron (SAGE) was deactivated in 1 January 1979.

The 1980's the base saw opportunity to change its serious role as a military base into a community hub of activity. Whatcom County government saw the potential of a Medium security prison or a library and recreational area for the community. Some of those plans never became reality. Instead Hostels International opened there hostel in the old officers barracks in the early 1980's and is presently utilizing the building still. Now named Bay Horizon park Whatcom County Parks department owns the 74 acre property. In 1986 Lions club Camp Horizon a camp for special needs kids and adults, saw the opportunity to use the old barracks and recreational areas for their camp. Presently Lions Club district 19-H and the Lions Camp Horizon Foundation is in a long term lease with management and operations of the property.

The old base heating system, which included overhead steam pipes for heating was torn down in the late 1980's. The property saw great transformation due to all utilities being placed underground. Demolition of the steam plant and civil engineering buildings which were non functional buildings at that time. Department of Defense environmental protection plan along with support of the foundation brought a clean-up of toxic chemicals that possibly spilled into the ground.

757 Blaine AFS, WA FPS-10 (2); FPS-20; FPS-24; FPS-6, -6A; FPS-26A FPS-24; FPS-6A; FPS-26A Jan-52 01-Jan-79 BUIC-II. Site was located at Birch Bay, WA. BUIC II ops commenced 1 Mar 66. Now is a public park.

Blaine AFS is located in the NW corner of Whatcom County on Birch Bay 20 miles NW of Bellingham.

The 757th ACWS, predecessor of the present unit, was activated at Paine Field near Everett on 27 Nov 1950. The initial cadre arrived at the Birch Bay site on 14 Mar 1951. Late in 1953 the Birch Bay site was officially designated Blaine AFS taking its name from the nearest incorporated town. As the national air defense requirements, techniques and organization necessarily became more sophisticated, the 757th ACWS was included as an element of the Seattle Air Defense Sector on 1 Apr 1960 and was simultaneously redesignated 757th Radar Squadron. In 1966 Blaine became the newly created 25th AD's first BUIC center, but three later the BUIC was deleted and the site reverted back to its role as a long range radar unit.

27 Nov 1950 757 ACWS activated at Paine Field. Concurrently Det 1 at Paine transferred to the 757. 635 ACWS at Neah Bay reformed at 758 ACWS

1 Apr 1951 The AF formally established Paine as an active installation under assignment to the 4753 ABS

15 Aug 1951 757 ACWS moved to a new facility at Birch Bay WA, concluding Air Defense radar ADDC operations at the Paine Field Lashup Site.

The 757th AC&W Squadron began operating a pair of AN/FPS-10 radars at Blaine in January 1952. In 1959 this squadron switched to operating an AN/FPS-20 search radar and AN/FPS-6 and 6A height-finder radars. The site began providing data to the Seattle Air Defense Sector SAGE Center in February 1960. In the 1960s this site converted to an AN/FPS-27 search unit. The 757th was deactivated in March 1979.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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

Unit yearbook. *25 Air Division (Defense). 1953-1954*

Unit yearbook. *25th NORAD Region. 1963.*

