

8th FIGHTER SQUADRON



LINEAGE

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

STATIONS

Selfridge Field, MI, 15 Jan 1941
Morrison Field, FL, 23 May 1941–4 Jan 1942
Melbourne, Australia, 2 Feb 1942
Canberra, Australia, 16 Feb 1942
Darwin, Australia, 17 Apr 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 25 Sep 1942
Dobodura, New Guinea, 15 Apr 1943
Tsili Tsili, New Guinea, 30 Aug 1943
Gusap, New Guinea, c. 29 Oct 1943
Hollandia, New Guinea, 3 May 1944
Biak, 23 Jun 1944
Tacloban, Leyte, 25 Oct 1944
San Jose, Mindoro, 2 Jan 1945
Lingayen, Luzon, 27 Feb 1945

Okinawa, 17 Aug 1945
Atsugi, Japan, 15 Sep 1945
Chitose AB, Japan, 20 Feb 1946
Misawa AB, Japan, 2 Apr 1948
Ashiya AB, Japan, 30 Jun 1950
Itazuke AB, Japan, 8 Jul 1950
Taegu AB, South Korea, 29 Sep 1950
Kunsan AB, South Korea, 1 Apr 1953
Misawa AB, Japan, 4 Nov 1953–10 Dec 1957
Etain/Rouvres AB, France, 10 Dec 1957
Spangdahlem AB, Germany, 25 Aug 1959–15 Jul 1968
Holloman AFB, NM, 15 Jul 1968

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Ramstein AB, Germany, 12 Sep–11 Oct 1970 and 10 Sep–6 Oct 1971
Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 12 May–4 Oct 1972
Hahn AB, Germany, 3 Mar–5 Apr 1973 and 5 Sep–6 Oct 1975
Ramstein AB, Germany, 21 Sep–20 Oct 1976 and 22 Aug–22 Sep 1977

ASSIGNMENTS

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

ATTACHMENTS

49th Fighter Bomber Wing, 15 Apr–15 Oct 1957
26th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, c. 12 Sep–c. 11 Oct 1970 and 10 Sep–6 Oct 1971
50th Tactical Fighter Wing, 3 Mar–5 Apr 1973 and 5 Sep–6 Oct 1975
86th Tactical Fighter Wing, 21 Sep–20 Oct 1976 and 22 Aug–22 Sep 1977

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-35, 1941
P-40E, 1942
P-40K
P-40N
P-47, 1943–1944
P-38, 1944–1946
P-51D, 1946–1949
P-51K
F-80C, 1948–1951
F-84E, 1951
F-84G
F-100D, 1957
F-100F
F-105, 1962–1967
F-4, 1967–1978

F-15, 1978–1992

AT-38, 1992

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

F-80C

49-0555	49-0823	49-1818	49-0824	49-0522	49-0807
49-1812	49-0804	49-0832	49-0565	49-0486	49-0459
49-0725	49-0823	49-0466	49-0829	49-1820	49-0463
45-0819	49-0727	49-0471	49-1821	49-0826	49-0518
49-0828	49-0852	49-1862	49-0844	49-0539	49-0663

F-84E

50-1182

51-0682

51-0684

51-0658

51-0603

F-84G

51-10324

51-1131

F-100D

54-2137

54-2156

55-2756

56-3206

56-3207

F-100F

56-3843

56-3904

56-3854

55-2756

56-3206

56-3854

P-40

41-5330

P-40E

41-24831	41-24822	41-35948	41-36160	41-5622	41-5607
41-24822	41-36283	41-36155	41-25180	41-25012	41-36087
41-36283	41-5620	41-36246	41-36160	41-5576	41-35951

P-40K

42-45793
41-45965

P-40N
42-104946 42-104961 42-104981 42-104987 42-104950 42-104956
42-104967 42-104977 42-104979 42-104990 42-104949 42-105807

P-51D
44-72599 44-64066 44-73834 44-73386
44-74285 44-63368 44-73859 44-73624
44-72544 44-64128 44-74302

P-51K
44-12089
44-12035

T-33
49983

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

F-4D: HO

F-15: HO

UNIT COLORS

Yellow

Yellow band with a Black bolt

COMMANDERS

Cpt Robert D. Van Auken, unkn-1 Apr 1942
Cpt Allison W. Strauss, 1 Apr 1942
Maj Mitchell E. Sims, 27 Apr 1942-Nov 1942
Maj Robert V. McHale, unkn
Cpt Charles E. Petersen, 22 May 1944
Maj William C. Drier, by 30 Aug 1944
Maj Mark H. Vinzant Jr., 22 May 1945
Cpt James A. Chandler, 27 Oct 1945
Cpt Bedford R. Underwood, 1 Jan 1948
Maj Verne E. Bivin, by 1 Feb 1948
Maj John A. Duganne, 30 Apr 1948
Cpt John D. Mattie, 31 Oct 1948
LTC John A. Duganne, 1 Feb 1949
LTC Benjamin H. King, 11 Nov 1950
Maj Irving W. Boswell, Apr 1951
LTC James B. Fishburn, Jul 1951

LTC Erwin B. Elrod, 30 Nov 1951-Jul 1952
LTC William F. Georgi, unkn-Jan 1953
Maj Frank D. Henderson Jr., Jan 1953
Maj Lucius G. Lacroix, 1 Apr 1953
Maj Robert E. Carey, 10 Jun 1953
LTC John L Gregory Jr., by Dec 1953
LTC Paul J. Imig, Mar 1955-unkn
LTC Charles H. Duncan, Jun 1957
Maj James O. Cowee, 10 Dec 1957
Maj Stephen L. Bettinger, 15 Nov 1958
Maj John L. Peters, 9 Sep 1960
LTC Francis B. Clark, 17 Jul 1961
LTC Robert A. Evans, 13 Nov 1962
LTC James M. Morris, Sep 1964
Maj Walter S. Bruce, 31 Dec 1965
LTC Lloyd C. Smith, 24 Jun 1968
LTC Lester W. Krushat, by Dec 1968
LTC James B. Ross, 30 Jun 1969
LTC James R. Lawver, 4 Feb 1970
LTC Donald W. Hobart, 13 Nov 1970
LTC William L. Anderson, 27 Oct 1972
LTC Harry E. Vreeland, 3 May 1974
LTC James E. LaPine, 3 Mar 1976
LTC Donald W. Kilgus, 1 Dec 1977
LTC Patrick S. Dotson Jr., 18 Jan 1980
LTC Joseph M. Henderson Jr., 25 Sep 1981
LTC David E. Rickert, 18 Jul 1983
LTC Robert L. Summers, 1 Jul 1985
LTC Jerry D. Coy, 12 Nov 1986
LTC William G. Stinebaugh, 26 Aug 1988
LTC Gary B. Wood, 2 Oct 1989
LTC John D. W. Corley, 28 May 1991
LTC Edward T. Schantz, 14 Aug 1992
LTC James P. Hunt, 1 Jul 1993
LTC Michael P. Setnor, 10 Feb 1995
LTC Michael Roller, 14 Jun 1996
LTC Gary R. Woltering, 27 Jun 1997
LTC David A. Moore, 1 Jul 1999
LTC Matthew P. McKeon, 13 Jul 2001
LTC David F. Toomey, 2 Jun 2003

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
East Indies
Air Offensive, Japan
China Defensive
Papua
New Guinea
Western Pacific
Leyte
Luzon
Southern Philippines
China Offensive

Korea
UN Defensive
UN Offensive
CCF Intervention
First UN Counteroffensive
CCF Spring Offensive
UN Summer-Fall Offensive
Second Korean Winter
Korea Summer-Fall, 1952
Third Korean Winter
Korea, Summer 1953

Vietnam
Vietnam Ceasefire

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Australia, [20 Apr]–25 Aug 1942
Papua, [30 Sep] 1942–23 Jan 1943
New Guinea, 14 May 1943
Philippine Islands, 27 Oct–7 Dec 1944
Korea, [2 Jul]–25 Nov 1950
Korea, 9 Jul–27 Nov 1951

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
5 May–6 Oct 1972

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Mar 1964–28 Feb 1966
1 Mar 1966–30 Jun 1967
1 Jan 1971–15 Apr 1972

1 Jun 1995-31 May 1997
1 Jun 1998-31 May 1999
2 May 2004-31 May 2005

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations
[2 Jul] 1950-7 Feb 1951
8 Feb 1951-31 Mar 1953

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
9 May-4 Oct 1972

EMBLEM

On an Air Force Golden Yellow disc within a narrow Black border, a Black sheep, his eye White, standing on a Red lightning flash fesswise, abased, the lightning pointing to dexter. (Approved, 12 May 1960; replaced emblem approved, 7 Jan 1952)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

The Black Sheep

OPERATIONS

The 8th Fighter Squadron's story began on January 16, 1941, when the 49th Pursuit Group, Interceptor was activated at Selfridge Field, Michigan. Approximately one year after activation, the 8th and its sister squadrons moved to the Southwest Pacific to begin their World War II combat role. Flying the P-40, the 8th quickly asserted itself and received a Distinguished Unit Citation for its activities in Australia during April through August 1942. Throughout the war, the 8th provided air support for the allied ground forces and engaged in air-to-air combat with enemy aircraft. These activities merited the squadron ten battle honors and seven unit citations.

It was during the Second World War that the 8th acquired the title "The Black Sheep" Squadron. In 1943, the 49th Fighter Group began the transition from the P-47 to the P-38. While the other two squadrons received new aircraft, the 8th received the aircraft being discarded by the other squadrons. The pilots, feeling that the 8th was on the tail end of the supply line, began calling the 8th the "Black Sheep" Squadron. Combat in Southwest Pacific, 20 Apr 1942-4 Aug 1945.

From 1946 until 1950, the 8th TFS transitioned through the P-51 and F-80 and served as a part of the occupational forces in Japan. With the start of the Korean War in June of 1950, the newly redesigned 49th Fighter-Bomber Wing began combat operations in Korea by covering the evacuation of civilian personnel from Kimpo and Suwon. Combat in Korea, 2 Jul 1950-27 Jul 1953.

The most heralded Sentinel rescue mission occurred on the afternoon of December 11, 1950, when 1st Lt. Donald R. Michaelis, flying an L-5 north of Seoul, picked up a mayday from the

wingman of a bailed-out F-80 pilot. Learning the location of the downed pilot, Michaelis stated, "I knew it was too late in the day for a rescue helicopter to come after him, so I went off on my own hook." Lieutenant Michaelis headed, with fighter escort, to a location several miles southeast of Pyongyang. Because the area had no landing strips, the JOC at Taegu did not direct Michaelis to continue but allowed him to proceed at his own discretion. Meanwhile, the escort fighters had pinpointed the downed pilot and relayed to Michaelis that a nearby road would make a suitable landing strip. Michaelis decided to proceed, but finding the road unsatisfactory, he selected a nearby frozen rice paddy. On his third attempt he executed the difficult landing on the paddy. The downed pilot, 1st Lt. Tracy B. Mathewson of the 8th FBS, made a dash for the L-5. Perhaps surprised at the daring rescue attempt, the enemy troops did not fire until Mathewson had nearly reached the rescue aircraft. Their gunfire quickly attracted the attention of the escort fighters, whose strafing enabled the L-5 to take off. For this rescue, Lieutenant Michaelis earned the Silver Star. At an awards ceremony the next month, Michaelis and three other 3d ARS members received their Silver Stars.

After Korea, the 8th moved with the wing to Europe. During their eleven year stay at Etain-Rouvres Air Base, France and Spangdahlem Air Base, West Germany, the 8th flew F-86s, F-100s, F-105s, and finally F-4Ds in 1967.

In July 1968, the 49th Tactical Fighter Wing was assigned to Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. From May through October 1972, the 8th was deployed to Takhli Royal Thai AFB, Thailand for combat operations. While in Southeast Asia, the 8th flew air interdiction and close air support missions.

After returning to Holloman, the 8th continued various combat exercises with F-4's until 1977, when it began its transition to the F-15. In June of 1978, the transition to the F-15 was completed. The squadron trained in the F-15 for thirteen years until June 1992.

Tactical Air Command deployed 12 F-15s of the 8 TFS from the 49 TFW from Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, to Kwang Ju Air Base, Korea, from 3 May to 3 June. During its stay, the unit deployed six aircraft to Misawa Air Base, Japan, for Cope North 82-3.

In August 1992, the 8th Fighter Squadron began flying the AT-38B. Its mission was to train new Air Force pilots, fresh out of undergraduate pilot training, the skills required for aerial combat.

On 30 July 1993, the 8th Fighter Squadron transitioned to the F-117A. Portions of the squadron deployed to Southwest Asia to fly combat air patrol, 19 Sep–19 Dec 1991.

The 8th Fighter Squadron at Holloman AFB, N.M., has taken delivery of the first of its 20 planned F-22 fighters. This aircraft arrived Dec. 21. Holloman's 49th FW is scheduled to receive 40 F-22s Its 7th FS, sister unit to the 8th FS, is nearing its full complement of 20. The 8th FS, known as the "Black Sheep," should have its 20 F-22s. The unit had been without aircraft since April 2008, when it retired its F-117s. Holloman is also under consideration to host F-35 strike fighters Air Force officials have said if F-35s end up there, they might relocate the F-22s.2009

Airmen at Holloman AFB, N.M., held an inactivation ceremony for the 8th Fighter Squadron. The "Black Sheep" are standing down after less than two years of operating F-22s due to the Air Force's Raptor fleet consolidation plan, which calls for Holloman to lose its two squadrons' worth of F-22s and take on two F-16 squadrons for training. "We flew 2,500 sorties and over 3,000 hours. That's more than 10 sorties a day, with less than nine F-22s," said Lt. Col. Craig Baker, 8th FS commander, in highlighting his unit's accomplishments during the inactivation ceremony. The inactivation takes effect on July 15. Some of the 8th FS' F-22s are going, for the time being, to Holloman's 7th FS, while others will bolster the ranks of F-22 units at JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska; JB Langley-Eustis, Va.; and Nellis AFB, Nev. The 7th FS' F-22s will eventually shift to Tyndall AFB, Fla. This is the second time in the 8th FS' 61-year-history that the unit will go on inactive status. The first time was in April 2008 following the retirement of the F-117 Nighthawk. The Black Sheep have flown 15 airframes throughout their history, and they dropped the first bombs in both Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom when they flew F-117s. 2011



Air Force Order of Battle
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.
Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.
Unit history. *49th Tactical Fighter Wing, History in Review. 1940-1972.*