

8th SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



LINEAGE

8th Aero Squadron organized, 21 Jun 1917
Redesignated 8th Squadron (Surveillance), Jun 1921
Redesignated 8th Squadron (Attack), Nov 1921
Redesignated 8th Attack Squadron, 25 Jan 1923
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron (Light), 15 Sep 1939
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron (Dive), 28 Sep 194
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron (Light), 25 May 1943
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron, Light, Apr 1944
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron, Light, Night Intruder, 25 Jun 1951
Redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron, Tactical, 1 Oct 1955
Redesignated 8th Attack Squadron, 18 Nov 1969
Redesignated 8th Special Operations Squadron, 30 Sep 1970
Redesignated 8th Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1973
Redesignated 8th Special Operations Squadron, 1 Mar 1974

STATIONS

Camp Kelly, TX, 21 Jun 1917
Selfridge Field, MI, 8 Jul 1917
Garden City, NY, 28 Oct–22 Nov 1917
Winchester, England, 8 Dec 1917
Dartford, England, 24 Dec 1917 (detachments at Thetford, Wyton, and Northolt, England)
Thetford, England, 1 May–11 Jul 1918
Winchester, England, 11 Jul 1918

Amanty, France, 30 Jul 1918
Ourches, France, 31 Aug 1918
Toul, France, 29 Sep 1918
Saizerais, France, 23 Oct 1918
Colombey-les-Belles, France, 11 Feb 1919
Fargues-St Hilaire, France, 22 Feb–18 Apr 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 3 May 1919
Kelly Field, TX, 25 May 1919 (flight at McAllen, TX, after 25 Jul 1919)
McAllen, TX, 13 Aug 1919 (flight operated from Laredo, TX, 15 Aug 1919–3 Aug 1920, and
from Pope Field, NC, after 13 Aug 1920; detachment of flight operated from Laredo, TX,
after 3 Aug 1920)
Kelly Field, TX, 2 Jul 1921 (flight at Pope Field, NC, to 26 Nov 1921)
Ft Crockett, TX, 30 Jun 1926
Barksdale Field, LA, 27 Feb 1935
Savannah, GA, 8 Oct 1940–19 Jan 1942
Brisbane, Australia, 25 Feb 1942
Charters Towers, Australia, 17 Mar 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 31 Mar 1942
Charters Towers, Australia, 9 May 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 28 Jan 1943
Dobodura, New Guinea, 10 Apr 1943
Nadzab, New Guinea, 1 Feb 1944
Hollandia, New Guinea, 16 May 1944
Dulag, Leyte, 15 Nov 1944
San Jose, Mindoro, 30 Dec 1944
Okinawa, c. 7 Aug 1945
Atsugi, Japan, c. 26 Oct 1945
Yokota AB, Japan, 20 Aug 1946
Johnson AB, Japan, 14 Mar 1950
Iwakuni, Japan, 1 Jul 1950
Kunsan AB, South Korea, 18 Aug 1951
Johnson AB, Japan, 5 Oct 1954
Yokota AB, Japan, 17 Nov 1960
Clark AB, Philippines, 24 Apr 1964
Phan Rang AB, South Vietnam, 17 Jan 1968
Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam, 15 Nov 1969
Eglin Air Force Auxiliary Field No. 9 (Hurlburt Field) FL, 18 Aug 1969-31 Aug 1970
Clark AB, Philippines, 1 Oct 1972–1 Mar 1974
Eglin Air Force Auxiliary Field No. 9 (Hurlburt Field) FL, 1 Mar 1974

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Clark AB, Philippines, 9–23 Apr 1964
Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam, 5 Aug–3 Nov 1964
Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam, 18–28 Jun 1965
Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, 28 Jun–15 Aug 1965, 16 Oct–16 Dec 1965, 15 Feb–18 Apr 1966,
and 15 Jun–15 Aug 1966

Phan Rang AB, South Vietnam, 12 Oct–12 Dec 1966, 11 Feb–12 Apr 1967, 7 Jun–2 Aug 1967,
and 26 Sep–22 Nov 1967

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 21 Jun 1917–31 Aug 1918

IV Corps Observation Group, 31 Aug 1918

VI Corps Observation Group, 23 Oct 1918–5 Feb 1919

Unkn, 5 Feb–1 Jul 1919

Army Surveillance (later, 1st Surveillance; 3rd Attack; 3rd Bombardment) Group, 1 Jul 1919

3rd Bombardment Wing, 25 Oct 1957

41st Air Division, 8 Jan 1964

Thirteenth Air Force, 24 Apr 1964

405th Fighter Wing, 18 Nov 1964

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Jan 1968

3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Nov 1969

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, 30 Sep 1970

315th Tactical Airlift Wing, 31 Jul 1971

377th Air Base Group (later, 377th Air Base Wing), 15 Jan 1972

405th Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1972

1st Special Operations (later, 834th Tactical Composite; 1st Special Operations) Wing, 1 Jul 1974

1st Special Operations (later 16th Operations) Group, 22 Sep 1992

ATTACHMENTS

3rd Bombardment Wing, 13 Aug 1956–24 Oct 1957

41st Air Division, 1 Sep 1963–7 Jan 1964

405th Fighter Wing, 9–23 Apr 1964

405th Fighter Wing, 24 Apr–17 Nov 1964

34th Tactical Group, 5 Aug–3 Nov 1964

33rd Tactical Group, 18–28 Jun 1965

2nd Air Division, 28 Jun–7 Jul 1965

6252nd Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Jul–15 Aug 1965, 16 Oct–16 Dec 1965 and 15 Feb–7 Apr 1966

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, 8–18 Apr 1966, 15 Jun–15 Aug 1966, 12 Oct–12 Dec 1966, 11 Feb–
12 Apr 1967, 7 Jun–2 Aug 1967, and 26 Sep–21 Nov 1967

405th Fighter Wing, 15–17 Jan 1968

315th Tactical Airlift Wing, 16–30 Jul 1971

6251st Air Base Squadron, 1–14 Sep 1972

Detachment 2, 377th Air Base Wing, 15–30 Sep 1972

WEAPON SYSTEMS

DH-4, 1918–1919, 1919–1926

GAX (GA-1), 1923

O-2, 1926–1928

A-3B, 1928–1934

A-12, 1934–1936

A-8

O-19B

O-19E
A-17A, 1936-1940
B-18, 1939-1941
A-18
A-24, 1941, 1942
A-20A, 1941, 1942-1943, 1943-1945
B-25J, 1943
A-26B (later designated B-26), 1945
A-26C
B-57, 1956-1969
A-37, 1969-1972
C-130E, 1974
MC-130E
CV-22A

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

A-12
33-221
33-231
33-235
33-230

A-17
35-118

A-17A
36-225
36-202

A-18
37-60
37-56

A-20A
40-91
40-102
40-99

A-24
41-15754

A-26B
44-34323
44-34258
44-34238
44-34295

44-34387
44-34413

A-26C
44-35306
44-35278

A-3
28-98
27-250
27-250

A-3B
30-34
30-9
30-9
30-16
30-18
30-6
30-253
30-262
30-262
30-28
30-20
30-233
30-16
30-26
30-240
30-26
30-14
30-18
30-251
30-3
30-235
30-4
30-7

A-8
32-353

B-25J
43-28136

B-26
44-34378

B-26B

44-34393
44-34238
44-24279
44-34692
44-34286
41-34396
44-34218
44-34253
44-34098
44-35272
44-34247

B-26C

44-35771
44-34266
44-34280
44-35516
44-34311
44-35996
44-34531

DH-4

AS-39408

DH-4B

AS-62994

O-19B

30-125

O-19E

31-542

RA-24

41-15770

RA-24A

41-15789

B-57

52-1516	55-4279	55-4270	52-1545	52-1571
52-1519	55-4278	55-4275	52-1551	52-1578
52-1523	55-4277	55-4276	52-1565	52-1582
55-4282	55-4248	52-1532	52-1567	52-1588
55-4281	55-4265	52-1543	52-1568	53-3826

53-3827	53-3877	53-3889	53-3898	53-3935
53-3828	53-3879	53-3890	53-3906	53-3940
53-3840	53-3880	53-3892	53-3911	
53-3856	53-3881	53-3894	53-3915	
53-3865	53-3882	53-3895	53-3926	
53-3870	53-3886	53-3897	53-3931	

MC-130E

64-0559

64-0565

64-0572

64-0568

64-0571

64-0567

C-130E

64-0566

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS

Cpt Sheldon H. Wheeler, 21 Jun 1917

1Lt Norton L. Newhall, 17 Oct 1917

2Lt Jacob D. Halstead, 1 May 1918

1Lt George Englehart, 18 Jul 1918

Cpt John G. Winant, 2 Aug 1918

1Lt Walter Bender, 16 Feb 1919

2Lt F. Taylor, 31 May 1919

Cpt William G. Renwick, 7 Jun 1919

Cpt H. M. Guilbert, 3 Sep 1919

Cpt George C. Kenney, 13 Oct 1919

1Lt Vincent J. Meloy, c. Jul 1920

Cpt Charles A. Pursley, c. Jul 1920

1LT Harrison G. Crocker 28 Mar 21-15 May 21

1LT Vincent J. Meloy 15 May 21-24 Mar 22

1Lt John R. Glascock, 7 Aug 1921

1Lt Vincent J. Meloy, 1 Nov 1921

Cpt Charles B. B. Bubb, 16 Feb 1922

Cpt Thomas H. Shea Jr., 14 May 1922

1LT Lotha A. Smith 1 Jun 22-1 Jul 22

1Lt Peter E. Skanse, 17 Jun 1922

Cpt Charles B. B. Bubb, 12 Oct 1922

1LT Edward V. Harbeck 10 Jun 23-1 Aug 23

Cpt Joseph H. Davidson 1 Aug 23-1 Oct 23

1LT Lotha A. Smith 1 Oct 23-1 Jan 24
1LT Harrison G. Crocker 1 Jan 24-1 Jun 24
Cpt Joseph H. Davidson, 3 Aug 1923
1Lt Lotha A. Smith, 13 Oct 1923
Cpt Joseph H. Davidson, 1924
1LT James E. Duke 1 Jun 24-1 Aug 24
1Lt George W. McEntire, 19 Jan 1925
Cpt Joseph H. Davidson, 17 Feb 1925
Cpt Ross F. Cole, 24 Apr 1925
1Lt Dwight J. Canfield, 10 Mar 1926
2Lt John L. Hitchings, 14 Apr 1926
2Lt Howard M. Turner, Apr 1926
1Lt Dwight J. Canfield, 6 May 1926
1Lt Ralph F. Stearley, 17 Jun 1926
1Lt Angier H. Foster, 4 Oct 1926
1Lt Ralph F. Stearley, 9 Nov 1926
1Lt James T. Curry Jr., 4 Dec 1926
1LT Samuel J. Simonton 31 Aug 29-6 Sep 29
1LT John L. Davidson 6 Sep 29-20 Jan 30
Cpt Lotha A. Smith 20 Jan 30-5 Jul 33
1LT John D. Corkville 7 Jul 33-14 Feb 34
1LT George McCoy, Jr. 14 Feb 34-14 Apr 34
Cpt Lloyd L. Harvey 14 Apr 34-18 May 34
Cpt John D. Corkville 18 May 34-2 Jul 34
Cpt Lloyd L. Harvey 2 Jul 34-11 Feb 35
Cpt John D. Corkville 11 Feb 35-20 Aug 35
Maj. Lester J. Maitland 20 Aug 35-16 Jul 38
Maj Younger A. Pitts, 16 Jul 1938
Cpt Richard H. Lee, 11 Jul 1939
Cpt John F. Guillet, 21 Dec 1939
Maj Richard H. Lee, 31 Jan 1940
Cpt Robert D. Gapen, 4 Apr 1941
1Lt Robert F. Strickland, 1 Jul 1941
1Lt Alexander G. Evanoff, 24 Jan 1942
1Lt Virgil Schwab, 2 Mar 1942
Maj Floyd W. Rogers, 17 Apr 1942
Maj Harry L. Galusha, 30 Jul 1942
Maj Holden F. Ellison, 18 Oct 1942
LTC James A. Downs, Mar 1943
Maj Randolph H. Wilkins, Aug 1943
Cpt Martin J. Radnik, 2 Nov 1943
Maj Charles W. Howe, 4 Feb 1944
Maj Charles C. Smith, May 1944
Maj George R. Greene, 28 Sep 1944
Maj Abraham E. Shook, 13 Feb 1945
Cpt George L. Cooper, 13 Jul 1945

Cpt Donald G. Hellier, Oct 1945
Cpt Lawrence A. Adams Jr., 1 Nov 1945
Cpt Max E. Wolfson, 24 Dec 1945
1Lt Clifford S. Haines, 1 Jan 1946
Cpt Edward W. Cordes, Mar 1946
Cpt Virgil R. Sewell, Apr 1946
Cpt Weston F. Maughan, Dec 1946
Maj John J. Ruetters, 3 Jan 1947
Maj Thomas J. Price, 8 Jan 1948
Maj Joseph W. Bird, 7 May 1949
LTC William D. Harris, 22 Sep 1949
LTC Abraham E. Shook, 2 Aug 1950
LTC Isaac F. Larkey, 18 Oct 1950
Maj Gus Weiser, Mar 1951
LTC Edward L. Wilson Jr., 12 May 1951
LTC Stanley V. Rush, 29 Aug 1951
LTC Edward D. Leahy, Dec 1951
LTC Ralph N. Romstad, 18 Mar 1952
Maj Frederick S. Kelly, Oct 1952
Maj Robert L. Wood, Nov 1952
LTC Raleigh D. Smith, 24 May 1954
LTC Charles E. Mendell, 10 Jun 1955
LTC James M. Sedberry Jr., 16 Jan 1956
Maj I. H. Young, 30 Jun 1958
LTC Norbert C. Treacy, 29 May 1959
Maj Patrick H. Kenny Jr., 30 Apr 1960
LTC Frederick W. Grindle Jr., 1 Jul 1963
Maj Howard F. O'Neal, 1 Jun 1964
Maj Roy L. White, 26 Sep 1964
LTC Daniel E. Farr II, 7 May 1965
LTC Gerald T. Hamilton, 15 Apr 1966
LTC Nathaniel A. Gallagher, 13 Oct 1966
LTC Robert S. Stedman, 18 Apr 1967
LTC Patrick H. Kenny Jr., 23 Jan 1968
Col Elbert M. Stringer, 23 Mar 1968
LTC Eugene Tiddy, 18 Nov 1968
LTC Kenneth S. Smith, 15 Mar 1969
LTC Albert E. Smith, 25 Jun 1969
LTC Morris T. Warner, 15 Nov 1969
LTC John Q. Wise, 7 Dec 1969
LTC Whitney N. Tomlin, 22 Jun 1970
LTC William A. Orth, 30 Sep 1971
LTC Frank K. Sloan, Apr 1971
LTC Gordon H. Weed, 15 Jan 1972
LTC Donald J. Loosely, 16 Jul-30 Sep 1972
None (not manned); 1 Oct 1972-31 May 1974

LTC Peter K. Nikonovich, 1 Jun 1974
LTC Donald W. Burger, 7 Mar 1975
LTC Hugh M. Hunter, 8 Mar 1977
LTC Roland D. Guidry, 4 May 1979
LTC Robert L. Brenci, 1 Oct 1980
LTC James L. Hobson Jr., 26 Jul 1982
LTC David A. Miles, 20 Jul 1984
LTC John W. Harbison, 27 Aug 1986
LTC Jerry L. Thigpen, 11 Jul 1988
LTC Thomas M. Beres, 2 Jul 1990
LTC Gary L. Murdock, 29 May 1992
LTC Kenneth H. Poole, 18 Apr 1994
LTC Bernard V. Moore II, 5 Jan 1996
LTC Jeffrey S. Alderfer, 18 Jul 1997
LTC Raymond J. Chapman, 24 May 1999
LTC Lloyd B. Moon, 14 Feb 2001
LTC Douglas A. Galipeau, 29 Aug 2002
LTC Daniel Zook, 4 Jun 2004
LTC Theodore A. Corallo, 20 Jun 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War I

Lorraine

St Mihiel

World War II

Antisubmarine, American Theater

East Indies

Air Offensive, Japan

Papua, New Guinea

Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific

Leyte; Luzon

Southern Philippines

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 Advisory
Vietnam Defensive
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
TET 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Commando Hunt VI
Commando Hunt VII
Vietnam Ceasefire

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers
Panama, 1989–1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Papua, 23–[29 Jul 1942]
New Guinea, 17 Aug 1943
Korea, 27 Jun–31 Jul 1950
Korea, 22 Apr–8 Jul 1951
Korea, 1 May–27 Jul 1953

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
[12 Oct–12 Dec 1966 and 11 Feb–10 Apr 1967]
6 Jun 1967–18 Jan 1968
15 Nov 1968–31 May 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device
19 Feb 1965–19 Feb 1966

[8 Jul–15 Aug 1965, 16 Oct–16 Dec 1965, 15 Feb–18 Apr 1966, and 15 Jun–15 Aug 1966]
[2 Apr–12 Apr 1967 and 7 Jun–2 Aug 1967]
[26 Sep–21 Nov 1967 and 15 Jan–2 May 1968]
1 Oct 1968–13 Apr 1969; 14 Apr–15 Nov 1969
[15] Nov 1969–20 Jan 1970; 21 Jan–1 Sep 1970
1 Dec 1970–25 Jun 1971
21 Aug–6 Dec 1971
5 Apr–7 Jul 1972
8 Jul–1 Oct 1972
1 May 1982–30 Apr 1984
1 Jun 1997–31 May 1999
1 Jul 2003–30 Jun 2005

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jun 1958–30 Jun 1960
1 Jul 1960–31 Mar 1962
5 Aug 1964–31 Mar 1965
1 Jan 1976–31 Mar 1977
15 Jul 1979–15 May 1980
16 May 1980–30 Apr 1982
1 May 1985–30 Apr 1987
1 May 1988–30 Apr 1990
16 Apr 1992–15 Apr 1994
1 Jun 1995–31 May 1997
1 Jul 1999–30 Jun 2001
1 Jul 2001–30 Jun 2003
1 Sep 2004–31 Aug 2006

Gallant Unit Citation

6 Oct 2001–30 May 2003

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

27 Jun–31 Jul 1950

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

7 Nov 1969–30 Nov 1970

EMBLEM

The insignia for the Eighth Aero Squadron is a great American eagle, with the wings spread, holding the American Liberty Bell. (Approved, 14 Feb 1924)

The official description is "An American Eagle with outspread wings, clutching the top of the Liberty Bell super-imposed upon a ring target." This insignia was chosen because the 8th was the first American Air Service unit to use the DE Havilland DH-4 aircraft in combat, powered by the

famous Liberty engine. The Liberty Bell and the American Eagle have always symbolized America's stand for freedom. The combination of Air Service, the Liberty Bell, the American Eagle and the Liberty engine all contribute to make this an appropriate insignia to be officially adopted by the 8th Squadron. Captain S. H. Wheeler, the Squadron C.O., was personally responsible for designing the insignia.

On a disc Azure, a bezant bearing a stylized blackbird bendwise sinister, head to base body Sable, wings Argent, fimbriated of the second; all within a narrow border Black. Attached above the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "BLACKBIRDS" in Black letters. Attached below the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "8 SOS" in Black letters. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The stylized blackbird conveys movement and flight. The flight direction is indicative of the Squadron's low-level mission. The body of the stylized blackbird reinforces the unit's unconventional warfare role and operations during darkness. The wings symbolize the Squadron's unique CV-22 mission and the twin prop rotors of the Osprey's tilt rotor design. (Approved, 19 Jul 1993)

MOTTO

BLACK BIRDS

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

During the hot days of early summer, 1917, there was great confusion among the clerks and ground officers of the Second Company "I", Provisional Aviation Camp, Kelly Field. There was much throwing of ink, pounding of typewriters and swearing behind the portals of the Inner Shrine and when the dust settled on June 21st the 8th Aero Squadron came out on the run, with Captain S. H. Wheeler at the head, and has been going strong ever since. A few weeks spent at equipping the personnel—mixed with plenty of drill and fatigue which was not of the "bunk" variety—and the Squadron moved to Selfridge Field, Mount Clemens, Michigan.

At Selfridge, the squadron constructed the field. For 3 months the squadron trained cadets, aviation mechanics, and fitters and riggers.

Advanced courses in pick and shovel and other aero activities were indulged in by all at Selfridge until the 27th of October when all hands moved to Garden City, learned a bit about discipline, and boarded the Carpathia, November 22nd, docking at Liverpool, December 8th. At Winnaldown, four sections were formed and sent to "schools of destruction" to receive the latest methods of handling the wrench and cold chisel.

After a stay of 3 weeks at the rest camp Winchester, the squadron broke into four sections and sent to different RFC training centers.

On 1 May the entire squadron formed at Thetford. The squadron crossed the channel at South Hampton and landed at Le Havre and proceeded to a rest camp at St Maxient.

The squadron went via train to Amanty, Meuse arriving on the last day of July.

On 31 August the squadron moved to Ourches via truck train, they were the second liberty squadron to reach the front. At Ourches the squadron became part of the 4th corps and attached to the first division as a divisional squadron

The work undertaken on the 11th was confined to Reconnaissance missions, trips being made at dawn and toward evening. This information was reported to the Intelligence Officer at Observation Group Headquarters, 4th Army Corps and transmitted by telephone to G-2, Headquarters 4th Army Corps. It should have reached the Division from that center. As the Period of Preparation just prior to the attack took place during the hours of darkness no aeroplanes were used.

The plan of employment of the Air Service was carried thru complete from H hour until darkness on September 13th. Additional planes were added to this schedule. It was necessary to substitute for one of the Infantry Contact Planes, temporarily reported missing, to replace one of the Artillery Counter Attack Planes which crashed and to furnish an extra Infantry Contact Plane (this plane was sent out about 2:30 and never returned). In addition an Alert plane was called upon to locate our front line about five o'clock and a late evening reconnaissance was made as far back as Metz. In all, our planes were in the air for thirty-six hours and thirty minutes on this day and twenty-four separate missions were accomplished.

On September 14th the schedule of the previous day was repeated up to noon hour, from then on one Counter Attack Plane was kept constantly in the air and toward dusk a strong Reconnaissance Patrol was sent out. The first Infantry Contact Plane to leave the field never returned.

Over these two days our Infantry Contact Plane met with some success; but no work was accomplished with the artillery by the Artillery Counter Attack Planes although valuable information was at times obtained and messages dropped on PC's of Corps, Division and Brigades. Wireless messages were also sent and the advancement of the tanks carefully observed. The failure of the Artillery Counter Attack Plane to succeed in its work with the artillery was due to the very rapid advance of our own troops and the constant change of battery positions. It was impossible to reach the batteries by wireless. Some of the Observers attempted to get control of artillery fire by dropping written messages on batteries giving wave length, corps letter to be used, etc. This also failed.

Two planes were scheduled to regulate heavy artillery guns attached to the Division on set targets. Neither were successful. The target of one on Mount Sec was shut in by clouds and enveloped in a smoke screen. Observation was impossible. The other plane failed to get any show of panels in answer to its wireless. The wireless on this machine was tested before leaving the field and again on returning. Both times it functioned properly.

Throughout the attack three of our planes were at the disposal of the Corps Artillery. The plan adopted by the Division for employment of the Air Service could not have been improved upon.

The liaison between Divisional Headquarters and the 8th Aero Squadron both prior to and during the attack was unsatisfactory. This was in no way due to unwillingness on the part of individuals responsible to cooperate, for the most generous support was given at Divisional Headquarters to the Officers of this organization, and yet it is a fact, that imperfect liaison prevented the Division from receiving the full benefit of information gathered by the Observers and Pilots of this Squadron.

In the first place the Divisional Field Order sent thru the 4th Corps was not received until the evening of September 14th or 62 hours after H hour. In the future such data should be sent direct to the Squadron thru the Squadron Liaison Officer attached to Divisional Headquarters. This Officer had a motorcycle at his disposal for the transmission of all such information.

Although the front line was successfully reported twice during the first day of the attack at no time were infantry panels seen by our Observers. All messages sent by Observers were not received at the Divisional Receiving Station. This was no doubt due to inexperience on the part of the Observers, interference caused by enemy wireless, poor weather conditions, etc. It is true, however, that as important a message as "rolling barrage falling on our own troops" failed to get thru although picked up elsewhere. It is absolutely essential that at least one radio receiving set at Divisional PC should listen in without break to the Infantry Contact Plane.

Prior to the attack I found that there were no radio receiving sets at either of the Infantry Brigade PC's. As I was told the communication between Divisional and Brigade PC's is seldom maintained during an attack and as I understand that information gathered by the Infantry Contact Plane is often of more immediate interest to the Brigade than to the Division, I set up two of the Squadron radio receiving sets together with four Operators in order that the Brigade Headquarters might get all information wirelessly by the Infantry Contact Plane direct. These instruments never reached Brigade Headquarters. The Operators volunteered to string telephone wire. All four were grateful to be of some use. It is my understanding that each Brigade PC is entitled to a radio receiving set under the present table of organization. Certainly these instruments could be used to advantage.

On returning to the Aerodrome all Observers made detailed written reports which were given to the Group Intelligence Officer and telephoned by him to G-2, 4th Corps Headquarters. These Major Truesdale, C.S.O., 1st Division, told me were not forwarded to the Division. They contain the most complete and valuable information gathered by the Squadron.

Throughout the attack there were no means of communication between Divisional Headquarters and the Divisional Squadron, except courier which was of no practical value because of distance and road congestion. The most important single item necessary to bring about complete liaison between Divisional Headquarters and the Divisional Squadron and to make possible the maximum use by the Division of all information gathered by Observers and Pilots of the Squadron is a direct telephone line between the two Headquarters. This might be accomplished thru the Balloon central.

By the time the boys had worked up courage enough to entrust their linen to the French for

washing, the outfit was ordered to the Ourches airdrome to become part of the Fourth Corps Group, attached to the First Division. Active service over the lines commenced immediately and on September 12th and 13th the Group was more than busy with the operations against the St. Mihiel salient. Four pilots were lost in this engagement but word was received later that two were prisoners of the Huns.

The Eighth moved to the Toul Airdrome where it remained less than a month, going on October 23rd to Saizerais to become part of the Sixth Corps. While at Saizerais, and before the armistice was signed, five officers were lost. One met his end in an accident while the other four were later reported as prisoners in Germany.

Both at Toul and at Saizerais a large number of voluntary bombing missions were carried out. The Squadron was actively engaged on the front two and a half months. The total losses were: eight killed (four in accidents) three injured and six "missing".

Shortly after the signing of the armistice, as a reward for faithful performances, the Powers-That-Be ordered the Squadron to the United States to be demobilized. The news of the orders were greeted with large amounts of joy by the squadron, which at the time was still ignorant of the peculiar and devious ways of demobilization. That was back in the early days just after the armistice, when it was generally believed that orders for home meant "Hoboken toot sweet".

Sad was the awakening! For one dreary morning the squadron climbed out of its box cars and found itself going into camp in a place that was even wetter than Saizerais, which had been supposed to hold all existing records for dampness. This new camp was supposed to be just a temporary waiting place with a transport lurking in the near future.

But the weeks lengthen into months, and still the transport seems to be as far away as ever. And as, the months of waiting pass, the one hope is to be back home before the whole works go dry.

The Eighth was engaged in the operations in the Toul Sector, Chateau-Thierry, St. Mihiel, and the Argonne-Meuse first and second offensives, terminating its work on February 5, 1919. It suffered twelve casualties, consisting of 4 killed and 8 prisoners.

Stationed at Kelly Field, TX, as of June 1919 as the 8th Surveillance Squadron. Assigned on 1 July 1919 to the Army Surveillance Group (subsequently redesignated as the 1st Surveillance Group, and later the 3rd Attack Group).

Transferred on 13 August 1919, less Flight B, to the U. S. Army Airdrome, McAllen, TX. Participated in the Mexican Border Patrol operations August 1919-June 1921 and flood relief operations in the Rio Grande Valley in June 1922.

Flight B transferred 13 August 1920 to Pope Field, NC.

Redesignated as the 8th Squadron (Attack) on 14 March 1921.

Entire squadron transferred 2 July 1921 to Kelly Field, TX. Redesignated as the 8th Attack

Squadron 25 March 1923.

Transferred on 30 June 1926 to Fort Crockett, TX.

Transferred on 27 February 1935 to Barksdale Field, LA.

Reorganized and redesignated 8th Bombardment Squadron on 1 December 1939 and assigned to the 3rd Bombardment Group.

Transferred on 8 October 1940 to Savannah, GA.

When the group received the improved Curtiss A-3B Falcons, a more precise and heavily armed version of the O-1 Falcon, the group painted the tail surfaces of the aircraft to distinguish each squadron from each other: yellow for the 8th, white for the 13th, and red for the 90th. In 1932 came the Curtiss low wing monoplane A-8 Shrike with its liquid cooled Conqueror engine. By late 1933, the 3rd was flying the radial powered Curtiss A-12 Shrike, an even more advanced model for low level attack missions.

Captain Floyd Rogers led thirteen A-24 Dauntless's of 8 Squadron from Charters Towers to Port Moresby. They suffered heavy losses while in New Guinea. They were withdrawn from New Guinea after it was realised that they were not suited for their intended role without adequate fighter protection and they were desperately in need of adequate workshop facilities and spares backup. They were more suited to carrier based operations.

The 3rd Light Bombardment Group comprising A-24 Dauntless Dive Bombers, A-20 Havoc Bombers and B-25 Mitchell bombers moved to Charters Towers on 1 March 1942. The first aircraft to land at the newly constructed airfield was Major "Big Jim" Davies of the 8th Squadron in his A-24.

On 29 July 1942, seven A-24's of the 8th Squadron left Port Moresby, led by Maj. Floyd Rogers, headed for a convoy heading for Gona. They had an escort of P-39's. Somewhere over the Owen Stanleys they lost their escort and decided to go in with out them. They encountered a host of Zeros -- one A-24 returned from that mission, Capt. Wilkins and Gunner Al Clark. Wilkins later received the Medal of Honor, posthumously, in a Rabaul mission on 21 November 1943.

Then the North Koreans undertook their first act of aggression on June 1950, they marched against an ill-trained and under manned ROK Army. Recognizing this action as a threat to world democracy, President Truman ordered American Forces to come to the aid of the reeling ROK Troops. The American Army landed in Korea and fought courageously in a defensive action against overwhelming Red attackers.

As the first American soldiers encountered the enemy, overhead were the 8th Bombardment Squadron's B-26 attack bombers on the first bombing raid of the " police action." From Yokota on the Japanese Island of Honshu, they hit the Reds with napalm, high explosives, rockets and incendiaries. Still the Communist tide rolled southward until the United Nations Forces were contained in the narrow Pusan Perimeter. Throughout the entire action, the 8th flew daily,

pounding the enemy's troops, ripping the supply lines, smothering its tanks and artillery in fire and blasting his supply dumps, in coordination with the 8th Army to assure that there would be no "Dunkirk " in Korea.

When General MacArthur pulled his end run and landed at Inchon, the air support given by the 8th was instrumental in achieving the victory there. At that time, the Liberty Squadron was flying out of Iwakuni and carrying their loads of destruction to the Reds daily. So effective was the daylight strikes that Communists began moving their supplies by night only. To counter this move, the 26's went on the "grave yard shift" and so earned the title "The Night Invaders"

The United Nations forces pushed the Communists to the very banks of the armed might, the Yalu, by November of 1950, before the armed might of Red China was thrown into the battle. Once more, the battle line moved southward until air and ground reinforcements stopped the Red advance a few miles north of Seoul. A U.N. counter offensive then pushed the Chinese back to the present armistice line. There the ground battle seesawed, while, by day and by night, the 8th sent its men and planes to harass and destroy the United Nation's enemies.

While the front line positions remained stagnant, the 8th flew hundreds of missions to hamper the Red efforts to build up their supplies in order to recover from their ill-fated spring offensive. At first our efforts were confined mainly to night route recce's although bomber streams, rail recce's and daylight formations were used effectively. With the solidification of the front lines, a new kind of bombing came into being. The tadpole, striking at the enemy front line positions protected by weather or darkness, hit with such uncanny accuracy that the Chinese and North Koreans developed a mystical fear of the " plants that can see in the dark."

While the peace talks droned on, new generations of fighting men came to the Friendly Eighth. They came to fight a war for freedom, the Regulars, the Re-treads, the "New boys" from Cadet schools that didn't exist before the Korean crises. They came and went stateside. Not all of them went stateside, some " got it" in the flaming hell at Chinnampo, some in the icy blackness of a night " tad " some in the far off mountains north of Wonson. and others in searchlight nightmare of Purple Four. But the next night.

For almost 2 years this air war went on. our losses mounted and the claims piled up: one truck, two roadcuts. one loco. 4 boxcars, one redball machine, 2 trucks, 6 trucks. 2 roadcuts, a 12 span bridge, a loco. 6 boxcars and a rail cut, 8 trucks and 2 road cuts.

But in early June of '53. a new feeling came into the air. nothing definite, just the "knowing" that something was up. The mission quota rose daily a full scale maximum effort was underway. Armament crew chiefs met the ships at night and readied the aircraft for early morning flights. Combat crews returned from missions, debriefed, and climbed back, red eyed and weary, into their ships for an early "tad". For two months this grueling routine was adhered to as schedule requirements rose.

Then on June 27th 1953, came, the long awaited climax, the Armistice had been signed and at 2200 the Cease Fire would take effect. How fitting it was that Col. LeBaily, Wing Commander selected the 8th to fly the last... as it had the first bombing mission in Korea. With a few scant

minutes remaining before the 2200 deadline, a B-26 Night Invader bearing the Liberty Squadron's yellow tail, opened its bomb bays and dropped the load of explosives that detonated in North Korea. And then the stillness of the Armistice took hold.

During the latter part of 1953 and the first of 1954, the Eighth Squadron maintained its combat readiness, through continuous training. And thus, helped to maintain the uneasy peace in Korea.

On the 1st of October 1954, the 8th left Kunsan for Johnson Air Force Base in Japan, taking with them a proud history and high spirits of accomplishment. The "Liberty Bell" Squadron continues to serve its country by being vigilant...by being constantly combat ready.

Southeast Asia, Apr 1964–Sep 1972.

On one such mission, 14 September 1951, Capt John S. Walmsley of the 8th Bombardment Squadron, attacked a train until he ran out of ammunition. He radioed for a follow-up strike and remained in the target area, illuminating the train with a spotlight for the subsequent strikes. His aircraft naturally came under intense fire as he illuminated the target, but he bravely persisted until he was shot down, but the target was destroyed. Like Major Wilkins, Captain Walmsley received a posthumous Medal of Honor.

13 December 1968 USAF Martin B-57E Canberra 54-4284 of the 8th Tactical Bombardment Squadron, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, has mid-air collision with C-123B 54-0600 over Xieng Khovang, southern Laos, all three crew of the B-57 KWF, pilot of C-123 survives bail-out, lands in tree, rescued by an HH-3, but six others are KWF.

Participated in Iranian hostage rescue attempt, Apr 1980.

Combat in Grenada, 24 Oct–3 Nov 1983

Panama, 20 Dec 1989–14 Jan 1990

Southwest Asia, 16 Jan–17 Mar 1991

The first MC-130E Combat Talon serving with the 8th Special Operations Squadron completed one of its last active duty missions July 14, on its return from a deployment to Southwest Asia. The aircraft's return to Duke Field, Fla., was greeted by distinguished visitors, crew family members, and 8th SOS commander Lt. Col. Ted Corallo. "It's served the nation well after 41 years of active duty service," Corallo said. The modified C-130 is not retiring; it will continue to serve with the Air Force Reserve. The unit began its transition to the CV-22 Osprey in August, when the 8th SOS began moving from Duke Field to nearby Hurlburt. 2006

In August 2006, the 8 SOS ceased operating the MC-130E Combat Talon and prepared for AFSOC's newest platform, the CV-22 Osprey. On November 16, 2006, the 8 SOS welcomed its 22nd type of aircraft by accepting the ceremonial key for the unit's first CV-22.

The Pentagon on Saturday identified two airmen who perished in the April 8 crash of a USAF

CV-22 Osprey that claimed the lives of a US soldier and a civilian employee and injured others on board. The airmen were Maj. Randell D. Voas, 43, of Lakeville, Minn., and SMSgt. James B. Lackey, 45, of Green Clove Springs, Fla., both members of the 8th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla. According to a 1st Special Operations Wing release Voas was a CV-22 evaluator pilot and a former MH-53 pilot who traded Army green for Air Force blue in 1999. Lackey was a CV-22 evaluator flight engineer and 14-year veteran MH-53 flight engineer, who entered the Air Force in 1986. Members of the 8th SOS had been deployed to Afghanistan since March; it was the second Southwest Asia tour for the unit with its new Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft. 2010. After an "exhaustive investigation," Air Force officials still don't have "clear and convincing evidence" as to what exactly caused a CV-22 to crash near Qalat, Afghanistan, killing four and injuring the remaining 16 on board. The aircraft's flight incident recorder and the vibration structural life and engine diagnostics control unit—collectively known as the "black box"—and its right engine were destroyed by precision guided bombs sent to ensure sensitive information in the wreckage did not fall into enemy hands, according to Air Force Special Operation Command's release on the newly issued findings of the accident investigation board. Without that information, officials were unable to determine an exact cause, but the board did determine 10 factors that "substantially contributed to the mishap," including poor weather conditions, human error, and an "unanticipated high rate of descent and engine power loss." They did rule out loss due to enemy action, environmental brownout conditions, and vortex ring state. 2010

Air Force Special Operations Command investigators determined that crew error caused the crash of a CV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft on June 13 during a routine training mission practicing two-ship formation flying on the Eglin Range, north of Navarre, Fla. By clear and convincing evidence, the accident investigation board found that "the cause of the mishap was the crew's failure to keep the aircraft clear of the lead aircraft's wake," according to the command's Aug. 30 release. "This resulted in an 'uncommanded' roll to the left, rapid loss of altitude, and impact with the terrain," states the release. The CV-22, assigned to the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla., was destroyed upon impact. All five aircrew members sustained various degrees of injuries when the aircraft crashed. However, none of the injuries were life-threatening, according to AFSOC. The airmen were members of Hurlburt's 8th Special Operations Squadron. The loss of the aircraft is valued at approximately \$78 million, states the release. 2012

Air Force officials relieved the commander of the 8th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., following last week's crash of one of the unit's CV-22 Ospreys, reported AOL Defense June 21. "Loss of confidence" in Lt. Col. Matt Glover's "ability to effectively command the unit" drove the decision, said 1st Special Operations Wing Commander Col. James Silfe, according to AOL Defense. The squadron's demanding mission "require[s] new leadership to maintain the highest levels of precision," he said. All five of the Osprey's aircrew were injured in the June 13 mishap that occurred during a training mission at the neighboring Eglin Range Complex. Maj. Brian Luce, one of the pilots, and TSgt. Christopher Dawson, a flight engineer, were released from hospital care two days after the crash, while the squadron temporarily suspended flight operations. On June 19, Cpt Brett Cassidy, the second pilot, was discharged from the hospital. That left flight engineers TSgt. Edilberto Malave and SSgt. Sean McMahon still undergoing treatment and rehabilitation. 2012

The three Air Force CV-22s that took fire last month while trying to evacuate US citizens from a violence-stricken part of South Sudan sustained "moderate damage," according to US Africa Command spokesman Chuck Prichard. However, due to operational security concerns, he could not elaborate or discuss the timeline for their repair. The incident occurred on Dec. 21 as the CV-22s were approaching the town of Bor to fetch US citizens from the conflict zone. Unknown forces struck the CV-22s with small arms fire, damaging all three and wounding four US service members aboard them. Prichard said the CV-22s "returned safely" to their forward operating location, which AFRICOM identified as Entebbe, Uganda, where airmen transferred the wounded to a C-17 for a flight to Nairobi, Kenya, for medical treatment. The CV-22s are assigned to the 8th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla. 2014



Air Force Order of Battle

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