

101st BOMBARDMENT PHOTOGRAPHIC SQUADRON



LINEAGE

39th Aero Squadron organized, 5 Jun 1917
Redesignated Squadron A, Rich Field, TX, 14 Jul 1918
Demobilized, 19 Nov 1918

39th School Squadron constituted, 6 Feb 1923
Activated, 1 Aug 1927

Squadron A, Rich Field, TX reconstituted and consolidated with 39th School Squadron constituted, 1933

Redesignated 39th Observation Squadron, 1 Mar 1935
Inactivated, 1 Sep 1936
Activated, 1 Feb 1940
Redesignated 39th Observation Squadron (Medium), 26 Feb 1942
Redesignated 39th Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 39th Reconnaissance Squadron, 25 Jun 1943
Redesignated 101st Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, 12 Jun 1944
Redesignated 101st Bombardment Photographic Squadron, 7 Feb 1945
Inactivated, 25 Dec 1945
Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948

STATIONS

San Antonio, TX, 5 Jun 1917
Chanute Field, IL, Aug 1917
Rich Field, TX, Dec 1917-19 Nov 1918
Kelly Field, TX, 1 Aug 1927-1 Sep 1936
France Field, CZ, 1 Feb 1940
Howard Field, CZ, 20 Mar 1942
Waller Field, Trinidad, 6 Aug 1942-26 Feb 1944
Dalhart AAFld, TX, 15 Mar 1944
Esler Field, LA, 1 May 1944
Stuttgart AAFld, AR, 6 Feb 1945

Brooks Field, TX, 5-25 Dec 1945

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 1917-1918

10th School Group, 1 Aug 1927

Air Corps Advanced Flying School, 16 Jul 1931-1 Sep 1936

Panama Canal Department, 1 Feb 1940

Panama Canal (later Caribbean; Sixth) Air Force, 20 Nov 1940

72nd Observation Group, 7 Mar 1942 (attached to Trinidad Sector and Base Command after 6 Aug 1942)

Antilles Air Command, 1 Jun 1943

Second Air Force, 15 Mar 1944

Third Air Force, 5 Apr 1944

69th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 11 Apr 1944

74th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 29 Jan 1945

XIX Tactical Air Command (attached to 69th Reconnaissance Group), 7 Nov-25 Dec 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

SJ-1

JN-4

O-2

O-19

O-11

O-25

O-38

C-14

BT-2

A-17, 1940

O-47, 1940-1944

O-49, 1941-1944

L-4, 1942-1944

B-18

P-39

C-45

B-25

C-60

O-52, 1943

UC-61

UC-78, 1943-1944

B-25/F-10, 1944-1945

A-25

L-5

A-26, 1945

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS

1st Lt. Robert H. Finley 1 Aug 27-4 Nov 28
Capt. George A. Whatley 11 Aug 36-1 Sep 36
2nd Lt. Harold A. Wheaton 4 Nov 28-31 Jan 29
Inactive 1 Sep 36-25 Nov 36
Capt. Perry Wainer 31 Jan 29-1 Nov 31
Capt. Edward V. Pettis 25 Nov 36-1 Feb 40
1st Lt. Max F. Schneider 1 Nov 31-28 Nov 31
1st Lt. Graeme S. Bond 1 Feb 40-5 Apr 40
Maj. Ulysses G. Jones 28 Nov 31-11 Aug 36
Capt. Donald N. Wackwitz 5 Apr 40-ao Jun 40
Unknown ao Jun 40-7 Dec 41

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

None

EMBLEM

On a blue disc two checks in gold. (Approved, 16 Oct 1941)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Flying training unit, 1917-1918. Air defense in Caribbean area, 1940-1944.

The first unit of its kind (in the modern sense) to join the Air Corps establishment in the Canal Zone, the 39th Observation Squadron (C&D) was activated at France Field and subordinated to Headquarters, Panama Canal Department, on 1 February 1940 as the dedicated observation unit for the command.

The Squadron acquired the very first examples of the then modern North American O-47A (including 37-268), when its complement of ten of these new aircraft were flight delivered down to Panama by Squadron personnel from San Antonio starting 14 June 1940.

While the unit was working up on the O-47A's, it also had a number of Northrop A-17's on strength, and with these, conducted its first six-ship night formation flight across the Isthmus to Albrook, then up the Pacific coast to Aguadulce. Then the flight continued on to the Atlantic coast and on home to France Field. Considering the state of navigational aids available at the time, this was little short of a remarkable flight.

In August, 1940, the Squadron started participating in the then-weekly tactical problems laid on by the 19th Wing and, during one of these, acted as a scouting screen out to sea to "intercept" an expected in-coming flight of "enemy" bombers heading for the Canal. Later that same month, now transitioned into their O-47's completely, the Squadron took their shiny new mounts in an aerial tour of Central America, visiting every capital city in Central America except British Honduras.

As the organization of the Air Corps units in Panama continued to evolve, the Squadron became attached to the 12th Pursuit Wing in February 1941 and, on 28 June, lost its first aircraft, when 1LT Louis F. Coira crashed O-47A 37-268 (the first O-47 to reach the Squadron) 100 yards from the south edge of France Field. The fate of the pilot is not recorded.

With the coming of war, the Squadron was still at France Field and, by February 1942, its strength had dwindled to but seven O-47A's (one of which was at the Depot for repairs). That same month, on the 25th, the unit was redesignated as the 39th Observation Squadron (Medium).

By 3 March 1942, unit first-line strength had dropped to just six O-47A's (plus the one still at Depot), but two new Stinson O-49's (later designated as L-1's) had been added and, on the 7th, the unit was subordinated to the newly arrived 72nd Observation Group, and moved to Howard Field on the 20th.

Redesignated as the 39th Observation Squadron on 4 July 1942, the unit got ready for a major move to Waller Field in Trinidad, where it was attached after 6 August as a vital element of the Trinidad Sector & Base Command.

By the end of that fateful year, still nominally a part of the 72nd Observation Group but detached in Trinidad, the Squadron still had three of its original O-47A's, but only one of the O-49's (by now redesignated as an L-1), although it also had two Piper L-4A's and a very rare Beech C-45C twin engine light transport (one of only two impressed Beech B18S six-seaters acquired by the Army). At first, following its arrival on Trinidad, the unit's aircraft were kept very busy flying very low-level patrols around Trinidad and, occasionally, some of the other nearby islands in the Lesser Antilles, morning and night, with special instructions to keep a watch for possible German saboteur landing attempts. One veteran of the unit, Vincent H. Smith, recalls that "The British welcomed us with open arms then, as they had their hands full with U-boats and severed communications."

The C-45C was transferred out of the Squadron around 6 February 1943 and was replaced by another more utilitarian L-1 but, later that same month, yet another strange aircraft appeared on its roster when a Lockheed C-60A "Lodestar" turned up by 13 February.

By mid-March 1943, the unit still had its trio of venerable O-47A's, two L-1's, two L-4A's, and the C-60A but had added two little-known Curtiss O-52 "Owls" to its strength. In April, this motley crew was joined by a Beech UC-45B, which replaced the C-60A.

On 25 June 1943, the character of the unit changed significantly when it was redesignated as the 39th Reconnaissance Squadron and, while it still retained two each of the O-47A, O-52, L-1 and L-4A, plus the UC-45B, had now gained five "racers" in the form of three Bell P-39N's (42-18515, 18523 and 18527) and two P-39Q's (42-19624 and 19630).

The Squadron had been assigned to the Antilles Air Command from 1 June as well. By this time, the "observation" and "reconnaissance" functions of the Squadron were something of a fiction as, The unit was performing the dull and monotonous (but vital) duty of target towing and tracking for the Coast Artillery and defensive air units stationed on Trinidad.

By 14 August, aircraft assigned remained unchanged aside from the addition of an elderly Douglas RB-18 (and a Beech UC-45A, 42-43496, which had been converted from AT-7 standard), which, by 11 December, had been joined by an RB-18B, and RB-18C, a Fairchild UC-61B and a Cessna UC-78, an additional P-39Q (42-19632), and yet another L-4A, besides the other veteran aircraft which were still going strong.

With the war now having essentially passed the Lesser Antilles by, the need for the Squadron quickly ebbed and, on 26 February 1944, the unit was relieved from the AAC and transferred back to the U.S. where it went on to become the 101st Photo Reconnaissance Squadron.

Chanute felt the hectic pace of the country to get men trained and over to France as soon as possible. On 25 August 1917, two additional aero squadrons, the 38th and the 39th, arrived by special train from Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas. The 380 men arrived at 9:30 in the evening and were met by over 1,000 people who hoped to see the soldiers. But to the disappointment of the townspeople, the men had already retired for the night, and did not march to Chanute until the following morning. The arrival of the two squadrons brought the complement of men at the field to nearly 1,000, the number for which the field had been built. Three weeks later, on 12 September 1917, Chanute's first 24 graduates left for the larger "aerial concentration camp" at San Antonio, Kelly Field, to complete their training. These men were the first cadets from the University of Illinois. Among them was Reed G. Landis, who later became an ace, downing nine enemy airplanes and one balloon. On 7 October 1917, Chanute received orders from the War

Department ordering the 10th and the 16th Aero Squadrons to be ready to leave within 48 hours for Ft. Wood at Mineola, New York. The men, anxious to be off to fight the Hun, cheered the news. Chanute had expected to retain the squadrons through the winter, and had given them permanent assignments in camp. The news of a student departure required a certain amount of shuffling of personnel. All the field's best truck drivers and motorcycle riders were included in the order and several such men from the 38th and 39th squadrons were transferred to the 10th and 16th. These two squadrons were to become part of the 3rd Provisional Aero Squadron once they arrived in France.

The field hastened to ready the squadrons for a rapid departure. All members were forbidden to leave Rantoul, but it was an exercise in futility. The railroad companies did not have enough cars available to move the soldiers. The men waited for nearly a month. The bedding had been turned into the quartermaster, and the only bedding the men had was the blankets carried in their knapsacks. They slept on the bed springs of their old barracks. After five delays, the squadrons finally left early in the morning of 2 November 1917. Captain "Pop" Hinds was in charge of both companies. The squadrons went to Garden City, New York, rather than the expected Mineola destination to await transportation to Europe. The departure of the two squadrons cut Chanute's complement of men nearly in half. Only the 38th and 39th squadrons, two reservist squadrons and the medical corps in charge of the field hospital, less than 400 men, remained on the field. But even then three new squadrons were expected from Texas.

As winter approached, it became uncertain whether the field could be kept open. Colonel Jones traveled to Washington DC in early November 1917 to attend a special meeting of commanding officers of 15 aviation fields. He returned in mid-month with the news that the field would remain open, but flying would be suspended on 15 December. Actually bad weather prevented flying after 7 December and on the 13th the 39th Aero Squadron left for Rich Field at Waco, Texas, to continue flying training there. Later in the month, the field sent 20 Standard planes and 15 Hall-Scott motors to Wichita Falls and 39 Curtiss planes to Kelly Field. Only a few planes remained at Chanute for officers' winter flying. Until the 152nd, 153rd, 173rd, and 174th Aero Squadrons arrived from Kelly at Christmas time, the departure of the 39th left only the 38th squadron to man the field. In time, the 38th became the headquarters squadron with the nickname of "Home Guards."

Within three months after the opening of Chanute Field, trained squadrons, of about 150 men each, were transferred to depots in the East for overseas assignments. The 10th and 16th Aero Squadrons were the first to leave, followed closely by the 39th. The first two squadrons were shipped overseas; the 39th was sent to Waco, Texas. In December, the 152d, 153d, 173d, and 174th Squadrons reported from Kelly Field, Texas, to fill vacancies in shops, hangars, and classrooms; the 210th Squadron was organized at Chanute Field from local recruits. Classes were conducted daily in every branch of aviation related to the maintenance and repair of airplanes, including specialized training for mechanics, carpenters, riggers, and hangar men.

Constituted in the Regular Army on 6 February 1923 as the 39th School Squadron and assigned to the 14th School Group. Designated Active Associate was the 40th School Squadron 1923-27.

Allotted to the Eight Corps Area on 28 February 1927. Activated on 1 August 1927 at Kelly Field, TX, relieved from assignment to the 14th School Group and assigned to the 10th School Group. Relieved from assignment to the 10th School Group on 16 July 1931 and attached to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School. Consolidated in 1933 with the 39th Aero Squadron (a WWI unit organized in July 1917 at Kelly Field, TX; demobilized on 19 November 1918 at Rich Field, TX; reconstituted in 1933). Redesignated as the 39th Observation Squadron on 1 March 1935. Inactivated on 1 September 1936 at Kelly Field, TX, and allotted to the Eighth Corps Area. Organized on 25 November 1936 with Organized Reserve personnel as a RAI unit with headquarters at Fort Worth, TX.

Subordinate flights concurrently organized as: Flight A at Houston, TX; Flight B at El Paso, TX; Flight C at Raton, NM. Activated on 1 February 1940, less Reserve personnel, at France Field, CZ, and assigned to the Panama Canal Department. Further assigned to the Panama Canal Air Force 20 November 1940. Location 7 December 1941— France Field, CZ.

The Air Corps Institute was established at Scott Field in 1940 and proved very popular as a correspondence school for the Air Corps. This change is covered in General Order No. 4, dated 27 May 1939. The same order activated the 93rd School Squadron and inactivated the 21st Balloon Group which had been active on the field from the beginning of the period of lighter-than-air aviation instruction. The same order transferred all personnel of the 7th Air Base Squadron, except one, Sergeant William A. Osborne, to the 93rd School Squadron. The Base Headquarters and the 7th Air Base Squadron was retained as an active unit of the field, though its sole member was attached to the 93rd School Squadron.

By the end of 1940, the following organizations had been activated: 11th, 12th, and 13th School Squadrons, as of 20 August 1940; 34th School Squadron, 1 September 1940; the 26th, 27th, and 28th School Squadrons, 1 October 1940; the 29th, 30th, 31st, 39th and 40th School Squadrons, 5 December 1940.

The Base Department of ACTS was moved from Chanute Field to Scott Field on 19 September 1940 and the Basic School was returned to Chanute Field on the same date.

During 1941 the following units were activated: Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Biloxi Branch, 301st, 302nd, 303rd, 304th, 305th, 306th, 307th, 308th, and 309th School Squadrons, and the 367th, 368th, 369th, 370th, 371st, and 372nd School Squadrons.

300426	A-3	27-309	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Lynch, Frederick D.	Biggs Field, Fort Bliss, TX
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320624	O-11	28-208	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	FLEF	Coursey, Harry	Kelly Field, TX
321025	O-2H	28-167	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Logan, Arthur L.	Fredericksburg, TX
330310	O-25A	30-190	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TACMF	Moore, John C., Jr	Kelly Field, TX
330412	O-2H	27-289	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Stocks, Fred S.	15 mi from Floresville, TX
330505	C-14	31-396	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACW	McHenry, George A.	Midland, TX
330619	ZO-2H	28-129	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Bateman, Martin A	Biggs Field, TX
330621	O-2H	28-180	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOANO	Holtermann, Eyvind	Aux Field, 10 mi W of Kelly Field, TX
330622	ZO-2H	27-296	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Holtermann, Eyvind	Aux Field, 10 mi W of Kelly Field, TX
330720	O-2H	29-165	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Scott, Robert L., Jr	Catarina, TX
330720	O-2H	29-175	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	KFLEF	Thompson, Keith A.	20 mi SE of Holletsville, TX
331031	O-25A	30-194	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	FLEF	Timper, Norman F. D.	7 mi W of Kelly Field, TX
340313	O-19B	30-98	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	KCR	Carson, James W	Leon Springs Military Reservation, TX
340314	O-19B	30-142	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Scherer, Robert M.	Kerrville, TX
340319	O-19B	30-110	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Anderson, S. E.	Kelly Field, TX
340328	O-19B	30-96	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Harris, George R, III	Kelly Field, TX
340618	O-19B	30-96	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Goldberg, Morris	Kelly Field, TX

340619	O-19B	30-142	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	FLEFNO	Olson, Albert F.	Kelly Field, TX
340706	O-19B	30-103	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Mason, Ben A.	Kelly Field # 2, TX
340802	O-19C	31-336	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Phillips, Carlyle W.	Kelly Field, TX
340810	O-19B	30-106	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Yeager, Robert R.	George West, TX
340813	O-19C	31-336	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Nightingale, Frank N.	Kelly Field, TX
340929	C-14	31-384	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	FLEF	Harding, Neil R	Wrightsboro, TX
341020	BT-2B	31-3	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Underhill, James D	Biggs Field, El Paso, TX
341025	BT-2B	31-94	39SchSq		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Shea, Augustine F.	Pearsall & Kelly Field, TX

430223	O-47A	37-315	39OS	72OG		TAC	Pillow, Louis A	Tobago/BWI
430307	C-47A	37-315	39OS	72OG		MAC	Pillow, Louis A	Seawall Fld, BWI
430307	C-47A	37-314	39OS	72OG		MAC	Sears, Aubrey C	Seawall Fld, BWI
430307	C-47A	37-315	39OS	72OG		MAC	Pillow, Louis A	Seawall Fld, BWI
430307	C-47A	37-314	39OS	72OG		MAC	Sears, Aubrey C	Seawall Fld, BWI
430414	L-1	40-214	39OS	72OG		LAC	Gruber, Isadore L	Mucurapo Is, BWI
430416	C-47A	37-314	39OS			DTCEF	Slade, William A	Tobago, BWI

430626	P-39N	42-18523	39OS	26OG		TAC	Swanson, C W	Howard Fld
420413	O-47A	37-262	39OS	72OG	Howard Field, CZ	KMACO	Hendrickson, Willard N	1mi SE of Campana, PAN
420514	O-47A	37-286	39OS	72OG	Howard Field, CZ	KMIS	Daub, Arthur C	Unknown, PAN
350615	BT-2BI	31-89	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Davidson, Howard C.	Airdrome, Ft Leavenworth, KS
350617	BT-2BI	31-93	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	KCRGC	Zablan, Porfirio E,	3 mi N of Kendalia, TX
350726	BT-2CI	31-448	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Suarez, Fructuoso F.	Kelly Field, TX
350820	BT-2BI	31-129	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	FLEFNO	Brugge, Byron E	4 mi W of Poteet, TX
350912	BT-2BI	31-60	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Fickel, Jacob E.	Camp Stanley, TX
351012	BT-2BI	31-122	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Knapp, Robert D.	Vicinity of Kelly Field, TX
351022	BT-2BI	31-81	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Vance, Reginald, F. C.	Stover's Ranch, 30 mi from Kerrville, TX
351220	BT-2BI	31-110	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TAC	Lancaster, Charles E., Jr	Kelly Field, TX
360317	BT-2CI	31-122	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LAC	Baumler, A. J.	Kelly Field, TX
360422	BT-2BI	31-47	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	MAC	Strieber, Edward M.	Catarina, TX
360428	BT-2B	31-66	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	LACGL	Scott, Emil S.	Kelly Field, TX
360525	BT-2BI	31-80	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TOA	Hayes, Wolcott F.	Biggs Field, Fort Bliss, TX
360718	BT-2BI	31-89	39OS		Kelly Field, San Antonio, TX	TAC	Laird, John A., Jr	Hensley Field, TX

401119	O-47A	37-315	39OS		France Field, CZ	LACNO	Barrow, Carl W	France Field, CZ
401205	O-47A	37-268	39OS		France Field, CZ	LAC	Gerhart, Quinter P.	France Field, CZ
410401	O-47A	37-300	39OS		France Field, CZ	FLoG	Swanson, Clyde W.	1 mile off shore, from Dept. Tng. Ctr., PAN
410602	O-47A	37-268	39OS		France Field, CZ	FLEF	Coira, Louis E	France Field, CZ
410605	O-47A	37-287	39OS		France Field, CZ	KDTCoG	Burgess, Walter K	Machellila, ECUADOR
410608	O-47	37-289	39OS		France Field, CZ	MIS	Allen, Augustus J	Rio Hato, CZ
410709	B2-2BG	31-145	39OS		France Field, CZ	KCRMF	Hallihan, George F.	3 miles NW Rio Hato, CZ
410711	BT-2BG	31-29	39OS		France Field, CZ	LAC	Burhanna, Howard Jr.	Rio Hato, CZ
411203	O-49	40-214	39OS		France Field, CZ	LAC	Slade, William A	Chepo, PAN
420216	L-49	40-214	39OS		France Field, CZ	LAC	Henderson, Willard N	La Joya, PAN
420217	L-49	40-213	39OS		France Field, CZ	TOA	Slade, William A	Capira, Rep of Panama
420812	O-47A	37-285	39OS		Waller Field, TRN	ACC	Slade, W A	Waller Field, TRN
420901	O-47A	37-285	39OS		Waller Field, TRN	FLoG	Swanson, Clyde W	26 mi NE of Guasipati, VEN

450917 A-26B 44-34174 101BPS 74TRG Stuttgart Fld SF Wiles,
Paul A USA TX Mineral Wells

440731 F-10 41-30181 101FRS 69TRG Esler Field, Alexandria, LA
KCR Way, Charles L USA LA 20 mi E of Esler Field, LA

440803 B-25J 43-28044 101PRS 69TRG Esler Field, Alexandria, LA
TAC (parked aircraft) USA LA Esler Field, LA

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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