

80th FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

Execute counter land and counter air through precision attack against Democratic Republic of Korea forces in a fully contested and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear combat environment. Combat-ready F-16C fighter squadron conducting air operations throughout the Pacific theater. Employs 32 pilots, 11 operations support personnel, 21 aircraft, and resources valued in excess of \$725 million to generate and fly over 4,200 sorties per year. Flies interdiction, counter-air, close air support, and forward air controller-airborne missions. Employs night vision goggles and precision guided munitions.

LINEAGE

80th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 6 Jan 1942
Activated, 10 Jan 1942
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron (Two Engine), Jul 1943
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 20 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 26 Dec 1945
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 14 Jan 1947
Activated, 20 Feb 1947
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron, Jet, 1 Jan 1950
Redesignated 80th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958
Redesignated 80th Fighter Squadron, 3 Feb 1992

STATIONS

Mitchel Field, NY, 10–26 Jan 1942
Brisbane, Australia, 6 Mar 1942
Lowood, Australia, 28 Mar 1942
Petric, Australia, 10 May 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 20 Jul 1942
Milne Bay, New Guinea, 8 Nov 1942
Mareeba, Australia, 6 Feb 1943
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 21 Mar 1943
Dobodura, New Guinea, 11 Dec 1943
Cape Gloucester, New Britain, 28 Feb 1944
Nadzab, New Guinea, 25 Mar 1944
Owi, Schouten Islands, 18 Jun 1944
Morotai, 20 Sep 1944
Dulag, Leyte, 15 Nov 1944 (operated from Morotai, 15–30 Nov 1944)
San Jose, Mindoro, 20 Dec 1944
Ie Shima, 5 Aug 1945
Fukuoka, Japan, 25 Nov–26 Dec 1945
Itazuke AB, Japan, 20 Feb 1947
Ashiya AB, Japan, 14 Apr 1947
Itazuke AB, Japan, 25 Mar 1949
Kimpō AB, South Korea, 27 Oct 1950
Itazuke AB, Japan 20 Dec 1950
Kimpō AB, South Korea, 25 Jun 1951
Suwon AB, South Korea, 24 Aug 1951
Kadena AB, Okinawa, 21 Oct 1954
Itazuke AB, Japan, 6 Aug 1956
Yokota AB, Japan, 13 May 1964
Kunsan AB, South Korea, 15 Feb 1971

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 30 Oct–29 Dec 1964
Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 27 Jun–26 Aug 1965
Osan AB, South Korea, 26 Dec 1968–20 Feb 1969, 24 Apr–27 May 1969, 5 Aug–10 Sep 1969,
28 Nov–27 Dec 1969, 6 Mar–10 Apr 1970, 29 May–20 Jun 1970, 7 Aug–4 Sep 1970, 30 Oct–
28 Nov 1970, and 23 Jan–15 Feb 1971

ASSIGNMENTS

8th Pursuit (later, 8th Fighter) Group, 10 Jan 1942–26 Dec 1945
8th Fighter (later, 8th Fighter Bomber) Group, 20 Feb 1947
8th Fighter Bomber (later, 8th Tactical Fighter) Wing, 1 Oct 1957
41st Air Division, 18 Jun 1964
6441st Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Apr 1965
41st Air Division, 15 Nov 1966
347th Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Jan 1968

3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Mar 1971
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 16 Sep 1974
8th Operations Group, 3 Feb 1992

ATTACHMENTS

49th Fighter Bomber Group, 11 Aug–25 Sep 1950
51st Fighter Interceptor Group, 25 Sep–27 Oct 1950
Twentieth Air Force, 21 Oct 1954–10 Feb 1955
49th Fighter Bomber Group, 10 Feb 1955–18 Oct 1956
8th Fighter Bomber Wing, 1 Feb–30 Sep 1957
41st Air Division, 13 May–17 Jun 1964
2nd Air Division, 27 Jun–26 Aug 1965
2nd Air Division, 30 Oct–29 Dec 1964
Detachment 1, 475th Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Feb–15 Mar 1971

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-39, 1942–1943
P-400, 1942–1943
P-38, 1943–1945
P(later, F)-51, 1947–1950
F-80, 1950–1953
F-86, 1953–1957
F-84, 1954–1956
F-100, 1956–1963
F-105, 1963–1968
F-4, 1968–1971, 1971–1981
F-16, 1981
F-16C
F-16D
F-80C
P-38F
P-38G
P-38H
P-51D
P-51K
F-100F



80th Fighter Squadron F-16 arriving at Kunsan Air Base on 18 January 2007. (Air Force Photo)



80th Fighter Squadron F-80C in Korea 1951 (Air Force Photo)

COMMANDERS

Maj Phillip H. Greasley, 10 Jan 1942

Maj I. C. Conner, 20 Dec 1942

Cpt Edward Cragg, 21 Mar 1943

Cpt Falletta, 4 Apr 1943

Maj Edward Cragg, 8 Apr 1943

Maj Jay T. Robbins, 27 Dec 1943

Maj Cyril F. Homer, 4 Oct 1944

Maj Joseph P. Johnson, 9 May 1945

Maj Robert G. Hochuli, 31 May 1945

Maj John R. Breedon, 22 Aug 1945

1Lt Arthur E. Sullivan, 25 Oct-Dec 1945
Maj John L. Beck, 20 Feb 1947
LTC Archie M. Burke, 7 Aug 1947-unknown
Cpt Adrian W. Acebedo, 1948
Maj Harry W. Christman Jr., Jun 1948
Maj Flavel P. Sabin, 25 Mar 1949
Maj Amos L. Sluder, 11 Oct 1949
LTC Harold L. Price, 12 Jul 1950
Maj Richard R. Coursey Jr., 30 Nov 1950
LTC James H. Buckey, Mar 1951
Maj Ernest T. Burnette, 25 Jul 1951
LTC Herbert R. Mann, Nov 1951
Maj Arthur B. Faunce, 5 May 1952
Maj James R. Spofford, 9 May 1952
LTC Wilbur A. Tapscott, Aug 1952
LTC Franklin Q. Smith, Feb 1953-1 May 1953
Unknown, 1 May 1953-unknown
Maj Robert E. Schellhaus, unknown-30 Mar 1955
LTC John L. Gregory Jr., 31 Mar 1955
LTC Virgil K. Meroney, c. 6 Aug 1956
LTC William F. Tanner, 29 Jul 1957
Maj Robert L. Herman, May 1960
LTC Aaron J. Bowman, 11 Dec 1961
LTC James E. Bean, 1 Aug 1963
Maj Lawrence N. Guarino, 1 Apr 1964
Maj John P. Anderson, 12 May 1964
Maj Bobby J. Mead, 1 Nov 1965
Lt Col William L. Janssen, 28 Jun 1966
Maj Arthur E. Indermuehle, 9 Jun 1967
LTC Dennis O. Boyle, 19 Jun 1967
LTC William L. Janssen, 27 Sep 1967
LTC Walter L. Mapes Jr., 20 Feb 1968
LTC Frank W. Payn, 23 Jun 1969
LTC Coleman L. Baker, 5 Aug 1969
LTC Frank W. Payn, 27 Feb 1970
Lt Col David L. Oakes, 4 May 1970
LTC Bill C. Driver, 15 Feb 1971
LTC Lloyd O. Reder, 12 Jun 1971
LTC Soloman Harp III, 26 Jul 1971
LTC Ferguson, by Dec 1971
LTC Spillman, by Oct 1972
LTC Robert S. Kan, by Jan 1973
LTC Ray H. Bryant, 6 Aug 1973
LTC Robert W. Hiebarger, 19 Feb 1974

LTC Matthew B. Wallace, 19 Jun 1974
LTC Wendell W. Schuler, Apr 1975
LTC Paul Marsh Jr., 16 Jul 1975
LTC Bruce Williams, 4 Aug 1976
LTC Phillip L. Murphy, 26 Jul 1976
LTC Thomas R. Fussell, 8 Jul 1977
LTC Michael J. Quinlan, 24 Nov 1978
LTC Jay E. Riedel, 26 Jun 1979
LTC George Brower, 29 Jul 1980
LTC Chester P. Garrison, 17 Jul 1981
LTC John J. Davis Jr., 10 Dec 1981
LTC George W. Norwood, 29 Oct 1982
LTC Jerry W. Narancich, 14 Oct 1983
LTC Barry J. Johnson, 4 Sep 1984
LTC Dana Duthrie, 26 Jul 1985
LTC Clarence C. Randall, Jun 1986
LTC John J. Cummins, 9 Jun 1987
LTC Ronald S. Willke, 6 Jun 1988
LTC Donald F. Gabreski, 19 May 1989
LTC Michael E. Vanderford, 25 May 1990
LTC Thomas G. Strong, 25 May 1991
LTC John C. Hodges, 8 Jun 1992
LTC Philip M. Breedlove, 2 Jun 1993
LTC Jeffrey A. Remington, 1 Jun 1994
LTC Robert A. Coe, 9 Dec 1994
LTC Jerry T. Slaughter, 12 Jul 1995
LTC David S. Scott, 9 Jul 1996
LTC Kevin E. Williams, 3 Jul 1997
LTC Rickie A. French, 29 May 1998
LTC Gregory A. Smith, 23 Nov 1998
LTC Nelson Cabot; 18 Nov 1999
LTC Russell Walden, 1 Nov 2000
LTC John M. Fyfe, 16 Nov 2001
LTC Eric J. Schnitzer, 8 Nov 2002
LTC Kevin B. Schneider, 9 Sep 2003
LTC Steve Clapp, 14 Jun 2004
LTC Stephen Langford, 1 Jul 2005
LTC Van A. Wimmer, 2 Jun 2006
LTC Thomas Klopotek, 1 Jun 2007
LTC Jay Boyd, 20 Jun 2008
LTC Jack Sine, 1 Jul 2009
LTC James Wilkerson, 1 Jul 2010
LTC Douglas G. Thies, 29 Jun 2011
LTC Leslie F. Hauck III, 26 Jun 2012

LTC Paul Miller, 10 Jun 2013
LTC Robert Raymond, 9 Jun 2014
LTC John Gallemore, 12 Jun 2015
LTC Matthew C. Crowell, 10 Jun 2016

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
East Indies
Air Offensive, Japan
China Defensive
Papua
New Guinea
Bismarck Archipelago
Western Pacific
Leyte
Luzon with Arrowhead
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 Advisory
Vietnam Defensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Papua, 23 Jul 1942–23 Jan 1943

New Guinea, 20 Aug–15 Sep 1943

New Britain, 24 Oct–7 Nov 1943

Philippine Islands, 26 Dec 1944

Korea, [24 Aug–25 Sep] 1950

Korea, [27 Oct]–2 Nov 1950

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

12 May 1963–21 Mar 1964

1 Apr–30 Jun 1965

27 Jun–26 Aug 1965

15 Apr 1969–15 Mar 1971

1 Jul 1972–31 Dec 1973

1 Apr 1977–31 Mar 1978

1 Jun 1986–31 May 1988

1 Jun 1995–31 May 1997

1 Oct 2003–30 Sep 2005.

1 October 2005 - 30 September 2007

1 November 2009 - 31 October 2011

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

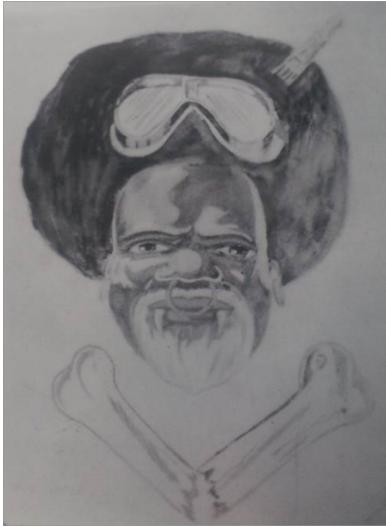
27 Jun 1950–31 Jan 1951

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966–14 May 1971

EMBLEM

While re-equipping during the stay at Mareeba, the squadron commander, Major Cragg, dubbed the 80th "The Headhunters" after the local headhunter tribes of Papua New Guinea. He enlisted crew chief Yale Saffro, who previously worked as an artist for Walt Disney, to design the new emblem for the squadron, which they still proudly wear today



Original Yale Saffro drawing which was used as the basis for the 80th FS "Headhunters" Emblem
(Courtesy Photo)





On a White disc the face of a headhunter proper wearing Blue pilot goggles, above a White, Brown and Yellow broken bone; all within a narrow Yellow border. (Approved, 9 Oct 1986)

The headhunter emblem is an historic insignia and dates back to the deployment of the squadron to the island of New Guinea during World War II, The headhunter represents the likeness of the proud Papuan Chief of New Guinea who saved the lives of some of the pilots of the 80th who were shot down during World War II. On a white disc the face of the headhunter proper wearing blue pilot goggles, above a white, brown and yellow broken bone; all within a narrow yellow border. The significance of the colors on the 80th patch are as follows: BLUE - Represents loyalty, defense provided over water and its air-to-air mission; YELLOW - Represents excellence and the day defense provided by the 80th; BLACK - Represents determination and the night missions of the 80th; BROWN - Represents the ground missions of the 80th; WHITE - Represents wisdom and the spirit of freedom that has always been found in the 80th; RED - Represents courage and the bloodshed by members of the 80th throughout its proud history.

MOTTO

AUDENTES FORTUNA JUVAT—Fortune Favors the Bold

NICKNAME

Juvats

OPERATIONS

Combat in Southwest and Western Pacific, 22 Jul 1942–16 Aug 1945. Combat in Korea, 27 Jun 1950–27 Jul 1953. Air defense in Japan and Korea, 1953–1954, in Okinawa, 1954–1956, and in Japan and Korea, 1956–1971. Combat in Southeast Asia, 12 Nov–25 Dec 1964 and 27 Jun–26 Aug 1965.

The 80th Fighter squadron was born in the rapid buildup of forces as the United States entered World War II; the Army Air Force constituted the unit as the 80th Pursuit Squadron on 6 January 1942, less than a month after the Pearl Harbor attack. The 80th became activated four days later at Mitchell Field, New York, where the squadron became part of the 8th Pursuit

Group. After little more than two weeks to assemble its personnel, the 80th deployed with the rest of the group to the Pacific Theater, leaving New York by train on 26 January. After a cross-country rail trip, the squadron boarded the SS Maui and sailed to Australia.

The 80th Pursuit squadron arrived at Brisbane, Australia on 6 March 1942, where it and the rest of the group were equipped with aircraft. The aircraft, P-39 and P-400 Airacobra fighters, had also arrived by ship, requiring the squadron to assemble the crated fighters before flight operations could begin. Initial operations consisted of training and supplying replacement personnel for the 80th and 36th Pursuit squadrons, the group's two other flying units which had forward deployed to New Guinea for combat operations. The unit was redesignated as the 80th Fighter Squadron on 15 May.

The 80th began combat operations on 22 July 1942, with its forward deployment to Port Moresby, New Guinea. Early missions involved escorting bombers and strafing enemy ground targets. The squadron's first aerial victories came on 26 August: Six of the unit's Airacobras on a mission over the Japanese airfield at Buna caught Japanese planes taking off in groups of three. In the battle that ensued, Lt Dan Roberts scored the first and second aerial victories when the first Zero he engaged burst into flames and crashed into the trees and the second burst into flames after a head-on pass. Lt William Brown scored two more while 1Lt George Helveston and 2Lt Gerald Rogers accounted for one each. Rogers was trying to down one more Zero that was trying to land when other Japanese fighters got on his tail and he was forced to ditch his badly damaged fighter in the bay. He subsequently swam ashore and was returned to Port Moresby in mid-September with the help of a local tribe of headhunters.

In November the squadron moved to Milne Bay, New Guinea, where it continued to fly mainly escort missions. The stay at Milne bay lasted only a few months, and an outbreak of malaria forced the 80th and the rest of the 8th Fighter group to return to Australia for rest and recuperation. From 6 February to 21 March, the squadron regrouped at Mareeba, Australia. The 80th was equipped the P-38 Lightning during this period due to Captain (later Major) Edward "Porky" Cragg's aggressive campaigning for the new aircraft, while its two sister squadrons remained in the P-39 and P-400. After returning to Port Moresby in March, the 80th Fighter Squadron conducted the bulk of the group's combat operations, since the Airacobras of the other two squadrons were in poor mechanical condition. The 80th would continue to fly the Lightning for the remainder of the war.

The squadron moved forward as Allied forces captured territory, staying at several bases in New Guinea, the Philippines and finally on to Ie Shima as the war ended. The 80th played a part in such operations as the invasion of Cape Gloucester, Hollandia and the campaign in the Philippines. During the assault on Hollandia on 30 and 31 March and 3 and 12 April, the 80th Fighter squadron shot down 33 enemy aircraft without any losses of their own, making them the first squadron in the Pacific theater to exceed 200 kills. By the end of the war, the 80th downed over 225 enemy aircraft (the second highest squadron in the theater, and overall second highest twin engine allied fighter squadron in the war), receiving the Presidential Unit Citation, ten campaign credits, four distinguished Unit Citations, and the Philippine Presidential

Unit Citation. Among the 24 “Headhunter” pilots who became aces was Major Jay T. Robbins, the 8th Fighter Group’s leading ace with 22 confirmed kills who also served as for a time as 80th Fighter Squadron commander. The 80th and the rest of the 8th Fighter Group served as part of the occupation force after the Japanese surrendered, operating from Fukuoka, Japan. On 26 December 1945, the 80th Fighter squadron deactivated.

The squadron remained inactive until 20 February 1947, when it was once again activated and again assigned to the 8th Fighter Group, which had moved to Itazuke, Japan. In the interim, the group had also converted from the P-38 to the F-51D Mustang. A few months later, the squadron moved to Ashiya, Japan, and in March 1949 returned to Itazuke. In August 1948, the 8th Fighter Wing was formed and activated, and the 8th Fighter Group and its flying squadrons were assigned under the new wing. The 80th began to transition to its first jet aircraft in 1949, trading in its Mustangs for the F-80 Shooting Star. This conversion was completed in 1950, and the squadron designation changed to the 80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron on 20 January 1950.

North Korea invaded the South on 25 June 1950, and the Headhunters once again entered combat. A day after the invasion the 80th and the rest of the 8th Fighter Wing provided air defense for the evacuation of Americans from Seoul. Other than these initial air defense missions, the 80th spent the rest of the war flying bombing missions. Though the rest of the 8th wing briefly reverted back to the F-51 Mustang because of difficulty acquiring spare parts for the new jet fighter in the early part of the Korean War, the 80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron remained in the F-80. During the time the rest of the wing flew the Mustang, the 80th was attached to the 49th Fighter-Bomber Group (and later to the 51st Fighter-Interceptor Group), although the squadron continued to fly its missions from Itazuke. The Headhunters rejoined the wing when the remainder of 8th Fighter Wing re-equipped with the F-80 and moved to Kimpo, Korea in October 1950. The 80th served at several different bases during the Korean War, returning to Itazuke after the Communist Chinese intervention and later moving to Suwon, Korea after the United Nations pushed back the Chinese offensive. Shortly before the war ended, the squadron converted from the F-80 to the F-86 Sabre, but continued to fly air-to-ground missions in the Sabre.

The headhunters earned two Distinguished Unit Citations and two Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citations, as well as ten campaign streamers during the Korean War. In addition, one of its pilots earned the nation’s highest military award: On the morning of 22 November 1952, Major Charles J. Loring of the 80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, on his 51st mission, led a flight of four F-80s in a close support strike against enemy formations near Triangle Hill (which overlooks Sniper Ridge near present-day Osan Air Base). Loring was directed by an airborne controller to dive-bomb gun emplacements that were pinning down US ground forces near Sniper Ridge. The ground fire, as usual, was very heavy. After locating his target, Loring signaled his flight members and then rolled into his bomb run. Most of the enemy fire concentrated on his F-80 as it led the attack. Other members of his flight saw Loring’s plane take several direct hits from AAA. They expected he would pull out of his dive and attempt to reach nearby friendly territory. Instead, he continued the attack, altering his course some 45 degrees in a deliberate, controlled maneuver, and dove directly into the enemy gun positions.

Loring's actions destroyed the enemy positions and allowed the entrapped infantry to advance at the cost of his own life.

About a year after the war ended, on 21 October 1954, the 80th moved from Suwon, Korea to Kadena, Okinawa. The move attached the squadron to Twentieth Air Force, although still officially assigned to the 8th Fighter Group. While at Kadena, the 80th converted to the F-84 Thunder jet. After this attachment ended on 7 August 1956, the Headhunters rejoined the 8th Fighter Wing, which had again moved to Itazuke. Here the squadron began flying the F-100 Super Sabre. During this time the squadron name changed again, with a 1 July 1958 redesignation as the 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

In 1962 the 80th transitioned to the F-105 Thunderchief, and in May 1964 moved to Yokota Air base, Japan, where it was attached to the 41st Air Division. A few months afterwards, the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing moved to the United States, so the Headhunters were reassigned to the 41st Air Division. Stationed at Yokota until 1971, the 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron served under several different parent units over the next few years, including the 6441st Tactical Fighter Wing, 41st Air Division and 347th tactical Fighter Wing.

The squadron also performed two combat deployments to Southeast Asia in 1964 and 1965, serving first for two months at Korat RTAB, Thailand and later for two months at Takhli RTAB, Thailand. For these two combat tours the 80th earned the Vietnam Advisory campaign streamer. These two deployments made up the total of the 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron's involvement in Vietnam. Headhunter pilots flew against such major targets as the Hai Nguyen Steel Plant, storage facilities at Haiphong, northeast and northwest rail lines, Phuc Yen, Kep, and the Doumer Bridge. On 23 August 1967, while flying an F-105 Thunderchief, 1Lt Dave Waldrop gunned down a Mig-17 over North Vietnam. While in Vietnam, the 80th accumulated 7,384 combat missions in Southeast Asia, with 2,657 combat missions over North Vietnam. These missions represent 17,104.4 combat hours over Southeast Asia. Members of the 80th were decorated with 7 Silver Stars, 64 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 426 Air Medals while deployed to Vietnam. Sadly, several "Headhunters" remained in Vietnam after the squadron departed. Quincy Collins, Neal Jones, Don Heliger, Bill Frederick, and Lynn Powell are all listed as Missing in Action (MIA). For its involvement, the squadron earned one Battle Honor, the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross (with Palm), and four Air Force Outstanding Unit Citations. During the war, the 80th produced one Ace, Jeff Feinstein, with 5 confirmed kills. During this period, 8 TFW Commander Col Robin Olds, gave the 8th TFW its nickname of "Wolf Pack" which has stuck ever since.

During the late 1960's, the Air Force assigned the squadron to the defense of the Republic of Korea. The squadron converted to the F-4 Phantom in late 1967 and early 1968. After heightened tensions following the USS Pueblo crisis in January 1968, the squadron began a series of periodic deployments to Osan Air base, South Korea. Between 1968 and 1971, the 80th deployed to Osan nine times, usually for about a month each time. On 15 February, 1971, the 80th moved from Yokota AB to Kunsan AB, and was temporarily assigned to Det 1, 475th TFW. Soon after, the 80th designated to deactivate. Fortunately, former "Headhunter" Lt Gen

Jay T. "Cock" Robbins, who was Vice Commander of TAC at the time, caught the action and rescued them at the last minute. Instead of fading out, the Headhunters were re-staffed with new personnel, primarily from the 391st Tactical Fighter Squadron. The 391st motto was "AUDENTES FORTUNA JUVAT" which translates from Latin: "Fortune Favors the Bold". This motto subsequently became the new "Headhunters" motto. As the new "Headhunters" were removing their old patches, they would grasp the triangular patch by the upper left hand corner to tear them off. All would tear off except the word "JUVAT". This caught on immediately. The harder senior leaders attempted to stamp it out, the more entrenched it became (to the point of covering the Wing Commander's flight suit with "JUVAT" patches each time he hung a flight suit on the line to dry!). On 16 September 1974, the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing replaced the 3 TFW at Kunsan, reuniting the "Headhunters" with the "Wolf Pack."

Pilots of the 7th US Air Force in Korea employed live AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles for the first time during training missions on 16 August. The 80th Fighter Squadron at Kunsan AB led the initiative to shoot live rounds as a means of evaluating fighter assets in South Korea. Because of logistics issues and fiscal constraints in US Pacific Air Forces, Republic of Korea-assigned F-16 units do not have the opportunity to deploy back to the US for Combat Archer, the established program for live launches. Every fighter squadron in the 7th Air Force participated in the exercise. A-10 pilots from Osan AB, Korea, dropped illumination flares to provide a lock-on for the missiles.

These two deployments made up the total of the 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron's involvement in Vietnam. 80th pilots flew against such major targets as the Hai Nguyen steelPlant, storage facilities at Haipong, northeast and northwest rail lines, Phuc Yen, Kep, and the Doumer Bridge. On 23 August 1967, while flying an F-105 Thunderchief (the largest single-engine fighter ever produced) 1Lt Dave Waldrop (temporarily assigned to the 34th TFS at Korat) gunned down a Mig-17 over North Vietnam. While in Vietnam, the 80th accumulated 7,384 combat missions in Southeast Asia, with 2,657 combat missions over North Vietnam. These missions represent 17,104.4 combat hours over Southeast Asia. Members of the 80th were decorated with 7 Silver Stars, 64 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 426 Air Medals while deployed to Vietnam. During the war, the 80th produced one Ace, Captain Jeff Feinstein, an F-4 WSO with 5 confirmed kills.

Sadly, several "Headhunters" remained in Vietnam after the squadron departed. Of these, Quincy Collins, Murphy Neal Jones and Don Heiliger returned home in 1973, but William V. Frederick and Lynn K. Powell are listed as Killed in Action (KIA).

The squadron continued flying the F-4 at Kunsan until September 1981, when it received the F-16 Fighting Falcon. On 3 February, 1992, the 80th Tactical Fighter Squadron was redesignated the 80th Fighter Squadron and reassigned to the new 8th Operations Group (a direct descendant of our original 8th Pursuit Group). The 80th Fighter Squadron continues to support the United States Contingent in Korea with the same pride and excellence instilled by the historical "Headhunters" of the past. In demonstration of this, they proudly bear the name given to them by "Porky" Cragg in 1943, wear a patch very similar to the one designed by Yale

Saffro, and use some of the Flight-Lead call-signs (“Chevy,” “Olds,” and “Buick”) dating back to World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

From late 2007 through early 2008, the 80th traded its Block 30 C+ F-16s for Common Configuration Implementation Program (CCIP) F-16s Block 40s from Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. The Headhunters are the first squadron in the Republic of Korea to field the new capability of the Modular Mission Computer, Advanced Targeting Pod, and Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System via the upgraded Block 40 aircraft. Their full conversion is expected to be complete in January 2008, shortly after the squadron’s 66th birthday. The Headhunters of the 80th Fighter Squadron have stood ready to wreak havoc on any enemy throughout these past 66 years. Whether flying the legendary P-38 Twin-Tailed Lightning or today's F-16 CCIP Viper, the Squadron personifies tactical fighter excellence. With more than two hundred fifty one (251) air-to-air victories in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, making aces is still the Squadron standard.

Joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs) and F-16 pilots in South Korea trained together on close air support and counter insurgency scenarios at Kunsan Air Base, Dec. 1-4. F-16s assigned to the 80th Fighter Squadron at Kadena trained with joint terminal attack controllers from the 607th Air Support Operations Group at Camp Red Cloud for Exercise Woody Cloud 16-1 as a way to ensure the two units, geographically separated within South Korea, can stay in communication, according to a 7th Air Force release . "Being multiple hours away, we may not always have the opportunity to do a face-to-face debrief," said SrA. William Irwin, a JTAC in the 604th ASOS at Camp Red Cloud. "It's nice to be able to actually sit down and discuss weapons and tactics." Pilots and JTACs simulated events they have experienced in Iraq and Afghanistan, said Capt. Rolf Tellefsen, an F-16 pilot with the 80th FS. "We're trying to get a mix of everything in order to maintain some of those skillsets that guys don't execute very often." 2015



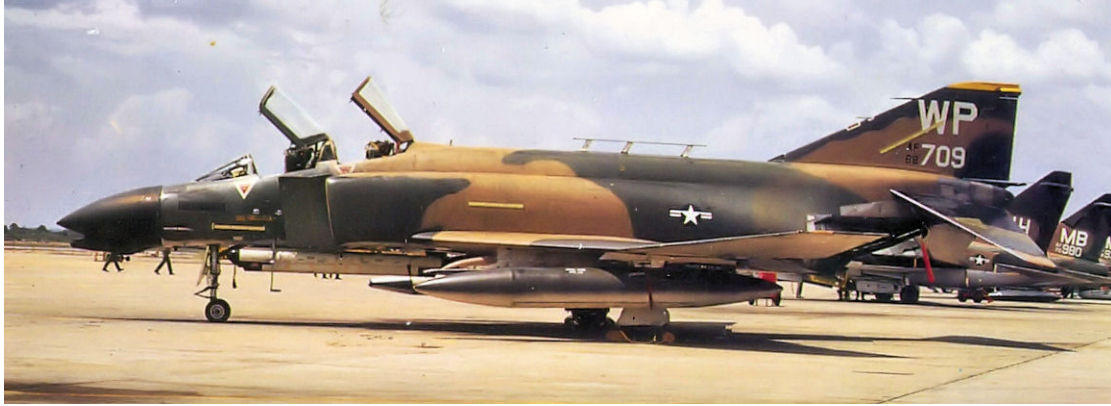
An 80th FS pilot readies his P-40 Airacobra in Australia in 1942 (Air Force Photo)



Major Jay Robbins, 80th Fighter Squadron commander from 27 December 1943 to 4 October 1944, piloting his P-38 Lightning over the Pacific Ocean during a combat mission in 1944 (Air Force Photo)



80th Fighter Squadron F-80 Shooting Star at Itazuke AB, Japan in 1950 (Air Force Photo)



80th Tactical Fighter Squadron F-4 Phantom at Kunsan AB, Republic of Korea (Air Force Photo)

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 10 Nov 2010

Updated:

Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

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