

UNITED STATES AIR FORCES IN EUROPE BAND

LINEAGE

386th Army Air Forces Band constituted, 14 Jan 1943
Activated, 1 Feb 1943
Redesignated 686th Army Band, 27 Dec 1943
Redesignated 686 Army Air Forces Band, 26 Feb 1944
Redesignated 686 Air Force Band, 26 Sep 1947
Redesignated United States Air Forces in Europe Band, 1 Oct 1991

STATIONS

Greenwood AAFld, MS, 1 Feb 1943-6 Dec 1944
St Germain, France, 6 Dec 1944
Wiesbaden AB, Germany, 1 Oct 1945
Sembach AB, Germany, 1 Oct 1973
Kaiserslautern Storage, Germany, 14 Mar 1979
Einsiedlerhof Storage Annex, Germany, c. Jun 1987
Sembach Annex, Germany, c. Jun 1997

ASSIGNMENTS

Army Air Forces Southeast Training Center (later, Army Air Forces Eastern Flying Training Command; Army Air Forces Training Command), 1 Feb 1943
Air Service Command, United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe (later, Air Technical Service Command in Europe), 6 Dec 1944
United States Air Forces in Europe, 25 Aug 1945
7100th Headquarters Command Wing, 1 Jul 1948
7100th Hq Support Wing-USAFE, 21 Jan 1951
7100th Air Base Group (later, 7100th Support Group; 7101st Air Base Wing), 1 Nov 1953
601st Combat Support Group, 1 Jun 1973
7400th Air Base Group, 1 Oct 1973
86th Combat Support Group, 31 Dec 1975
United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Nov 1979
316th Air Division, 1 Sep 1988
Seventeenth Air Force, 1 May 1991

United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Jun 1993
435th Mission Support Group, 29 Jan 2004
United States Air Forces in Europe, 18 Nov 2004

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

WWII American Theater

WWII EAME Theater

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

26 Aug 1955-7 May 1957

1 Jul 1965-30 Jun 1967

2 Jan 1971-1 Jan 1972

1 Jan-31 Dec 1976

7 Jun 1982-6 Jun 1984

13 May 1989-12 May 1991

Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards

1 Oct 1991-30 Sep 1993

1 Jul 1994-30 Jun 1996

1 Jul 1996-30 Jun 1998

24 Mar-10 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1998-30 Jun 2000

1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2002

1 Jul 2002-29 Jan 2004

1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005

1 Jul 2005-31 Dec 2006

EMBLEM

None on file. Unit may design and request approval of an emblem in accordance with AFI 84-105, chapter 3.

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The United States Air Forces in Europe Band is the command band of the United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE), representing the United States and its Air Force at the highest level of diplomatic, ceremonial, local and international community relations.

Stationed at Sembach AB, Germany, "America's Musical Ambassadors" have a performance tradition spanning over 60 years. In that time, the band has built an extensive cultural and diplomatic outreach, entertaining military and civilian audiences throughout Europe, Southwest Asia, and Africa. Always at the forefront of the band's musical mission is providing entertainment and musical support for thousands of U.S. military personnel and their families stationed throughout the European Command.

The 45-member unit is comprised of several performing ensembles to include the Concert Band, Check Six jazz ensemble, Touch 'n Go rock band, Ceremonial Band, Marching Band, Brass Quintet, Woodwind Quintet and protocol combos. With an extensive touring schedule supporting a vast performing area, the unit's composite ensembles present over 300 performances every year. In addition to performing live concerts, the USAFE Band is featured on international radio and television broadcasts and through recordings that bring the music of America to millions across the continent.

The USAFE Band traces its origins back to Greenwood Army Air Field, Mississippi, where it was first activated on February 1, 1943 as the 386th Army Air Forces Band. It was a small unit to start, with only 5 members to form the nucleus of the organization. The personnel roster grew rapidly though, and by November, the band was able to carry out its prescribed functions. The primary mission of the 45-member unit was to minister to morale, and they did so by performing field music, concerts, and musical shows for the troops. Members also made up a dance band for social affairs on the Post. Like other military units of the time, the 386th was actively involved in fundraising parades to promote the sale of bonds to aid the war effort.

On February 26, 1944 the band was renamed the 686th Army Air Forces Band. On December 6, that same year, the band moved to Army Air Forces Station #379 at St. Germain-en-Laye, a suburb of Paris, France. The original move was completed without personnel or equipment, but by January 17, 1945 all the members had arrived and were ready to perform. On September 17, 1945 the band moved again; this time to Wiesbaden, Germany where it would remain until 1977.

From 1947 to 1969, there were a total of four Air Force Bands in Europe: the 3rd AF band in South Ruislip, England; the 16th AF Band in Torrejon, Spain; the 583rd AF Band in Ramstein, Germany; and the 686th AF Band in Wiesbaden, Germany. Over time, budgets were cut and the bands were disbanded. The Ramstein 583rd AF Band closed in 1969, leaving the 686th the only Air Force Band left in Europe.

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Sources