

497th COMBAT TRAINING FLIGHT



MISSION

LINEAGE

302nd Bombardment Squadron (Light) constituted, 13 Jan 1942
Activated, 10 Feb 1942
Redesignated 302nd Bombardment Squadron (Dive), 27 Jul 1942
Redesignated 497th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 10 Aug 1943
Disbanded, 1 Apr 1944
Reconstituted and redesignated 497th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, 3 Feb 1953
Activated, 18 Feb 1953
Redesignated 497th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 25 Jul 1964
Inactivated, 16 Sep 1974
Activated, 1 Oct 1978
Inactivated, 24 Jan 1989
Redesignated 497th Fighter Training Squadron, 28 Oct 1991
Activated, 31 Oct 1991
Redesignated 497th Combat Training Squadron, 1 Aug 1994
Redesignated 497th Combat Training Flight, 26 Oct 2006

STATIONS

Savannah AB (later, Hunter Field), GA, 10 Feb 1942
Drew Field, FL, 7 Feb 1943
Harding Field, LA, 4 Oct 1943-1 Apr 1944
Portland Intl Aprt, OR, 18 Feb 1953
Geiger Field, WA, 18 Aug 1955-20 Jun 1958

Torrejon AB, Spain, 21 Jun 1958-18 Jun 1964
George AFB, CA, 18 Jun 1964-8 Dec 1965
Ubon Airfield, Thailand, 8 Dec 1965-16 Sep 1974
Taegu AB, South Korea, 1 Oct 1978-24 Jan 1989
Paya Lebar Air Base, Singapore, 31 Oct 1991

ASSIGNMENTS

84th Bombardment (later, 84th Fighter-Bomber) Group, 10 Feb 1942-1 Apr 1944
503rd Air Defense Group, 18 Feb 1953
84th Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955
65th Air Division, 5 Jul 1958
United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Jul 1960
32nd Tactical Fighter Wing, 18 Jun 1964
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 25 Jul 1964
831st Air Division, 6 Dec 1965
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Dec 1965-16 Sep 1974
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1978
51st Composite (later, 51st Tactical Fighter) Wing, 1 Jan 1982-24 Jan 1989
Thirteenth Air Force, 31 Oct 1991
36th Air Base Wing, 30 Jun 2005
36th Operations Group, 15 Mar 2006

ATTACHMENTS

65th Air Division, 1 Jul 1960-17 Jun 1964
479th Tactical Fighter Wing, 6-8 Dec 1965

WEAPON SYSTEMS

V-72 (A-31), 1942
A-24, 1942-1943
P-39, 1943
P-47, 1943-1944
F-94, 1953-1954
F-89, 1954-1955
F-86, 1955-1960
F-102, 1960-1964
F-4, 1964-1974
F-4, 1978-1989
F-4C
F-4D
F-4E
F-94B
F-94A
F-89D
F-86D



F-4D of the 497th TFS at Ubon Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand (USAF photo)

COMMANDERS

Lt Thomas W. Glasgow, Feb 1942-unkn
Unkn, 18 Feb-10 Mar 1943
LTC Fergus C. Fay, 11 Mar 1953
LTC Julian F. Crow, 7 Sep 1953
Maj Robert M. Bell, 17 Jul 1955
LTC Warren A. Bennet, 18 Aug 1955
Maj David V. Severen, 1 Nov 1959
LTC James M. Thomas, 27 Apr 1960
LTC George R. Halliwell, Jan 1961
LTC John S. Clarke, Jr., 16 Aug 1963
LTC James McGuire, Dec 1965
Maj Lawrence F. Gardner, Dec 1966
LTC George R. Halliwell, May, 1967
Maj Theodore J. Baader, 6 May 1967
LTC Jacob A. Morrow, 15 Jun 1967
LTC George R. Halliwell, 21 Jul 1967
LTC Norman M. Green, 9 Nov 1967
Maj Charles Bennett, 9 Jan 1968
LTC John Holman, 4 Feb 1968
LTC William D. Baisley, 23 Feb 1968
LTC Carl H. Cathey, Jr., 3 Feb 1969
LTC Jack C. Trabucco, 3 Jun 1969
LTC Daniel H. Parris, Jul 1969
LTC Robert L. Cass, 21 Oct 1969
LTC William W. Pinner, 6 Aug 1970
LTC Thomas M. Fitzgerald, 24 Feb 1971
LTC Richard J. Montgomery, 28 Jul 1971
LTC Daniel W. Schmarr, 16 Apr 1972

Maj Barrett V. Johnson, 10 Aug 1972
LTC Edward A. Crimp, 23 Aug 1972
LTC Ronald A. Johnson, 7 Jul 1973
LTC Robert D. Goertz, 30 Mar 1974
LTC Edward S. Joiner, Jr., 20 Jun-14 Sep 1974
Maj Nicholas B. Kemp, 1 Oct 1978
Lt Donald R. Brown, 1 Nov 1978
LTC Morris E. Norsworthy, 12 Sep 1979
LTC Charles H. Wimberly, 2 Sep 1980
LTC Robert E. Humphreys, 7 Jul 1981
LTC Gladstone J. Prater Jr., 9 Sep 1981-unkn
LTC Gary A. Van Valin, unkn-16 Jun 1983
LTC Charles M. Heltsley Jr., 16 Jun 1983
LTC Byron L. Huff, 22 Jun 1984
LTC John C. Gonda III, 6 Dec 1985-unkn
Col Robert E. Hammond, 1994
Col Mario S. Cafiero, 23 Sep 1996
Col Phillip J. Mixon, 23 Jul 1998-unkn

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

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

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citations

Southeast Asia

16 Dec 1966-2 Jan 1967

1 Mar 1967-31 Mar 1968

1 Jan-1 Apr 1971

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

16 Dec 1965-15 Dec 1966

1 Apr-30 Sep 1968

1 Jan-31 Dec 1970

1 Oct 1971-31 Mar 1972

1 Apr-22 Oct 1972

18 Dec 1972-15 Aug 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

20 Mar 1961-9 Feb 1962

1 Apr 1983-30 Apr 1984

1 May 1984-30 Apr 1985

1 Jul 1985-30 Jun 1987

[31 Oct 1991]-1 Aug 1992

1 Jan 1996-31 Dec 1997

1 Oct 2000-30 Sep 2002

1 Nov 2002-31 Oct 2004

30 Jun-30 Sep 2005

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966-28 Jan 1973

EMBLEM



On a disc horizontally divided white and black within a narrow black border a red curved sweep with white figurehead outlined in black with black nose issuing from base to chief. In upper left and extending beyond border a red flash explosion. In base and in front of red sweep a yellow lightning flash reaching out in four directions. In upper portion three dark grey cloud formations; all in front of curved black and white counterchanged radar waves reaching throughout from lower right to upper left. (Approved, 11 Oct 1956)



497th Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Served as an operational training unit, providing both cadre personnel and dive-bombing training for other bombardment units, 1942-1943. Moved to Harding Field, LA in Oct 1943 and became a replacement training (later, fighter pilot training) unit until inactivation in 1944.

Reconstituted and designated as the 497th Fighter Interceptor Squadron on February 3, 1953, the 497th FIS was activated on February 18 and was the last USAF squadron to receive the F-94A. In June 1953 the F-94As were returned to Lockheed for upgrading to F-94B standards and the squadron re-equipped with F-94Bs obtained from other ADC squadrons. They were based at the Portland International Airport, Portland, OR and assigned to the 503rd Air Defense Group. In the Spring of 1954 after having F-94S for only one year, they commenced cross-training into F-89s and their F-94s were flown out to other units. As part of Air Defense Command's Western Air Defense Force, performed alert commitment for the Portland area, 1953-1955. In the spring of 1954 they began to receive the first of their F-89Ds, and by the end of June they had twenty-four on hand.

Trained with F-86 from 1955-1958, then moved to Spain in Apr 1958. Operated jointly with the Spanish Air Defense Command, standing alert and performing air Defense training 1958-1963. During this period, was runner-up twice for the Hughes Trophy, 1961 and 1962, and won the trophy for outstanding performance as an air defense squadron for 1963.

The first accident free year was achieved on October 9, 1955, earning a second Flying Safety award. At years end, the Western Air Defense Force honored the 497th FIS with its Ground Safety award for the period.

In February 1956, the squadron made its second deployment to the Yuma desert. The result surpassed the '54 competition. The Air Force record of 225 hits was equaled and all other existing rocketry records were broken.

The 3rd consecutive Flying Safety award was achieved on the 9th of April with 14,005 hours. The flying safety record continued 23 months for a total of 17,217 hours. A minor accident in September, caused by material failure, ended the streak. This achievement was the result of the outstanding teamwork of the men of the 497th FIS.

The squadron was not only very proficient at combat readiness, it also excelled at intramural sports. In 1955 and 1956, the 497th FIS made a clean sweep with championships in softball, basketball, golf, volleyball, and football.

Torrejon AFB, Spain, opened on June 1957. The 497th FIS was chosen to deploy to Torrejon based on outstanding achievements in maintenance (combat readiness), rocketry proficiency, and flight safety.

On 5 July 1958, the 497th FIS arrived at the new Torrejon AFB, Spain. Many of the facilities were still under construction. The new barracks were outstanding, the hanger, under construction. The 497th FIS F-86Ds were transported to Spain by ship from Mobile, Alabama. In time, all the F-86Ds arrived from the States. Construction was completed and gear put away.

The new base for Rocketry Training was Sidi Slimane, Morocco. The competition between squadrons had ceased because now the 497th FIS was under SAC. SAC may have been the only down side to being at Torrejon. Spain proved to be some of the best duty in the Air Force.

There were sad times at Geiger Field and Torrejon. Aviation can be a dangerous occupation. Several airmen and aviators were lost while assigned to the 497th FIS. Frederick Davis, III was lost in a T-33 accident, Richard Dill in an auto accident in Spain, and Jim Seigers in an F-86D crash by Torrejon. An airman was killed on the ramp at Torrejon. Sorry, we don't have all the names.

The 497th began its relationship with the F-102 during early 1960 when the unit's F-86D flight simulator was replaced by an F-102 simulator. During April of 1960, six pilots who already had some experience with F-102s were sent to Bitburg AB, Germany, for transition training. Upon return, these pilots acted as instructors for the rest of the squadron.

On 26 April 1960, the unit's first F-102A (56-1136) landed at Torrejon after its delivery flight from France. The aircraft was piloted by COL Clay Tice Jr., commander of the 65th AD. The remaining twenty-five aircraft were delivered over the next three months with the last arriving on 13 July 1960.

The number of F-86Ds was gradually reduced with three Sabres being withdrawn each week. By the end of March 1960, all the F-86Ds had been retired. On 1 May the 497th was relieved of its alert commitment to complete transition to the F-102s. By 1 August the unit had completed transition and combat crew training and, after a deployment of all its F-102s to Wheelus AB for weapons proficiency training (22 August to 10 September 1960), the pilots of the 497th were declared operationally ready in the Delta Dagger.

The squadron assumed air defense alert on 14 September 1960 and on 1 April 1962 the 497th deployed six aircraft to Wheelus AB for two weeks of weapons training and live missile firing. By 26 May, the entire squadron had rotated through Wheelus AB.

During the 1962 deployment, one flight set a new record at the Wheelus range. Some 84.3 percent of high altitude intercepts were successfully completed, while 87.7 percent of all low altitude intercepts were completed.

During August of 1961, the 497th was notified that it was to represent USAFE in the William Tell Tournament at Tyndall AFB, Florida, during October. In the event, the world situation did not permit the participation of overseas squadrons in the meet.

One of the unit's officers received a "Well Done" award during May of 1962. CAPT Nathaniel O. Devoll was praised for his high degree of ability and professionalism in saving an F-102 from damage or loss. CAPT Devoll was on initial approach to Wheelus Air Base at 1,500 feet (three miles from the approach end) when the engine flamed out. Immediately, he attempted a "relight" first using the emergency system, then the normal system. Neither worked. CAPT Devoll declared an emergency and, holding off on extending his gear and speed brakes until the runway was assured, smoothly executed a dead-stick landing.

During 1962 the 497th received the "Air Force Outstanding Unit Award" for the period 20 March 1961 to 9 February 1962 and the squadron's two TF-102As were painted with the chevron on the fin.

The squadron has a remarkable safety record with none of its F-102s being lost, although one was damaged. 56-1121 was damaged at Torrejon on 2 October 1961. It received temporary repairs and was flown to Chateauroux AB, France, for overhaul, The aircraft returned to the squadron on 18 June 1962.

One minor incident involved a Spanish flight surgeon, CAPT Luis de la Serna. He had been invited to take a supersonic ride in a TF-102A by LTCOL George Halliwell, commander of the 497th. For the first part of the orientation flight everything went smoothly, but when near the speed of sound at 33,000 feet, half of the windshield shattered. Emergency procedures were started and LCOL. Halliwell instructed his passenger to prepare for a possible ejection. Since the cockpit was pressurized, the

pressure had to be released in order to reduce the chances of the glass blowing out. The aircraft headed back to Torrejon and made a successful emergency landing with both the glass and the passenger intact.

After moving back to the US in Jun 1964, equipped with F-4 aircraft and took part in tactical exercises, operational readiness inspections, and proficiency training. The entire inventory of F-102As were reassigned to other European squadrons, although the two TF-102As were returned to the U.S. The last F-102A (56-1062) left Torrejon on 3 June 1964, destined for Hahn Air Base, in Germany.

Combat in SEA, Dec 1964-Jan 1973. During this period, the 497th flew "Night Owl" interdiction missions and armed reconnaissance, led Navy pathfinder missions to numerous targets, and the first B-52s to targets in North Vietnam. Retained a combat capability until the same day, 16 Sep 1974 that the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing, its parent unit, moved to South Korea.

In December of 1965, the 497th TFS moved to Ubon, Thailand as part of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing. Still flying the F-4, the 497th TFS flew combat missions over Vietnam for the next eight years. While there, the unit developed night mission tactics during "Night Owl" FAC and interdiction missions. In 1974, the 497th TFS was inactivated.

In 1978, the squadron was once again assigned to the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing when it was activated at Taegu AB, South Korea, sharing the base with the Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF). Aircrews trained to remain proficient in close air support, interdiction, and air-to-air combat skills until 1989.

Coordinated combat training and exercises in PACAF, 1991-present.

The designation returned to Air Force ranks on 31 October 1991 as the 497th Fighter Training Squadron based at Paya Lebar Air Base in Singapore. The unit was redesignated the 497th CTS Combat Training Squadron in August of 1994, and continues to operate out of Singapore today, holding the Singapore Sling combat training program on a regular basis.

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 yearbook. *Taegu Air Base, Korea. 1987-1988*

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