

127 COMMAND AND CONTROL SQUADRON



MISSION

The 127 Command and Control Squadron mission is to provide communication support to the U.S. Government at all levels, including DoD, DHS, FEMA, State, and Local Agencies. These agencies are provided redundant communities during Peace Time, Natural Disasters and National Emergencies. Equipment utilized in support of the mission is flexible and state of the art enabling the 127 to provide services in a full spectrum of situations. Staffed with highly trained dedication citizen airmen, the 127 Command and Control squadron continues the proud heritage of the National Guard by answering out country's call when needed.

LINEAGE

127 Observation Squadron designated and allotted to the KS NG, 30 Jul 1940
Extended Federal recognition, 4 Aug 1941
Ordered to active service on 6 Oct 1941
Redesignated 127 Observation Sq (Light), 8 Oct 41
Redesignated 127 Observation Sq, 4 Jul 42
Redesignated 127 Observation Squadron (Light), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 127 Liaison Sq, 2 Apr 43
Redesignated 127 Liaison Sq (Commando), 1 May 44
Inactivated on 15 Nov 1945
Redesignated 127 Fighter Squadron and allotted to the KS NG, 24 May 1946
Received Federal recognition, 7 Sep 1946
Redesignated 127 Fighter Squadron, Jet, 21 Feb 1950
Redesignated 127 Fighter-Bomber Squadron,
Redesignated 127 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, SE (Conventional), 10 Jul 52
Redesignated 127 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Jun 53
Redesignated 127 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955

Redesignated 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron (SD) (Augmented), 1 Apr 61
Redesignated 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron,
Redesignated 127 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 25 Mar 1971
Redesignated 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 8 Oct 1979
Redesignated 127 Fighter Squadron,
Redesignated 127 Bomb Squadron,
Redesignated 127 Air Refueling Squadron,
Redesignated 127 Command and Control Squadron

STATIONS

Wichita, KS, 4 Aug 1941
Sherman Field, KS, 13 Oct 1941
Tullahoma, TN, 13 Apr 1942
Morris Field, NC, 2 Sep 1943
Statesboro AAFld, GA, 13 Oct 1943
Aiken AAFld, SC, 18 May 1944
Dunnellon AAFld, FL, 10 Jun 1944
Cross City AAFld, FL, 21 Jun 1944
Drew Field, FL, 17 Aug 1944
Lakeland AAFld, FL, 22 Aug-23 Oct 1944
Camp Anza, CA 23 Oct 44
Kalaikunda, India, 16 Dec 1944-4 Aug 1945 (detachments operated from Cox's Bazar, India, 20
Jan-7 Feb 1945, and Akyab, Burma, 21 Feb-19 May 1945)
Okinawa, 15 Sep 15 Nov 1945
Wichita Muni Apt, KS 1946-Nov 50
Alexandria AFB, LA 26 Nov 1950
Alexandria AFB, LA May 52
Chaumont AB, Champagne, France May 1952
Wichita Muni Apt, KS 1952-Jun 54
McConnell AFB, KS -Apr 68
Myrtle Beach AFB, SC -Jul 68
Kunsan AB, (South) Korea Jul 1968-Jun 69

ASSIGNMENTS

Kansas NG, 4 Aug 1941
68 Observation Group, 6 Oct 1941
75 Observation (later Reconnaissance) Group, 12 Mar 1942
I Air Support Command (later I Tactical Air Division III Tactical Air Division), 11 Aug
1943
2 Air Commando Group, 1 May 1944
United States Army Forces, Pacific, 4 Aug 1945
Thirteenth Air Force, 15 Sep 1945
Seventh Air Force, 29 Oct-15 Nov 1945
184 Wing

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

O-38
L-1
BC-1
O-47
O-57, 1943
O-49, 1941
L-6, 1943
L-5, 1944
C-64, 1944
L-4, 1945
L-1, 1945
O-46
A-20
P-40
L-4
L-5
UC-64
P/F-51, 1946
F-84, 1950
F-51, 1952
F-80, 1954
F-86, 1958
F-100, 1961
F-105, 1971
F-4, 1979
F-16, 1987
B-1, 1994
KC-135, 2002

Support Aircraft

COMMANDERS

Maj Paul N. Flanary, 4 Aug 1941
Maj Lyle M. Johnston, 11 Jul 1942
Cpt Carl R. Willey, 1 Sep 1942
Cpt Rudolph B. Walters, 5 Mar 1943
1LT John B. Noble, 29 Aug 1943
LTC Paul N. Flanary, 7 Sep 1946
LTC Roger B. Ludeman, 31 Dec 1946
Cpt Donald W. Coulson, 27 Dec 1950
Cpt Carl L. Boggs, 14 Jul 1952

LTC Donald W. Coulson, 1 May 1953
Maj Ralph T. Buchanan, 1 Oct 1962
Maj Frank G. Ross, 15 Jun 1965
LTC William W. Littlefield Jr., 1 Jun 1967
LTC Robert J. Welsh, 19 Jun 1969
Maj Edward L. Cummins, 1 Oct 1971
Maj Howard G. Tart, 10 Mar 1978
Maj Jerry W. Nelson, 9 Aug 1980
Maj Brian E. Barents, 21 Aug 1981
LTC Clyde R. Young, 1 Jul 1982
Maj George F. Scoggins Jr., 25 Feb 1983
Maj Charles D. Youngquist, 12 May 1986
LTC Robert E. Moran Jr., 7 Dec 1991
LTC Robert J. Murphy, 7 Dec 1992
LTC John L. Sanders, 20 Sep 1994
LTC John E. Parrott, 25 Sep 1995
LTC Thomas G. Suddeth, 2 May 1998
LTC Bradley S. Link, 7 Jan 2001
LTC Charles R. Morris, 11 Jul 2004
LTC Jason T. Barnes
LTC David A. Weishaar

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

India-Burma

Central Burma

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

The squadron members, together with a committee appointed by a civic organization in Wichita, received a total of 85 designs for the squadron insignia. Ultimately the design chosen was proposed by Major Flanary to the Adjutant General who concurred and forwarded the design to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. According to Major Flanary: "The Jayhawk represents the State of Kansas since the state is known as the Jayhawk State. The bird perched atop the clouds indicates aviation and being in the air which applies to this squadron. Also, the presence of the helmet and goggles adds to this impression. The observation angle is indicated by the binoculars hung around his neck". This design indicated that the squadron was a Kansas unit and intended to carry this distinction clearly on its aircraft.

Emblem (1): On a light blue disc a dark blue Kansas Jayhawk (dark blue body and wings, yellow feet and beak, brown face, wearing a red helmet and black binoculars, resting upon a white cloud formation. (Approved in 1944.)

Emblem (2): On a disc of light blue, border ultramarine blue, piped yellow, three blue Kansas Jayhawks in formation flight toward front of aircraft, with yellow beaks and red faces, wearing aviator's helmets and goggles brown, and yellow boxing gloves with white lightning flashes issuing toward front, each Jayhawk having white, jagged spinners and leaving white cloudlike vapor trail to rear. (Approved 6 Jul 1949.)

Going from observation and liaison squadrons, to a fighter squadron, approval was granted, 6 Jul 1949, for a new unit emblem. It was: On a disc of light blue, border ultramarine blue, piped yellow, three blue Kansas Jayhawks in formation flight toward front of aircraft, with yellow beaks and red faces, wearing aviators' helmets, brown goggles, and yellow boxing gloves with white lightning flashes issuing toward front, each Jay hawk having white, jagged spinners and leaving a white cloud-like vapor trail to the rear.



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The history of the Kansas Air National Guard began when the National Guard Bureau on 17 Jun 1940 stated that the Army Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 1941 provided for the organization of live anti-aircraft regiments and eight observation squadrons within the National Guard. The National Guard Bureau interviewed the Adjutants General of several states and determined that the District of Columbia, Louisiana, Oregon, Iowa, and Oklahoma each had adequate facilities for an air squadron in addition to the desire to organize such a unit. The district and these states were authorized squadrons without any changes. The Bureau recommended, that than additional squadrons be authorized for Wisconsin, Kansas and Georgia as soon as facilities became available. While the National Guard Bureau originally sought to establish observation squadrons in the above mentioned states, the plan was soon expanded to establish pursuit squadrons as well.

Recognizing Kansas' potential, an air representative of the Bureau made a personal visit to Kansas City, Kansas, on 19 Jun 1940, for the purpose of determining the suitability of that city for a pursuit unit.

Wichita had the necessary facilities and initiated a very active campaign to secure the squadron for this city. A party of Wichita leaders flew to Topeka, Kansas on 31 Jul 1940 and conferred with Governor Payne Ratner and the Adjutant General Brigadier General Milton R. Mclean urging them to designate Wichita as the site for organization of the squadron.

Significant factors in Wichita's receiving the squadron included the substantial pool of pilots available in Wichita due to the CAA Pilot Training Center, and the city's overall role as a leader in civilian aviation.

The squadron, according to the plans of the War Department, was tentatively scheduled for federal recognition on 1 Aug 1941 and for induction into federal service on 6 Oct 1941. In order for the squadron to receive federal recognition it had to have 103 men; therefore the first priority for the fledgling unit was to recruit the necessary number of men for recognition.

Considering the mission at hand, it was quite fortunate that Paul N. Harlan was a Wichita resident. Flanary held a commission in the Air Corps Reserve as a first lieutenant and was an official in the CAA Program in Wichita. In this capacity he gave flight instructions to a substantial number of area residents.

Lt Paul Flanary was appointed commander of the 127 Observation Squadron on 24 May 1941 and with his appointment order the authorization to recruit the squadron was forthcoming. Lt Flanary was highly successful as the squadron's head recruiter. Since he had given flight instructions in the area Lt Flanary immediately contacted a number of his present and former students, asking them to join the new squadron. Don Hattan at that time was a Chevrolet field representative for General Motors, had taken pilot training from Lt Flanary and upon the latter, he joined the squadron as an enlisted man.

When the squadron was inspected, Aug 4, 1941, it had a total of 125 men. The inspection was made by Colonel Jasper K. McDuffie, the unit's advisor, instructor, and officer representing the Kansas Adjutant General. On Aug 4 federal recognition was given and the men were sworn into state service. The squadron was due to be ordered into active service sometime in Oct 1941. In the meantime, the unit trained every Monday evening at the municipal airport. Originally, the unit trained at the Wichita National Guard Armory but, considering the 127's mission, it was quickly moved to the municipal airport where tents had been erected for squadron members. With the assistance of Sergeant E. W. Worthen, a Regular Army non-commissioned officer (NCO), squadron members received their first training in close order drill. Even while plans were being made for active duty, Wichita was preparing facilities for the squadron's eventual return. Newspaper reports described the progress of the \$304,000 hangar and armory designed for the squadron, located on the east edge of the Wichita Municipal Airport.

Active duty came before the 127 could use their new facilities. The Adjutant General of Kansas, Major General Milton R. McLean, through General Order Number 101, informed the squadron that it would be inducted into federal service on Oct 6, 1941. The 127 became the last Kansas National Guard unit organized before World War II and the last Kansas unit to enter federal service. According to the plan devised by the War Department, the squadron was to entrain for Fort Leavenworth on Oct 13, 1941. It would remain there and take training at Sherman Field until facilities were ready at Brownwood, Texas, where it would be permanently based for the duration of the "emergency." At 6:00 a.m. Oct 13, 1941, all officers and men had breakfast at Wolf's Cafeteria and then went directly to the Missouri Pacific depot where a special train was waiting to take them to fort Leavenworth. The squadron had already received three planes, a O-47A, a BC-1A and a O-38E. These planes were flown to Sherman Field by Major Flanary, Lieutenant Glenn Miller and Lieutenant Kenneth Roney.

The departure of the squadron was distinguished by the farewell breakfast. Colonel J. K. McDuffie and Master Sergeant E. W. Worthen, both of whom helped with the unit's training, were the guests of honor. Both were honored by the squadron with gifts in appreciation for their assistance. The Wichita Chamber of Commerce, so active in promoting Wichita as a site for the squadron, gave a program Monday morning and presented several hundred dollars to be used for the benefit and comfort of the squadron members. Once this was done, the special train consisting of three coaches and two baggage cars left the Missouri Pacific depot.

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According to the plan devised by the War Department, the squadron was to entrain for Fort Leavenworth on 13 Oct 1941. The unit was redesignated the 127 Observation Squadron (Light) on 8 Oct 1941. It would remain at Fort Leavenworth and take training at Sherman Field until facilities were ready at Brownwood here it would be permanent based for the duration of the

emergency.

Shortly before departing the squadron members, together with a committee appointed by a civic organization in Wichita, received a total of 85 designs for the squadron insignia. Ultimately the design chosen was proposed by Maj Flanary to the Adjutant General who concurred and forwarded the design to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Through Nov and Dec 1941, flight practice and instructions were given, and equally important the squadron's mechanics were trained. The new mechanics were placed under the supervision of MSgt Charles M. Dauster and TSgt Schuyler Shore both experienced aviation mechanics.

Tragedy struck the squadron for the first time on the afternoon of 10 Feb 1942. That afternoon, 2nd Lt Boyd V Mann, pilot and 2nd Lt Norman Meeks, observer climbed into the BC-1 A for a transition flight. It was the last time they were seen alive, for at 1630 the plane crashed at Blue Springs, Missouri.

The 127 received its first L-4 on 22 Mar 1942. There were 12 of these aircraft in the original shipment.

A plane crash claimed more lives on 5 Apr 1942. 2nd Lt Harold C. Chandler and Private First Class Forest Wilson, were flying an O-38E and just after a peel-off from a 'Luftbemy Circle' with two L-4s. crashed and burned. This accident happened just across the Missouri River from Sherman field.

Having completed the first phase of its training at Sherman Field the squadron was ordered to report to Tullahoma, TN, 12 Apr 1942.

Tullahoma, Tennessee was a distinct shock for the squadron. Tullahoma Army Air Base was still under construction when the 127 arrived. The most obvious problem it faced was the virtual lack of facilities. For example, the Post Exchange was a wagon on wheels. Tullahoma Air Base was situated in close proximity to Camp Forrest, Tennessee, the site of a major infantry center. Supplies and pay for the squadron were drawn from Camp Forrest.

On 29 Jun 1942, the 30th Observation Squadron joined the 127 at Tullahoma and that Day, Col Christopher C. Scott took command of the field and his cadre took over base activities that had been maintained by the personnel of the 127. The unit was redesignated the 127 Observation Squadron.

At a ceremony on 11 Jul 1942, Maj Paul N. Flanary was transferred to the 75th Observation Group and Maj Lyle Johnston took over as commander of the Squadron.

On 1 Sep 1942, Capt Carl R. Walley succeeded Maj Lyle Johnston as commanding officer. During this same period the entire squadron, every last man and plane, left Tullahoma for Shreveport Louisiana to participate in the most gigantic war games ever staged by the United States Army.

The squadron was located at the municipal airport at Shreveport sport during these maneuvers and for the first time began to work in close association with the 75th Observation Group.

Officers and enlisted men were constantly confronted with tests of supplies camouflaging, rapid advances and withdrawals and various other war games. They met this test with a success that drew praise from high officers in other branches of the service. On 12 Oct 1942, the squadron, in company with the 75th Observation Group, moved field headquarters to DeRidder, Louisiana for new maneuvers. While there, the entire squadron was on alert 24 hours each day.

As is perhaps true with any military organization in wartime, by 1942-43. the squadron was evolving into a different organization in terms of mission, as well as of personnel. For example, on 1 Apr 1943 the squadron was redesignated the 127 Liaison Squadron.

As described by former members the liaison mission was rather ill-defined but it included tactical reconnaissance (including aerial photography), artillery spotting, the pick-up and delivery of messages between field units, the transportation of personnel, and the evacuation of wounded from the rear areas behind the actual battlefield.

According to squadron records the first liaison pilots completed their training and were ordered to overseas duty on 12 Apr 1 1943. It is important to recognize that by Mar 1943 the squadron had been assigned a replacement training mission, a role it would perform until Dec 1943; therefore 127 personnel received non-liaison replacement pilots every few weeks and trained them. Then the rated pilots were shipped directly overseas.

On 5 Mar 1943, Capt Rudolph B. Walters became commanding officer, succeeding Capt Carl R. Willey, who selected retraining as the Engineering Officer.

The 127 was stationed at Tullahoma, Tennessee, longer than at any other base in its wartime existence. It remained in Tennessee from mid-Apr 1942 until mid-Oct 1943.

The 127 was removed as part of the 75th Observation Group on 19 Aug 1943, and transferred to the First Air Support Command which had headquarters at Morris Field, Charlotte. N.C. This Command was to be known as the First Tactical Air Division.

1Lt John B. Noble assumed command of the squadron on 29 Aug 1943, and Capt Walters was reassigned to another unit.

On 12 Oct 1943, the squadron was again ordered to move, this time to Statesboro, Georgia. At Statesboro Army Air Field the 127's mission was much the same as at Tullahoma: training liaison pilots. Their training at both bases was significant for several reasons. As an example, the liaison pilots trained by the squadron were noncommissioned officers. By the time the squadron reached Statesboro it had already trained some one hundred such flight crews of flying sergeants to do liaison work overseas.

The year 1944 found the 127 Observation Squadron still in the United States and still engaged in training.

In Apr 1944, the squadron received indications that it would not remain a training organization much longer. In Apr it was put on alert status and was given special training indicating possible overseas duty. A set of lectures was scheduled and instruction was given on several methods in the tropics, the desert, and the arctic. This flurry of speculative activity was followed on 1 May 1944 by the redesignations of the squadron as the 127 Liaison Squadron (Commando).

On 19 May 1944 orders were received to reduce the squadron to a total of 79 enlisted men and 14 officers as a result 47 enlisted men were transferred to the 340th Airdrome Squadron. Aiken, South Carolina. Transferred men who were kept by the 340th as key personnel were: First Sergeant Wilfred Hommertzheim, MSgt Virgil L. Whilhite, Armament Chief; MSgt James Warren. Line Chief: TSgt Leroy Stevens; Sgt Maj: SSgt Jack Crippen, Assistant to Medical Officer: SSgt Vernon H. Estorly, transportation chief Sgt Michael Camrat, Mess Sgt: Sgt Carl Merendo, Parachute Chief: Sgt Wayne Buckley, Quartermaster Supply Chief and Sgt William Brinkley, Tech Supply Chief. According to the First Sergeant Wilfred Hommertzheim, "it looked like another 127."

While an overseas move seemed imminent in May, the excitement generated by possible overseas assignment quickly died down when orders were not forthcoming. Instead, the squadron again was forced to go through a series of quick moves. Orders sent them to Aiken Army Field, South Carolina, on 18 May 1944; Dunnellon Army Air Field, Florida, on 10 Jun 1944; Cross City Army Air Field, Florida, on 21 Jun 1944; and Lakeland Army Air Field, Florida, on 22 Aug 1944.

After four months of constantly being on the move, the squadron again had a few months to train and plan for whatever the future held for them. The possibility of overseas shipment still seemed likely but after the disappointment of the past six months, there was a good deal of uncertainty. Squadron members qualified with the .45 caliber pistol and the M-1 carbine on the 4th and 5th of Sep 1944, and with the submachine gun on the 16th. Shortly thereafter, all non-essential records were destroyed and the squadron began to make final preparations for its departure, hopefully overseas. Orders were finally received for overseas duty in India on 23 Oct 1944.

According to orders, the squadron proceeded by troop train from Florida to Camp Anza, California, arriving there on 2 Nov 1944. Temporary quarters were arranged for the men while supplies were obtained for the overseas trip.

The squadron members again entrained on 8 Nov 1944, for the Port of Los Angeles where the squadron and its equipment were loaded aboard the USS General John Pope. The 127 was designated as an advance detail to the ship and was to serve in a guard capacity throughout the journey.

On 10 Nov 1944, three years after mobilization, the squadron left the United States for overseas duty in a combat theater. The land sighted on 26 Nov 1944 was Australia, and as the ship pulled into Melbourne Harbor, all hoped for at least several hours of shore leave to again feel solid earth under their feet. This anticipated leave did not occur.

Subsequently, on 29 Nov 1944, the ship's voyage was resumed, finally docking at Bombay, India, on 10 Dec 1944. The squadron members remained with the ship until 13 Dec when they departed by train for their base, called Kalaikunda.

It was a three-day, extremely rough ride to this base camp, located near the Indian city of Kharagpur, approximately 80 miles from Calcutta.

The 127 Liaison Squadron, Commanded by Major John Noble, from Jan 20 to May 18 was directly supporting the 15th Corps at Akyeb. They were in-on the battles for Kangaw, Ramree Island, Ru Ywa, An, Letpan, and Taungup.

All three squadrons were adept at forward air supply, the evacuation of wounded and the flying in of reinforcements. General officers of the British ground forces relied on them almost-entirely for personal reconnaissance of their areas, for courier service, and for the transport of Very Important Persons to the front lines. Lady Mountbatten on her tour of the 14th Army fronts was safely transported by the Second Air Commando L-5's. The Liaison Squadrons were always on call for artillery spotting and air rescue. Like their big brothers in the Troop Carrier Squadron each pilot amassed a startling total of combat hours; and gallantry in action above the call of duty was an almost daily occurrence.

It is believed the Liaison Squadrons had an excellent record considering the short field and strips from which they operated and the number of hours flown daily. Ten hours per day per pilot was not unusual.

As the month progressed, equipment and supplies arrived gradually. Airplanes were ferried in, serviced, checked out, and flown. By the first week of Feb, combat operations were near, and the massive airlift to Cox's Bazaar for the operation of the fighter squadrons began. The 155th Liaison Squadron moved to Central Burma, the 127 to Akyab, the 317th Troop Carrier to Palel, and later the 156th Liaison to Central Burma - all moves were efficiently carried out while the four airdrome squadrons were taken where they were needed. A concept of the work and planning involved in this short time is obtained when one considers that the Second Air Commando Group arrived in Kalaikunda, India, on Dec 14, 1944 and the fighter squadrons flew their first combat mission out of Cox's Bazaar Feb 16, 1945. From this time until the Group disbanded, elements were distributed all over parts of China, Burma, and India - a true representative of the CBI.

Meanwhile in the Arakan, on the West coast of Burma, the 127 Liaison Squadron, (Commando), was evacuating wounded, carrying cargo, and doing courier service for the 15th Indian Army Corps in its attack on the Japanese forces from Kangaw to Taungup. Commanded by Major John

Noble of Oklahoma City, the "grasshopper" pilots outdid even their big brothers of the Troop Carrier Squadron in comparative loads carried. At the same time the 155th Liaison Squadron, under Major Jack Zeigler of Florence, South Carolina, and the 156th Liaison Squadron, commanded by Major Anthony Maurel of Phoenix Arizona, were doing equally hazardous work for the IV Corps at Myitche, Meiktila, and Magwe. Day after day the little planes went into jungle clearings behind the Jap lines bringing hope to wounded who a year before would have been without hope. During Feb, Mar, and Apr, those three squadrons flew over 25,000 combat hours, evacuated 5,000 wounded, carried 15,000 passengers, and 1,200,000 pounds of cargo, all without the loss of a single man.

From Jan to Jun, 1945, the three Liaison Squadrons of the Second Air Commando Group distinguished themselves by the variety as well as the unfailingly excellent execution of their missions. As in the case of the 317th Troop Carrier Squadron, the total effect of their efforts was out of all proportion to the small number of planes involved.

Statistical reports cannot show the great morale support that the Liaison planes gave to the 14th Army. Front line troops were lavish in their praise and stated time and time again that their spirits were raised by the certain knowledge that necessary food and medicinal supplies would arrive and that casualties would be promptly evacuated. There is no question that if all other air support were removed, the work of the "L" Squadrons would still exert a powerful influence on the success of the ground troops.

The 127 Liaison Squadron (Commando) cooperated with the British Army from the beginning of its Burma offensive in Feb 1945 until the latter part of Apr 1945.

On 1 May 1945, the British offensive again picked up its pace with the invasion of Rangoon. British activity in Burma officially ceased on 6 May 1945, and with the collapse of Japanese resistance the 127 received a well-earned rest.

Monday evening, 7 May 1945, just following chapel services conducted by the group chaplain, Capt Ed Kimbrough, a news flash from the local radio station stated that Germany had surrendered unconditionally to the Allies. The next day Victory was confirmed, although official celebration was not until the ninth, and enhanced by an extra drink ration from the British.

Beginning on 17 May 1945, the L- 5's of the squadron were flown back to their original base in India. The move of men and equipment had been completed by 22 May 1945.

In Jun of 1945, a 30-plane flight left from Kalaikunda Army Air Field, flying over the "Hump", with Kunming, China as a destination. Ten planes from the 127 were among the flight, complete with their pilots who served as ferry pilots.

During that month, twenty-five L-5s were transferred from the organization to higher priority organizations in the China-Burma-India-theater. At the end of Jun the organization was still functional with a total personnel strength of fourteen officers and sixty-six enlisted men.

Jul 1945 passed with little in the way of outstanding occurrences, and certainly nothing in the way of combat missions. Finally, on 29 Jul 1945, the squadron was placed on a 24 hour alert. The equipment was packed and shipped to Calcutta, India, with personnel to follow on 4 Aug 1945.

The men boarded the USS General Collins at Calcutta and departed on 7 Aug 1945, for an unknown destination. The remainder of the month of Aug was spent aboard ship in the Pacific as the war had ended.

About 15 Sep 1945, the squadron reached its destination, Okinawa. According to Kansas National Guard records the 127 was shipped out of India for the express purpose of participating in the invasion of Japan.

With the war over, the men took temporary quarters on Okinawa and waited impatiently for new orders.

Orders were finally received which transferred the 127's personnel to the 25th Liaison Squadron stationed on Mindanao. The liaison pilots and officers were transferred to various units on Okinawa. Before much reorganization could occur, new orders were cut inactivating the squadron effective 5 Nov 1945. Yontan Air Strip, Okinawa, became the last base of the squadron for all practical purposes.

Now inactivated, the personnel were placed aboard a converted freighter which was to return them to the United States. The men slept in the holds where makeshift beds, constructed of two-by-fours and Army canvas, were their scant comfort. The ship proceeded north and picked up the Japanese trade waters to gain speed back to the United States. The northern route , proved to be so cold that the men could not take showers for two weeks. When they entered San Francisco Harbor after thirty-two days at sea, they were, according to one former member, "a dirty, filthy bunch."

Ironically, San Francisco offered very little comfort because upon arrival, the remnants of the squadron quartered on the beach in twelve-man tents. That night the winds blew most of the tents away. This hardly seemed a fitting homecoming for a squadron which had served four years of active duty.

For approximately two years it served as a training squadron, training enlisted pilots in observation and liaison duties. Once they were sent into a combat zone, the caliber of the pilots was very evident in terms of the successful missions flown by the personnel. It won praise from the British Army which found its services indispensable in the Burma campaign.

From the National Guard viewpoint, this squadron deserves special note. It retained its "Guard" character until 11 Aug 1943, when a substantial number of enlisted personnel, including most of the section heads, were transferred to the 75th Observation Group. After this major

reorganization, though it was no longer a National Guard Squadron, it still deserved recognition as an excellent flying organization which was a credit to the Army Air Forces, and the Kansas Air National Guard.

Maj John B. Noble completed deactivation on 6 Oct 1945. On 7 Sep 1946, the unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 127 Fighter Squadron, SE, and extended federal recognition as a unit of the Kansas National Guard, at Wichita Municipal Airport, Wichita, Kansas with LTC Paul N. Flanary as Commander.

While the 127 Observation Squadron was on active duty a hangar was erected for the 127 as it was hoped they would return during 1942. The unit did not return until 6 Oct 1945. The hangar went unused for four years, and is now part of McConnell AFB, Bldg 1218.

Upon reorganization in Sep 1946, the unit received one C-47 two AT-6, four B-26s two L-5, F-51 of which 25 were on station, when the unit was fully equipped.

Of the original squadron that was organized in 1941, several members rejoined, they were: the original commander, LTC Paul N. Flanary, and now commander of the unit again on 7 Sep 1946. Along with Capt Luther C. Kissick, Jr., 1LT Garland O. Beck, Warrant Officer Anthony A. Leis, and Sergeants, Paul F. Simmons, Larry Gorman, Julius A. Nilles, Lyle M. Ricker, Paul C. Jacobs, Jerry A. Cook, Glenn L. Tade, and Albert H. Davis. Of this group two members became full time employees with the National Guard to help reorganize and then continued through many more reorganizations. They were: Warrant Officer Anthony (Tony) Leis and Sgt Paul F. Simmons. Through their long careers, they left many notable marks with the National Guard in the state of Kansas, before Colonel Anthony Leis retired from the Headquarters, Kansas Air National Guard in the mid-1970's. LTC Paul F. Simmons retired as Commander, 190th Combat Support Squadron, Forbes Field, Topeka, Kansas, in mid- 1970.

During the late years of the 1940s rebuilding the unit was no easy task. Through the recruiting efforts of personnel, the unit grew to 250 members by Dec 1946.

LTC Paul N. Flanary left as commander of the unit in Dec 1946 and LTC Roger B. Ludeman assumed command 31 Dec 1946.

LTC Ludeman, took his troops to Annual Field Training at Casper, Wyoming, 11 Jun 1949. There they were joined by units from North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado and Wyoming.

The objective of this exercise was to insure that the Air National Guard units within the wing would be ready for immediate mobilization and operational employment, either offensively or defensively. In addition to the F-51 that was flown during annual training, several B-26 were used. Upon completion of the training, all units returned to their home bases.

On 14 Sep 1949, to celebrate the third year that the unit had been reorganized, LTC Roger Ludeman, led F-51 in an air show Saturday afternoon over downtown Wichita as a part of the

celebration. The planes maneuvered at speeds in excess of 350 miles per hour and made numerous passes over different parts of the city.

Going from observation and liaison squadrons, to a fighter squadron, approval was granted, 6 Jul 1949, for a new unit emblem. It was: On a disc of light blue, border ultramarine blue, piped yellow, three blue Kansas Jayhawks in formation flight toward front of aircraft, with yellow beaks and red faces, wearing aviators' helmets, brown goggles, and yellow boxing gloves with white lightning flashes issuing toward front, each Jayhawk having white, jagged spinners and leaving a white cloud-like vapor trail to the rear. This emblem, though slightly modified on the outer circle, is still a part of the current 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron, and a part of the pilots' flight suits.

On 17 Sep 1949, at 4:45 p.m., an Air Force F-84 swished into the Wichita Municipal Airport, and taxied to the hangar of Wichita's 127 Fighter Squadron. Capt Allen Murphy of the Air Force stepped out and said, "She's yours. Treat her nice because she's a honey."

It was a big surprise and a glorious climax to the day-long program to observe the anniversary. That evening an informal public dance was held in the Air National Guard hangar to the music of Dick Haughton's popular 16-piece orchestra. Featured soloist with the band was the pretty song-stylist Bobbie Brooks. The 127 was the only Air National Guard unit in the United States to receive the F-84's. Eventually, the 127 received 30 of the replacing an equal number of the F-51. None of the 127 pilots had been checked out on the F-84, however they started immediately. New aircraft also required redesignation of the unit. On 21 Feb 1950, the unit was redesignated as the 127 Fighter Squadron, Jet,. LTC Roger B. Ludeman was commander.

On 10 Oct 1950, the 127 Fighter Squadron, Jet, formerly the Kansas Air National Guard, was ordered to active duty.

From 10 Oct 1950 through 25 Nov 1950, the organization remained at the Municipal Airport, Wichita, Kansas. Since there were no facilities for messing or housing of personnel, the Airmen were authorized monetary allowances in lieu of rations and quarters.

On 11 Oct 1950, the 127 Fighter Squadron, Jet, was reassigned to the Fourteenth Air Force.

The 127 Fighter Squadron, Jet, was redesignated on 18 Oct 1950, as the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron. This organization was reassigned to Alexandria AFB, LA.

At 0700, 26 Nov 1950, the main body of the organization departed for Alexandria AFB and arrived at 2300, that same day. Distance traveled was 710 miles. The air echelon departed at 1000, 27 Nov 1950, and arrived at Alexandria at 1120. Upon arrival, all sections put special emphasis on bringing their records up to date.

The 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron was activated under the new wing-base plan, with no previous experience in operating under this type of organization. The 127 joined the 125th from

Oklahoma, the 128th from Georgia, the Headquarters, 137th Fighter Bomber Group (Oklahoma ANG) and the Headquarters, 137th Fighter Bomber Wing (Texas ANG) to form the 137th Fighter Bomber Wing. Additional personnel from Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma and Georgia, formed the Group Headquarters. Many problems were encountered as personnel had not been trained and were not equipped to efficiently perform their duties under the new organization. It was readily apparent that little advance planning had been done at the Air Force level.

The base at Alexandria had been abandoned for several years and was in a state of disrepair that almost prohibited its use. Tower facilities were not available. Buildings were run down and not sealed against wind or weather.

The railroad spur, essential for the movement of supplies and equipment into the base, had been ripped up. The base supply activity was not fully activated. Aircraft parts were almost non-existent. Few housekeeping supplies were available. Clothing was not available for the Airmen, and in particular, cold-weather gear for line personnel was conspicuous by its absence. The only hangar was occupied by the maintenance squadron, and all organizational maintenance had to be performed out-of-doors.

During the winter of 1950, temperatures in Alexandria fell to six degrees above zero, which, in that latitude, was a penetrating cold. The supply facility broke down to the point that coal for heating purposes was not available. Only slack coal could be had, which burned inefficiently. A great amount of discomfort was experienced by all personnel on base.

There were severe shortages of administrative equipment, namely typewriters. Crash and fire equipment for the safe operation of aircraft was missing. Fuel shortages and lack of fuel servicing units severely hindered flying. With the activation of the 137th Fighter Bomber Group, there were a few changes in personnel of the squadron. Maj Edward R. Fry was transferred to the 137th Fighter Bomber Group as the Group Operations officer and Capt Donald W. Coulson was appointed as the 127 Fighter Squadron Operations officer.

On 27 Dec 1950 LTC Roger B. Ludeman was transferred to the 137th Fighter Bomber Group to assume command of that organization. Capt Donald W. Coulson assumed command of the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron on 27 Dec 1950, and Capt Ivan Behel was appointed Squadron Operations officer. On 31 Dec 1950, the assigned strength of this organization was 34 officers and 110 airmen.

At the time of activation the Airmen were clothed under existing National Guard allowances. These allowances were considerably under Air Force allowances, and the time delay in obtaining additional clothing created a serious morale problem, since the men were not properly clothed to carry on their normal duties on a full-time scale. It was then recommended that in the future a base supply be set up far in advance of moving a unit to a base to establish a stock level of clothing and spare aircraft parts.

For the first three months of active duty the average in-commission rate for Tactical Aircraft was

69 percent. Average in-commission for all aircraft was 57.4 percent. The latter figure included two F-84 in depot for repair. Not included in the first figure, one C-47, and one B-26C for transfer inspection and parts.

Before leaving Wichita, personnel made approximately three trips per week to Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area (OCAMA) to walk-through parts and supply requisitions. Pilot pick-up of parts had been used as much as possible to expedite receipt of parts, but this method had not been used very extensively by Base Supply at Alexandria.

The 127 Engineering Section participated in "Operation Strawboss" by refueling fourteen F-84 aircraft in Wichita for a cross-country by the pilots. The 127 supplied line personnel and starting units.

The city of Wichita supplied fueling units, and Boeing Airplane Company supplied a starting unit. This operation at Wichita was carried out on a Sunday with notification having been received the Saturday before at 2000 hours of the proposed arrival of the aircraft.

The first two months of operation at Alexandria were hampered by lack of crash equipment, adequate parts supplies, and lack of fuel and fuel-servicing units. On 14 Dec 1950, Lt James Dennison relieved Capt Terye Rasmussen as Armament Section officer, and on 18 Dec 1950, the Armament Section started construction of offices for the various sections of the squadron. This project was greatly expedited by the fact that several of the men on this project had brought their own personal tools.

On 20 Dec 1950, approximately 50 percent of the personnel left for Christmas leave. The remaining personnel kept up the maintenance of aircraft and continued with the construction of the offices. On 27 Dec 1950, approximately fifty personnel of the assigned returned from leave and the remaining men left for New Year's leave. Work on aircraft and offices continued, and everything operated very satisfactorily.

Beginning 5 Jan 1951, the squadron went under the Tactical Air Command ninety-day training program. The 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron was selected as the first squadron of the group to go to Eglin AFB for air-to-ground gunnery. Fourteen planes were taken on 3 Feb 1951, and during the entire stay of approximately ten days, eight of ten planes were kept flyable daily. During the stay, the squadron flew 302 sorties, and the pilots attained an overall average of 47%, and an average of 35 sorties per day was attained.

A team from Chanute AFB arrived to display and lecture on the F-84, in conjunction with the use of complete mock-ups of the F-84. Each pilot completed this twenty hour course. A ground training program was in progress covering such phases as weather, gunnery procedures, chemical warfare, world events, etc.

Effective 1 Apr 1951, the unit experienced many more personnel changes in an effort to equalize all flights within the 137th Fighter Bomber Group.

Sgt James R. Conklin was assigned to the Engineering Section and MSgt George F. Strothman, became the Maintenance Inspector and transferred to HQ & HQ Squadron. Sgt Wayne S. Bidwell became the Aircraft Electrician and assigned to the 137th Maintenance Squadron. Private Robert B. Litchfield, who had just completed basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas, was assigned as an aircraft mechanic.

On 22 Apr 1951, the organization experienced its first non-battle casualty. Corporal Lavon D. Ochs, drowned at Valentine Lake, Alexandria, Louisiana. Corp Ochs was helping push a rowboat from the shore when his feet became tangled with weeds. In an attempt to straighten up, he continued to hold onto the boat as it went further out from the shore into deeper water. He lost his grip on the boat and drowned. His body was recovered after a three hour search.

During the latter part of Mar, several intercept missions took place over the Alexandria area when our assigned F-84's intercepted B-36, B-29 and B-50 which were making predetermined bomb runs over targets. Total flying time was restricted the first part of the quarter for several reasons. The refueling of aircraft was very poor because of too few fuel trucks; then, after these became available, their condition was unserviceable. Several times during this period the planes were grounded as no replacement parts were available.

Weather was another unfavorable factor. Much snow and ice, as well as persistent rain and low ceilings, kept the pilots on the ground. Prior to the squadron's going to gunnery, the entire squadron's planes were grounded for approximately one week for maintenance in preparation for the movement.

During the period 1 Jul to 30 Sep 1951, a large portion of the administrative backlog was cleared. Each section within the squadron completed its functional chart and posted same. Here all individuals concerned could become better acquainted with their responsibilities.

On 10 Jul 1951, the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron was notified that it was to participate in Operation "Southern Pines" and the operation site was located at Wilmington, North Carolina.

On 23 Jul 1951, 1LT Gerald W. Carpenter was killed in an aircraft accident at Alexandria. While approaching for a landing, Lt Carpenter experienced difficulty in getting his power reduced and crashed at the end of the runway. This was the first fatal accident in an aircraft since the squadron was ordered to active duty.

At the beginning of the third quarter, 1 Jul, operations of the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron were concentrated on the transition training of the pilots that had been newly assigned. This transition period in the F-84 was accelerated, but concentrated on seven pilots, so as to have the qualified complement of pilots needed to ferry aircraft to Southern Pines maneuvers, and also to have the number of pilots needed to take active part in the maneuvers.

Actual maneuvers at Southern Pines began 13 Aug 1951 and lasted through 26 Aug 1951.

During this period, daily ground and air alerts were scheduled from sunup to sundown. After thirty sorties daily, and one aircraft damaged beyond repair when an aircraft from another squadron taxied into the 127's parking area because of brake failure, all aircraft and personnel returned to Alexandria.

During the period of 1 Jul 1951 through 30 Sep 1951, the unit encountered two airplane crashes: One F-84C, serial number 47-1559, was damaged beyond economical repair in a taxi incident, one F-84C, serial number 47-1466, crash-landed and had to be salvaged, the pilot escaped uninjured. This still left the unit with seven F-84B's, six F-84C's, two T-33's and one F-51D. Of these, seven aircraft had cracked wings. During this quarter 1,359.55 hours were flown, using 498,965 gallons of JP3 fuel, and 3,501 quarts of oil.

Considerable valuable experience was gained from this operation during this quarter, and everyone benefited from these combat-operational conditions, with the assigned strength of 31 officers and 140 Airmen.

On 27 Oct 1951, the unit received notice of Warning Orders. Immediately the processing of all personnel eligible for overseas was begun, and by 10 Dec 1951, 96 percent of the personnel were eligible for overseas duty.

Nov greeted the unit with suspended flying of the F-84s so the aircraft could be brought up to full maintenance. Toward the end of Nov, Maj Coulson and three other pilots were airlifted to the Republic factory at Farmingdale, New York, to ferry new F-84Gs to Alexandria. This ferrying continued well into the month of Dec with a final count of eighteen aircraft being assigned to the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron.

In the first part of Dec 1951, operational activities were limited because of acceptance checks on the new "G" models and the transfer of the F-84Bs and Cs. The Group ordered all pilots and crews to attend the Mobile Training Unit before checking out the F-84G. This month also saw some high-altitude flying at over 40,000 feet, combining cruise control with formation flying.

During this quarter there was a great influx of new personnel, and for the most part, these Airmen had lower experience levels. It was necessary for the more experienced personnel to train, indoctrinate, and pass on "know how" to the new personnel.

The agenda of the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron operations during the first quarter of 1952 was both varied and extensive. Operational activities ranged from gunnery practice to refueling in flight. A total of 1,474 flying hours was accrued by squadron pilots, with one major accident and one pilot fatality. 1LT Donald Boleski, who joined the 127 on 15 Sep 1951, was killed on 25 Jan 1952, when an F-84D which he was ferrying from Shaw AFB to McClellan AFB, CA, crashed in the desert a few miles from Tucson, Arizona. His loss reduced the number of pilots in the squadron to seventeen. Two new F-84G were delivered to the squadron in Jan 1952, bringing the total number of assigned aircraft to twenty. This found the engineering section busy completing acceptance inspections on the newly arrived F-84G, and simultaneously completing major

inspection on the old F-84B and C before their transfer, with the last F-84C being transferred 30 Jan 1952.

By the last week of Jan 1952, it was definitely known that the squadron would be departing for Matagorda AFB and two weeks of gunnery exercises at Matagorda Island. A high in-commission rate was maintained, and the engineering section contributed immensely to the highly successful training mission. One major accident occurred during this deployment.

While on an aerial gunnery pass, Capt Idon Hodge severed a tow cable with a burst of .50-caliber ammunition. The tow target, loosened, whipped back against the aircraft's right wing and horizontal stabilizer, causing major damage. Capt Hodge maintained control of the plane and made an excellent landing at Matagorda Island.

Upon the squadron's return to Alexandria on 12 Feb 1952, all flying was cancelled for three days in order to allow engineering personnel to perform necessary inspections and maintenance required to have all planes in commission for an Operational Readiness Test scheduled on 23 Feb 1952.

Squadron strength was increased on 11 Feb 1952 by the addition of 1LT Charles Woody. Lt Woody was a Korean returnee and had flown T-6's in combat for a total of 100 missions in that theater.

Operational activities during the week prior to 23 Feb 1952 were dedicated to sharpening all pilots' abilities to fly formation in twelve and fourteen ship flights.

From 18 through 25 Feb 1952, the squadron underwent a technical inspection by representatives from the Inspector General's Office Headquarters, USAF. This inspection proved satisfactory in many respects and unsatisfactory in others.

At any rate the inspection pointed out many shortcomings, some of which all personnel knew existed, and some of which they did not know existed. As with all inspections, the section welcomed the suggestions, criticisms, and recommendations of the inspectors.

At the conclusion of the inspection, flying activities were again curtailed in order for Engineering to conduct inspections and perform maintenance and modifications necessary to have all aircraft in excellent condition for the overseas flyaway scheduled in May, 1952. Beginning 17 Mar 1952, all personnel went on a 0700-1800 hours, seven-days-a-week schedule in order to hasten the completion of this task. During Mar all pilots in the squadron, with the exception of five, made at least three hook-ups with the KB-29 and became familiar with the procedures and sensations of mid-air refueling.

The month of Apr found everyone planning and working toward getting ready for the proposed flight to France. Flying was somewhat curtailed at the beginning of the month because of a Technical Order compliance of fuel and oxygen modifications.

Three inspections of the Airmen's clothing were conducted during the last part of Apr and first week in May. Many Airmen were required to buy large amounts of clothing to replace items that were unserviceable. Where a hardship was evident because of the amount of clothing an Airman was required to buy, the total amount was amortized over a two to three month period, depending on the Airman's take-home pay.

An "advance party" headed by LTC Milton Quinn and Captain Leo D. Myer had been sent to Chaumont, France with approximately 75 Airmen on 30 Apr 1952, to prepare the "bare base" for the arrival of the main body. This included opening the mess hall, supply and assignment of tents by squadron, setting up beds and mattresses, and installing the fuel oil stoves for each tent.

With the installation of the last gas circulators in the barracks and orderly rooms on the base, many of the Airmen expressed envy of personnel who might take over the facilities occupied by this organization. They were remembering how in the wintertime all they could get from the powdered coal issued for heating was smoke and soot, and thinking of the coming winter with thermostatically controlled heat.

On the morning of 4 May 1942, the big event took place. All assigned aircraft made their final takeoffs from Alexandria Municipal Airport, Louisiana. After the last aircraft had raised its gear, 29 Airmen and the maintenance officer boarded a C-54 for the beginning of their journey to France.

The pilots assigned to the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron leaped off in their F-84G's on 5 May 1952, for their first leg of the Atlantic crossing with Chaumont, France as their destination. The F-84's left Alexandria, Louisiana without any undue difficulty.

The families of the pilots were all at the field to wish a "bon voyage" to one and all. The flights started taking off at 0100 hours with a flight leaving every 15 minutes. The first stop on the route was McGuire AFB, New Jersey. Here the planes were checked over carefully and refueled.

For a lot of the pilots the next hop was to have a new twist. It was to be the first time they had flown out of the States. The hop was to be flown over a wide variety of country, from the large and modern cities of the States to the snow-capped mountains of Canada.

The flights started taking off from McGuire AFB, New Jersey, at 1300, 5 May 1952, bound for Goose Bay, Labrador. This leg was made without incident but at the same time was an experience for all to land on a runway with tall snow banks on each side.

Here at Goose Bay, Mother Nature put a stop to the well-laid plans of men. Certain weather minimums had to be met before the air group could proceed with the water crossings. It wasn't until 10 May 1952, that the green light was given to proceed. The planes started taking off at 1100, arriving at Buie, Greenland, approximately two hours and thirty minutes later. Everyone's

plane ran perfectly except they all seemed to run rough when land fell below the horizon.

Leaving Greenland the next day the flights were uneventful with the exception of Capt James Bean. Approximately ten minutes out of Greenland he experienced generator failure. Capt Bean returned to Greenland successfully where he traded aircraft with Lt Harrison Lethbridge and again leaped off, arriving at Keflavik, Iceland later in the day. Lt Lethbridge, with the repaired plane arrived at Keflavik the following morning.

The following morning, 12 May 1952, they left Keflavik, Iceland, bound for Preswick, Scotland. At Preswick they remained overnight and the following day found out that they would not be going to Chaumont, France as planned, but would fly instead to Landstuhl, Germany.

The flight to Landstuhl, Germany, was made without incident. There the planes were checked and flying operations were limited due to lack of fuel.

During the evening of 13 May 1952, the remainder of the squadron was busy putting the finishing touches to their packing of clothing and packs. At midnight all personnel were awakened to stack their bunks and give the barracks a final cleaning. At 0130, 13 May, Continental Trailways buses pulled up in front of the barracks area, and all personnel were loaded on for the last stateside bus ride for some time, and the beginning of a long voyage. At 0800, unloading from the buses to the USNS Gen C. C. Ballou began in the port of New Orleans, Louisiana. Personnel were soon making the best of their living quarters to be occupied for the next thirteen days.

At 1600 on the afternoon of 14 May, the USNS Ballou pulled away from the pier and started down the Mississippi. About an hour from the port, the first fire drill was held. For many it was an exciting moment fitting their life preservers on and reporting to their stations for the first time.

During three days voyage of rough seas, on the Atlantic, more than 50 percent of the personnel became sick if they got out of their bunks for a long period and the Dramamine tablet supply was almost exhausted.

Then, on 24 May 1952, the squadron left Landstuhl for Chaumont, France. Again, at Chaumont, France, little flying was accomplished due to a lack of fuel and the fact that the main body of personnel had not yet arrived.

At 1030 hours on the morning of 26 May 1952, the port of La Pallice, France, was spotted, and port was reached at 1230 hours, 26 May 1952. A long French train was waiting to rush them to the new base. The train was quite an oddity to many of the men who were in France for the first time. The seating capacity of each car was forty-nine.

After a fourteen-hour train ride, with only a sack lunch to eat, they reached Chaumont, France. There, at the train station, transportation from the base was waiting. Many of the drivers of the

vehicles were pilots of this organization.

At 0700, 27 May 1952, all personnel had glimpses of their new home. A good chow was served and more than welcome, since they had not had a full meal for twenty-four hours. The remainder of the day was spent getting settled in the tent city, and waiting for baggage and equipment to arrive to enable the unit to start full operation again. Everybody realized what a terrific accomplishment had been made when all of the organization's aircraft and personnel arrived safely in the overseas theater.

Within a short time after arrival of the main body at Chaumont, France it was necessary to move all three squadrons to temporary bases at Lanstuhl, Bitbury, and Furstenfelbruck, Germany. This was necessary due to the deterioration of each end of the macadam surfaced runway from heat generated on take-offs of the F-84G. It was necessary to resurface the first 1500 feet of each with concrete.

The early part of Jun was devoted to getting the operation set up and functioning in a satisfactory manner. Arrangements were made so the squadron could have in-flight refueling every Tuesday. Each in-flight refueling day, two flights out of the squadron would be scheduled to make hook-ups. All but six of the pilots had had previous hook-ups with an aerial tanker at Alexandria, Louisiana.

Starting the second week of Jun 1952, flights were set up to run ground controlled missions into Germany. On 21 Jun 1952, the squadron furnished eight aircraft for a fly-by at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, in honor of German International Aviation Day.

Although the squadron did not see combat during the Korean Emergency because of being assigned to the European Theater of Operations, many 127 pilots and others who received their training within the unit distinguished themselves in combat following transfer to the Far East. Two pilots were killed while performing combat missions over the Korean peninsula.

On 9 Jul 1952, after 21 months on active duty, all personnel assigned to the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron were reassigned to the 493rd Fighter Bomber Squadron, and returned home to Wichita, Kansas. Personnel who had volunteered to remain on active duty beyond the 21 month tour were reassigned within the 48th Fighter Bomber Wing, Chaumont, France.

Five months earlier, 1 Feb 1952, the 8127 Air Base Squadron, was specially designated to absorb 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron personnel being released from Active Duty 1LT Clayton H. Bowman, was commander of this new unit.

On 10 Jul 1952, the 8127 Air Base Squadron was deactivated and that same day, the 127 was returned to the jurisdiction and control of the State of Kansas.

The unit was reorganized and redesignated the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron SE, Conventional (Augmented), in the Kansas Air National Guard On 10 Jul 1952, with Capt Carl L. Boggs as Com-

mander effective 14 Jul 1952.

The Korean Conflict created a shortage of F-84, so the 127 was again assigned F-51, from 10 Jul 1952 through 9 Jun 1954.

On 1 May 1953 Maj Donald W. Coulson assumed command of the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron SE, Conventional (Augmented) from Maj Carl L. Boggs who was reassigned to the aircraft maintenance area.

On 15 Aug 1953, the unit was reorganized and redesignated as the 127 Fighter Bomber Squadron, dropping the SE, Conventional, (Augmented) designation, with Maj Coulson as commander.

Eighteen F-80C were received by the squadron on 10 Jun 1954. The squadron was also equipped with two T-33, one C-47, one C-45 and three T-6.

Each pilot was required to fly a minimum of 100 hours each year, the same number of hours required of regular active duty Air Force pilots. But, this number of hours was exceeded greatly by each pilot of the 127. Training of new pilots receiving their flying instruction in conventional type planes required an average of approximately 25 hours of transition time in the T-33.

The new pilot was then given diversified training in instrument and night flying before he could go into the fundamentals of gunnery, rocketry and bombing.

The primary mission, interception, was to achieve and maintain that level of operational effectiveness which would enable the unit to intercept and destroy enemy airborne weapons.

The secondary mission, fighter-bomber, was to achieve and maintain that level of operational effectiveness which would enable the unit to destroy enemy surface targets in cooperation with friendly surface forces, and to support the operation of friendly aviation and air units.

After approximately 200 hours of intensive aerial training in jet planes, the pilot was then considered "combat ready" if he passed all the requirements.

Jun 1954, also marked the completion of the unit's \$1,800,000.00 hangar, Building 41. During the month of Jun 1955, Maj Ivan L. Behel and crew members studied an inch-thick pile of papers bearing instructions from the Lockheed Aircraft Company on how to get the maximum speed out of an F-80C. Maj Behel was entering the Air Guard plane, christened "City of Wichita," in the second annual Gen Earl T. Ricks Memorial Air Race, from Los Angeles to Detroit.

The unit also got official expressions of encouragement and good will from the city, when Mayor Claude DeVorss of Wichita, Kansas, met with Guard officers several days before the race. It was a mixed race, as all types of jets were included, , there was a handicapping system, taking into account the performance characteristics, refueling needs, and other factors differing in the

range from F-80s to the latest in fighters.

On 1 Jul 1955, the unit was redesignated and reorganized as the 127 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron

Maj Behel left Wichita on 2 Jul 1955, for Los Angeles to prepare for the race, which was to start the following Saturday at 6 a.m. Trailing him in a T-33 was Maj Carl L. Boggs, Chief of Maintenance and MSgt Louis F. Jespers, crew chief, at the Ontario, California port, the point of departure for the race. Heading for Grand Island, Nebraska, for the refueling point of Maj Behel's aircraft was a crew of five members who had been trained to make the fuel loading operation a short one, approximately three and one-half minutes.

Of the 24 entrants in the race, Maj Behel and crew placed third in his category. This race was in memory of the late Maj Gen Earl T. Ricks, former Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and was sponsored by the Air Force Association.

Following demobilization in Jul 1952, and the successful reconstitution of the 127 at McConnell AFB, KS, one of the biggest challenges to face the Kansas Air National Guard in the mid-1950 era was to occur in the late fall of 1956.

On 10 Jan 1958, the unit received the F-86L. This was the month the 127 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, began conversion from the slower type F-80 to the newer, faster, all-weather which was made famous during the Korean War. LTC Donald W. Coulson was the commander during this conversion.

The mission for the unit would be defense within the continental limits of the nation. The 127 was under the operational control of the 20th Air Division at Richards-Gebaur AFB, Grandview, Missouri. Pilots of the 127 could maintain daily watches, ready to "scramble" their jets into the air within five minutes after receiving an alert from the Air Force. In the past, with its slower and less maneuverable F-80s, the 127 was limited to its intercepting missions. But with the conversion to the F-86L the squadron would maintain 24-hour alerts, with two pilots standing ready to take the air anytime during the night or day, regardless of weather.

During this transition period, the unit still maintained its dedication to "Strip Alert," never missing or refusing a mission. The unit was rated the top in 10th Air Force, and Air Defense command. The unit set a record for both safety and accident-free flying hours for five consecutive years.

Annual training at Gulfport, Mississippi, in 1959 was regarded as one of the finest achievements ever accomplished by the 127. A really great effort was put forth by several hundred men to qualify the thirty-three pilots who were able to deliver their rockets miles above the earth to an enemy bomber and destroy him short of his target.

Capt Gene E. Turner, was the maintenance officer and he directed and coordinated the efforts

of mechanics, crew chiefs, instrument specialists, sheet metalmen, engine men, and electrical specialists. Sources say that Capt Turner wore out a new pair of shoes in the first five days of annual training at Gulfport.

Many of the ground crews voluntary worked as much as five-hours-a-day overtime to keep their F-86Ls in commission. This fine effort resulted in a splendid operational ready average of 82 percent, far above the acceptable Air Force requirements.

Working closely with the flight line was the E-4 fire control section, supervised by Capt David R. Britton. This section was specifically concerned with the fire control system and the Airborne Communications section which maintained the radio equipment in the airplane. The E-4 section had responsibility for insuring the aircraft's ability to find, intercept, and destroy the target. Their fire control systems averaged 81 percent operationally ready for the two weeks of summer camp. This figure was also substantially above an acceptable figure.

The armament section loaded the 2.75 inch Mighty Mouse aerial rockets in the pods under the bellies of the F-86. In all, 811 rockets were fired and many more were handled. Not a single accident occurred. Capt James Dennison and MSgt Bill Quint, were very pleased with the personnel of their section as not a single malfunction occurred in the air which could be traced to improper handling of their mission.

The F-86L pilots used the bomb shaped Delmar target to fire rockets at. This aerial target, known as the "bug", because it appeared on gun camera film like a hurrying insect, was towed by a T-33. Pilots of the 127's F-86L would locate and make runs on the "bug" which was towed across a range about forty miles out in the Gulf of Mexico. Interceptions were made at altitudes above twenty thousand feet. Pilots located, tracked, and made rocket firing runs entirely by radar.

LTC Donald W. Coulson, commander of the 127, was responsible for the performance and well being of the squadron. He was the "old pro" in the business. He was a World War II veteran and then recalled to active duty with the 127 when the Korean conflict occurred. Col Coulson was combat qualified in the F-86L and in addition to his flying duties had led the 127 to a position among National Guard Fighter Squadrons as the "best" in the nation. Tenth Air Force rated the 127 "First" among the twelve F-86 units in their area of responsibility. Col Coulson was a part-time guardsman, as he was Chief Executive of the Coleman Company, Wichita, Kansas.

Oct 1959, the 127 walked away with all honors in the first competition for the Aero-Design Trophy. On Sunday, 15 Nov 1959, Col E.G Johnson, 137th Air Defense Wing Commander, presented the trophy to Col Coulson who accepted it on behalf of the Officers and Airmen of the squadron. The Aero Commander's Trophy was awarded to the best fighter squadron in the wing. It was based on many factors such as rocket missions at summer camp, flying safety and training. Not only was the unit tops in the wing, it was also out in front of all Air National Guard units in the 10th Air Force area for the months of Jul, Aug, and Sep 1959. This was a tremendous accomplishment considering the short time the unit had been equipped with the F-

86Ls.

The 127 had been rated the top interceptor outfit with F-86s in the 10th Air Force area for the last quarter of 1959. This included squadrons from the states of: Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and New Mexico.

Jan 1960, the Inspection Team from 10th Air Force had arrived to inspect the unit for the Operational Readiness Test and Inspection. In conjunction with the inspection an alert was called at 0521 Sunday morning of drill, and within two hours, 529 men, approximately 99 percent of the assigned personnel were present for duty.

During this inspection, a commendable flying and ground safety record was noted by the inspectors as the unit had flown 9,351 hours since the last major accident while maintaining a 75.6% average aircraft operational ready rate for the last quarter.

Mar 1960, Governor George Docking announced the promotion of Col Edward R. Fry to Brig Gen, with duty as the Assistant Adjutant General for Air of Kansas.

Oct 1960, many Air National Guard Units were placed on alert because of the Berlin Crisis, which looked especially serious to the military. At that time Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and other Chiefs in the Pentagon fashioned a counterstroke to the Russian threat that stood a chance of being recorded as an unparalleled demonstration of teamwork, preparedness and flexibility.

Dubbed "Operation Stair step," the countermove to head off what appeared to be a potential limited war cast the Air National Guard in the starring role. Objective of this top secret operation was to reinforce North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces with mononuclear men and arms from the United States.

Involving hundreds of short-range fighters from across nearly a dozen states, about one-third of the total ANG force, the "Stair step" operation came to pass with figuratively drop-of-the-hat abruptness. In mid-Sep 1961, the ANG personnel called to active duty were told to report the first day of the following month.

What they didn't know at the time was that plan called for their deployment to Europe within the span of 30 days. Even more fantastic was the requirement that the planes involved in the deployment be operationally ready for duty within 60 minutes from the time their wheels touched on foreign soil.

It took a lot of effort to straighten out domestic affairs in the two weeks before departure and to gear spending from a civilian income to a military paycheck.

While there were some close calls, the operation was a complete success and not a man or

plane was lost, for those units that participated. The 127 personnel were not called to this duty, but had we been called, we would have been among the "best."

Under LTC Donald W. Coulson, the 127 Fighter Interceptor Squadron compiled an enviable record, second to none in the Air National Guard. Outstanding achievements included; the upgrading of 70 percent other-than aircrew personnel to a skilled level in their AFSC, a C-1 combat rating attained and sustained, the winning of the National Guard Association Trophy for 1960 and twice winner of the Wing Aero-Design Trophy. One of the finest achievements was the 38 months of operation in which 15,800 hours were flown without accident or incident.

After rising to the enviable position as Top Ranked Air National Guard Unit in the Nation, employing F-86L's, the unit was scheduled to transition to the 1,000 mph F-100s.

The unit was as reorganized and redesignated effective 1 Apr 1961 as the 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron (SD) (Augmented). Cap Theodore C. Coukfoulis assumed command of the 127 TFS effective 1 Apr 1961. At this same time the unit was assigned to the 140th Tactical Fighter Wing, Denver, Colorado, from the 137th Fighter Interceptor Wing with Headquarters in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

The acceptance of the new airplane meant a major transitioning job for the pilots and Airmen of the 127. On 15 Apr 1961, a Mobile Training Detachment from Amarillo AFB, Texas arrived for a 120 day tour. They assisted squadron personnel in familiarizing themselves with the new aircraft. Actual training flights commenced approximately 15 May 1961.

Reporting to McConnell on 15 Jul 1961 to begin 15 days of active duty field training were 575 Officers and Airmen of the 127 representing 99 percent of the Unit's strength. The primary objective was to advance the maximum number of pilots as far as possible toward attainment of operational readiness with the units F-100. During this Annual Training period, the pilots flew 310 hours.

127 was not one of the units activated for the Berlin Crisis.

May 1962, the 127 received one of the highest honors available to an Air National Guard Squadron The Air Force Annual Flying Safety Award. Only one other ANG unit in the country was so recognized for outstanding achievement in flying safety for 1961. The perfect flying safety mark of more than 4,000 accident-free flying hours in 1961, was particularly outstanding due to the challenge of transitional training from F- 86Ls to F-100s.

On 1 Oct 1962, the unit reorganized into the now 184th Tactical Fighter Group, to add greater stature and flexibility to the organization.

Maj Theodore C. Coukoulis, who formerly commanded the 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron was appointed Commander of the 184 TFG; Serving in newly created positions of Deputy Commanders were: Maj Robert J. Welsh, as Deputy Commander for Operations; and LTC Robert

M. Kelley, as Deputy Commander for Materiel. Working with Col Kelley was Maj Harry J. Chase, Chief of Supply; and Maj Gene E. Turner, as Chief of Maintenance. Group Headquarters and five squadrons comprised the Group; Headquarters 184 TFG, Commanded by Maj Theodore C. Coukoulis. 127 TFS, commanded by Maj Ralph T. Buchanan; the 184th Materiel Squadron, commanded by Maj James R. Dennison; the 184th Combat Support Squadron, commanded by Maj James C. Phillips Jr., the 184th USAF Dispensary, commanded by Capt James L. Barber, M.D., and the 127 Weather Flight continued as an attached unit, commanded by Maj Robert J. Sauer. SMSgt Robert E. Collins, the old 127 TFS First Sergeant would become the First Sergeant of the 184th Combat Support Squadron and MSgt Thomas H. Payne became First Sergeant of the 184th Materiel Squadron. This status change added 160 more positions to the unit.

During that same month, Oct 1962, the unit underwent an Inspection by 12th Air Force, which produced many "outstanding" areas, coupled with the over-all "satisfactory" report, indicating the 184th was in excellent condition, and was one of the best ratings received in the National Guard Bureau, as noted by Brigadier General I. G. Brown, Assistant Chief NGB, Air.

On 28 Oct 1962, as a result of the discovery of Russian missiles in Cuba, eight Reserve C-119 equipped troop carrier wings and six aerial port squadrons were called to active duty. The units, with some 14,000 Reservists, served at their home stations for the following month until the crisis was lifted. Again, the 127 was not mobilized during this crisis.

Feb 1963, marked five consecutive years of operation without a single aircraft accident. During this five-year period, the unit had flown more than 23,800 consecutive hours without an accident. The last incident recorded was a non-injury accident involving a T-33, 21 Feb 1958. In compiling this safety mark, the 184 TFG operated F-80C, F-86L, and F-100C/F, T-33 and a C-45, and the C-47.

National Guard Bureau records in Washington, D.C. reveal this flight safety mark to be unmatched by any Air Guard organization in the country flying high-speed tactical fighter aircraft. It was also believed to be among the best safety achievements of any US Air Force component the world over.

Wichita, Kansas, already active in Swift Strike III, the 102nd and the 104th; two fighter groups from Boston, Massachusetts and Westfield, Massachusetts Air National Guard, respectively. Swift Strike III has been called, "The largest allied airborne activity ever conducted during peacetime." More than 100,000 Army and Air Force active and reserve troops participated during Jul and Aug 1963, for two week periods in simulated war maneuvers over a 7,500 square mile area in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Under supervision of the U.S. Strike Command, composed of units from Tactical Air Command and Continental Army Command, two Forces - Red and Blue began battling for southeastern U.S. real estate in mid-Jul 1963.

Tactical pilots of the 184th flew 24 missions daily in support of the Blue Army ground troops

throughout the Carolinas, where most maneuvers took place. Both the 184th and the 560th operated supersonic F-100, with both Massachusetts units flying the F-86H from the Georgia field. Capt Frank G. Ross, gained distinction during these operations as he became the first ace of the maneuvers scoring five confirmed kills" of "enemy" aircraft on a single mission.

All activities at Swift Strike III were viewed as being "highly successful," and the members of the 184th returned to McConnell AFB, 17 Aug 1963, having completed their two weeks of training.

A contingent of pilots, F-100 and support personnel from the Group left Wichita, 13 May 1964, for two weeks participation in the air support phase of "Operation Desert Stoke." A giant military exercise, involving nearly 100,000 troops from active and reserve Air Force and Army. It took part in the maneuvers in the desert areas of Canada Montana, Nevada and Arizona.

In Sep 1964, a small number of unit members got the opportunity to participate in the "Diamond Lil XIV Exercise" at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. The course of this exercise involved thousands of U.S. Army, Air Force and Reserve troops in joint maneuvers by two opposing forces on the ground, and in the air above the vacs Alaskan backcountry. The 184th aircraft did not miss a scheduled sortie, and all personnel put in many hours of overtime to assure that record. All these personnel demonstrated a high degree of professional capability.

On 23 Jul 1966, the unit suffered its first fatal mishap in a non-active duty status since 1949 and more than 51,000 flying hours since 1958. 2nd Lt Douglas L. Dumler was one of a flight of four F-100s on a routine low-level training mission northwest of Vichy, Missouri.

On 30 Jan 1967, the 184th lost a fine officer and pilot, with the death of 2nd Lt Eldon C. Hart. Hart joined the unit in Jun 1964, and attended pilot training under the ANG program. He completed pilot training in Nov 1966. His death was the result of an F-100 accident which occurred in the Colorado mountains while on a training mission.

On 15 Apr 1967, the unit suffered another fatal aircraft accident approximately 10 miles west of Howard Kansas. The pilot Maj Paul C. Barrow was one of two F-100s participating in a formation training mission at the time of the accident.

After twenty years of service with the 184th, the C-47 (serial number 42-93173), was flown to its new home with the 190th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, Kansas ANG Hutchinson, Kansas, on 14 May 1967. The 184th C-47 was to replace the C-47 assigned to the 190th that had been selected for active service in Viet Nam as an AC-47.

Replaced by a larger four-engine C-54, the C-47 had enjoyed a long and colorful history with the 184th, beginning with its colorful history in 1946 shortly after the Wichita unit reorganized following World War II. The aircraft had shared the unit's flight line through the years with a number of assigned lighter aircraft including F-51s, F-80s, F-84s, F-86s and finally F-100s. The aircraft had flown numerous reconnaissance and mercy missions during floods, tornadoes and other emergencies, in addition to normal flights in support of unit activities.

More than 700 members of the 184th returned to Wichita on 29 Jul 1967 after completing two weeks of annual training exercised at Volk Field, Wisconsin. The unit performed all duties of administrating an air base from 15-29 Jul, including flying tactical fighter missions in F-100 and a wide variety of support functions.

With excellent flying weather prevailing throughout the encampment, pilots of the 184th completed a total of 198 sorties with total flying hours exceeding 440. Principally, the pilots were participating in air-to-air and air-to-around weapons missions to maintain Combat-ready status

In the air-to-air weapons missions 22 unit tactical fighter pilots requalified in aerial gunnery firing on a dart target towed behind other 184th jets. Air-to-air gunnery was completed over a restricted area of Lake Michigan. Seven of the unit's 36 pilots fired the AIM-9B Sidewinder missile to meet bi-annual Air Force qualification requirements. In all, 184th pilots expended 14,418 rounds of 20 mill cannon ammunition during weapons missions. 372 practice bombs and 278 2.75- inch rockets.

The following units of the Kansas Air National Guard were ordered to Active Duty effective 26 Jan 1968, for a period not to exceed 24 months:

HQ, 184th Tactical Fighter Group, Commander LTC Theodore C. Coukoulis

127 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Commander Col Bill Littlefield, Jr.

184th Combat Support Squadron Commander LTC Raymond Palmer

184th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Commander Maj Gene F. Turner

184th Supply Squadron Commander LTC Harry J. Chase

184th TAC Dispensary Commander Maj Robert C. Tinker

184th Communications Flight, Commander Maj Owen Bridgewater

127 Weather Flight, Commander LTC Robert J. Sauer

The call to duty for the 184th affected more than 800 men, most of whom were Kansas residents. In all, the call-up by the President ordered 14,600 Air National Guard and Air Force Reservists and 600 Navy Air Reservists throughout the nation to active duty.

At first, the initial reporting time was set for 7:00 a.m., Saturday, 27 Jan 1968. At mid-day Friday, 26 Jan, that time was moved to 7:00 p.m., 26 Jan 1968. When the Pentagon changed the wording on the unit's activation orders to read, "no later than 2400 hours." The 184th adjusted and when the group was mustered in the Guard hangar at the final established time of 7:30 p.m., an estimated 84 percent of the total strength was present.

Mobilization processing was completed Monday, 29 Jan 1968.

Despite time consuming mobilization processing, pilots of the 184th flew a number of missions in assigned F-100s Saturday, 27 Jan 1968: the unit's first full day on active duty.

Now as members of tactical Air Command personnel of the Wichita Wing had a new name and a new chain of command. The 184th Tactical Fighter Group was one of four Group comprising the 140th tactical Fighter Wing, with headquarters at Buckley ANG Base. Aurora. Colorado. The entire Wing consisting of units from Colorado: Sioux City, Iowa; Albuquerque. New Mexico: and the 184th.was recalled to active duty. The Wing in turn was part of the 832nd Air Division, Cannon AFB, New Mexico, a Division of 12th Air Force, with headquarters at Waco, Texas.

The first few days of the activation were spent processing unit members into active duty. followed by stepped-up training to insure the units combat readiness. From that point on, the 184th, including the attached units settled into their role as an active duty member of the Tactical Air Command and the United States Air Force.

At this point, the exact role the 184th and its supporting flights would play in the USAF was not known. As a member of Tactical Air Command, the 184th was ready for immediate deployment anywhere in the world and continued to train and increase proficiency while waiting further orders.

During the next five months that the unit remained at McConnell AFB personnel did their normal phases of training to increase the proficiency of each individual.

Pilots were deployed to Cannon AFB, New Mexico for several days to complete aerial training that could not be accomplished locally such as nighttime aerial exercises and air-to-air weaponry.

The unit began movement of personnel and cargo 2 Jul 1968 for Korea to become part of the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing. The largest contingent of 330 men left Tuesday 2 Jul 1968, aboard two chartered Northwest Orient 707s.

LTC William W. Littlefield. Jr., leaving his position as a Lear Jet Industries test pilot. was now commanding the 127, and would he the commander of the squadron in Korea. LTC Theodore C. Coukoulis, would become a staff member of the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing at Kunsan Air Base, Korea. Wet handkerchiefs were plentiful at the edge of the apron as waving arms signaled lots hugs and kisses in the wake of the first departures.

The departure of the final load of cargo signaled the end of a frantic week of activities for the 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron of the 184th Tactical Fighter Group which had begun on Friday 28 Jun 1968. Over 600 men, 248 tons of cargo, and a full squadron of F-100 deployed to their assignment at Kunsan Air Base. South Korea to become part of the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing. Some of the unit's personnel were aboard the first C-141s to accompany the cargo along with setting up inprocessing at Kunsan Air Base

On 4 Jul 1968, more wet handkerchiefs were plentiful at the edge of the apron as waving arms again signaled lots of hugs and kisses as the pilots and their F-100s began taking off as the final contingent of the former Kansas Air National Guardsmen headed for Korean duty Twenty-seven

F-100 pilots and 38 support crew members of the 127 were the last of the personnel to depart for Korea.

The rest of the 25 F-100s, including two two-seaters left at intervals of 30 minutes with the last ones roaring down the runway at 1:00 PM.

At 1:30 P.M., the men of the squadron's en route support team departed aboard the eleventh C-141 and the 127 was gone from McConnell AFB. The C-141s accounting for a total of 248 tons of cargo and 632 personnel sent from McConnell AFB to Kunsan Air Base, South Korea.

The estimated flying time was 29 1/2 hours from Wichita to Kunsan AB, South Korea. With 12 in-flight refuelings for each F-100 pilot, the planes arrived at 10:00 p.m. Saturday, 6 Jul 1968, Wichita time.

No word had arrived pertaining to the duty assignments for the remainder of the members at McConnell AFB, all remaining 127 personnel at McConnell were transferred to other bases throughout the United States.

LTC Theodore C. Coukoulis, Commander of the 184th Tactical Fighter Group was deployed to Kunsan Air Base, Korea on 2 Jul 1968 and LTC Leo D, Myer, assumed the duties as Acting Commander for the Group until all remaining personnel received their assignment orders for duties throughout the U.S.

When the 354th made its move to Korea, the 127 TFS from McConnell AFB, KS and the 166th TFS from Lockbourne AFB, OH were already in place. Both were former Air National Guard units. We brought the F-100 to Korea without a hitch over the entire 9,000 mile plus route

After the personnel of the 127 arrived at Kunsan Air Base, many personnel were reassigned to bases at Kwangju AB. home of the Republic of Korea Air Force 1st Fighter Wing. Osan, Suwon, Taegu and Rimini. At Kunsan the Wing was commanded by Col Donald W. Forney who had been commander of 354th and Col Henry W. Ritter Commanded the 354th Combat Support Group. The movement of the two Air National Guard Squadrons to Kunsan, a picturesque air base on a peninsula jutting into the Yellow Sea on Korean west coast marked the first time F-100s had been stationed in Korea for some. The newly assigned personnel helped make the base swell to nearly 5,000 military personnel

There were problems; the biggest was getting supply lines caught up with the unit, since no F-100's had been in the 5th Air Force for a long time. Morale was not a large problem. In fact the morale continued to be good. Meeting and talking with Korean people probably gave more people the understanding of why we were there than a dozen lectures or films.

In the past, there had always been some natural rivalry between the "Regulars and the Guardsmen. Suddenly, the Guardsmen found themselves smack in the middle of the Regulars and vice versa the result was something of which both sides can be proud.

Former ANGs found the Regulars were a lot easier to work with than they had anticipated. When the chips were down, and teamwork was needed it was there without question. The Regulars found that the Guardsmen were not weekend warriors at all, but were highly trained and qualified professionals. A coalition began that was to last for the entire time both were on Kunsan Air Base. Personnel on other bases, including Kwangju, Osan, Suwon, and Taegu and those who went on to Viet Nam, found the same to be true in their areas. The pilots in both areas, Korea and Viet Nam, were highly praised by superiors for their professional knowledge and on the ground the immediate concern was to keep base services going and continue the facilities rehabilitation program. A major problem on the base was housing but work on alleviating the problem began early. With the arrival of the 557th Civil Engineering Red Horse Squadron, augmented by 100 Air National Guardsmen who had undergone specialized training, Modulux Housing began springing up all over the bases replacing the 10-man tents. The 557th Civil Engineering Squadron commanded by Col Winston H. Clisham, was formed for use in Korea. It was the eighth Red Horse squadron to be formed. The other seven had already been deployed to Viet Nam. Other construction programs concerned aircraft dispersal shelters, and revetments. Supplies and equipment began to arrive and had to be put in storage or issued. Roads, grounds and utilities also had to be maintained.

Even though Kunsan personnel didn't take long to get to know the members of the various ROK units on the base the tour in Korea was not all work for Guard and Reserves. Trips to Kunsan City and Seoul along with the surrounding country were taken by many of the personnel on base providing new friends and some treasured pictures.

Many of the personnel took advantage of the educational, recreational opportunities at their base. Several donated time to teach English, a required subject for Korean children in school. Others worked with local orphanages or participated in stage productions. Many of us will remember the Thanksgiving and Christmas we spent away from our families with warm hearts because we helped make those days a little happier for Korean orphans by taking them on base for holiday dinners and entertainment.

Effective 16 Jan 1969. LTC John F. Taylor, originally a member of the 166th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Ohio ANG assumed command of the 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Kunsan Air Base. South Korea vice LTC William W. Littlefield, who had volunteered for duty in Viet Nam.

On 19 Jun 1969, the deactivation ceremony was held inside the Air Guard Hangar, with a band concert before the start of the ceremonies by the 28-piece 42nd Kansas Army National Guard Band from Richards-Gebauer AFB, near Kansas City. The men of the 184th Tactical Fighter Group of the Kansas Air National Guard were praised for their conduct in the first tradition of the American way as they were returned to civilian life.

19 and 20 Jul 1969 marked the return to Unit Training Assemblies for the recently demobilized units of the 184th. Most branches were reorganizing with the personnel that returned from active duty and of course telling stories with those people who were assigned to various bases

throughout the U.S. and to many bases overseas.

On 7 Oct 1969, the unit lost another officer with the death of 2Lt James R. Nelms as a result of an F-100F accident which occurred in the Oklahoma City area while on a training mission.

Jul 1968. Pilots and 27 F-100Cs from the mobilized 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS), Kansas ANG, arrived at Kunsan Air Base, Korea as part of the U.S. military response to the Pueblo crisis. Along with Guardsmen and F-100Cs from the 166th TFS, Ohio ANG, Guardsmen from other units, active duty Air Force personnel, and Air Force Reservists, they formed the Air Force's 345th Tactical Fighter Wing.

7 Oct 1969. the unit lost another officer with the death of Second Lieutenant James R. Nelms as a result of an F-100F accident which occurred in the Oklahoma City area while on a training mission.

During the Governor's visit, he toured flightline areas, viewed air to ground weapons missions conducted by unit pilots, and took his first supersonic jet flight in the two-seat F-100 piloted by Maj Ted Coukoulis. After an uneventful flight, the aircraft returned to Volk Field where landing difficulties were encountered. On touchdown, at a speed of 175 knots, the craft's drag chute failed to deploy properly and emergency measures were used by the pilot in order to stop safely. Maj Coukoulis was forced to blow both main gear tires in order to stop the speeding jet. It came to a halt approximately 200 feet from the end of the 8,750 foot runway. In spite of the minor difficulty, Governor Docking was highly enthusiastic about the flight. With another successful summer encampment the support personnel were treated with a first class Frontier 727 airlift back to Wichita, Kansas.

The 184th Tactical Fighter Group would deploy to Volk Field Camp Douglas Wisconsin for the last annual training period. 20 Jun 1970 through 4 Jul 1970. Beginning in Jan 1971, annual training would be on the year-around program for the 184th.

On 15 Jan 1971, the unit lost another officer with the death of Capt Peter N. Madelans, as a result of an F-100 accident which occurred in the area of McPherson, Kansas while on a training mission.

Feb 1971, saw nine members of the unit graduate from a 3 month F-105 training course at McConnell's 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing. They were: Col Ted Coukoulis. LTC Bob Welsh, Maj Ed Cummins, Capt Richard Colman, Capt Duane Buttell Capt Patrick Carter, Capt Marvin Link, Capt Jerry Nelson and Lieutenant Mickelson. All these officers were fully qualified to fly the F-105 aircraft. Maj Cummins, Capt Link, Capt Carter and Capt Buttell took the additional 6 weeks upgrade training to become Instructor Pilots for the F-105s.

The 184th Tactical Fighter Group received eleven F-105D just prior to 25 Mar 1971.

The unit later was authorized a PA (planes authorized) of 36, the unit never possessed more

than 32, and never had more than 25 to 30 on station at anyone time.

The 184th Tactical Fighter Group, Kansas Air National Guard. McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas, was officially redesignated as the 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group on 25 Mar 1971, At this same time the 127 officially became the 127 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron.

This new mission of the group was to conduct combat aircrew academic and flight training in the tactics techniques and operations of the F-105D and associated equipment.

From the time the F-105s were received in the unit, through Oct 1971, all personnel were involved in upgrade training, and hands- on training with the conversion to the 105. This meant classroom training for the maintenance personnel shipment of 11 retraining F100 parts and then receiving and stocking of the F-105 parts by the supply personnel.

For the pilots, it meant F-105 simulator time, and upgrading into the new aircraft. For the remainder of the personnel, it meant a lot of paper work in transferring of personnel. updating all records, and in general, just making sure all corners were covered, until the first class of students arrived.

On 1 Nov 1971 the first six ANG student pilots began the 26-week training course in the F-105 aircraft. Of the six students, two were from the 127, 2nd Lt Russell C. Axton and 2nd Lt Duane H. Ellingson. The other students were 2nd Lt Eugene Donner, and 2nd Lt Charles Martin from the Virginia ANG: David Kelsey, from the DC ANG; and John Myers. New Jersey, ANG.

In Mar 1972, the unit received the first T-39B aircraft for the purpose of giving F-105 pilots required radar familiarization training. This training involved radar navigation and radarscope interpretation. The T-39B was also equipped with Doppler radar equipment.

From assignment of the F-105s in Mar 1971 through 31 May 1973 There were thirty-one graduates of the flying Training course eleven graduates of the Instructor Pilot upgrade course. sixteen graduates of the academics and twenty-three students were still undergoing flying training. Other flying activities at that same time included instructor pilot proficiency and normal proficiency flying for unit assigned pilots.

Total flying time accomplished during this period was 11,832.4 hours. This included 10,554.7 hours in the F-105; 634.4 hours in the T-39 57.3 hours in the T-29, 519.8 hours in the C-54 and 66.2 hours in the U-3. During May 1973, a total of 843 hours were flown in the F-105.

During the period 15 Apr 1974 through 15 May 1974, the 184th TFTG supported the A7 and A-10 aircraft fly-off program at McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas. This was a DOD directed program and the test was conducted under direction of the Tactical Air Warfare Center. Logistics support provided by the 184th included build up of required munitions, aerospace ground equipment, test equipment, maintenance personnel and ships on an "as needed" basis. The unit was commended for the outstanding support contributed toward this project.

The 184th was selected to coordinate with representatives of Oklahoma Air Logistics Center and manufacturers' representatives to adapt the GS-7800 fuel control tester to the J-75 engine. This project was to provide absolute fuel control reliability by identifying and predicting fuel control component failures. The logistics support required included installation of the tester in aircraft installed engines as well as test cell engines, four to six men working with representatives of the various agencies, and approximately fifteen tests in each configuration. The results of this test were used throughout the Air Force for the J-75 engine.

The first aircraft accident occurred southeast of Auga on 2 Oct 1975, claiming the life of Maj Richard V. Gorman. Maj Gorman was the Smoky Hill Weapons Range commander at the time of the accident which was attributed to materiel failure.

Feb 1977, aircrews, maintenance personnel and aircraft were deployed to Nellis AFB, Nevada, to participate in Red Flag 77-3. During this exercise 184 TFTG pilots served as advisors for two units on their first participation in Red Flag training activities.

Red Flag also proved a valuable experience for the 184th personnel, exposing them to a multitask, high threat environment which is likely to be encountered in future tactical employments.

During the period 27 Jun 1977 through 12 Jul 1977, the 184 TFTG participated in an Army / Air Force combined arms exercise at Fort Riley, Kansas. During this exercise the 184th TFTG aircrews flew 82 sorties and dropped 35 BLU-27 fire bombs for both demonstration and tactical training purposes. Capt Adair assumed command of the 184th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron effective 2 Jul 1977, vice LTC Gene E. Turner's transfer to Headquarters, Kansas ANG. Col Turner had been commander of the 184 CAM Squadron for 12 years.

This accomplishment was especially significant in light of the mission of the 184th of training F-105 pilots. During the period, the 184th flew over 4,000 missions and logged over 6,000 flying hours of combat training, more hours than any other F-105 unit in the Air Force Reserve or the Air National Guard.

During the months of Mar and Oct 1977, the 184 TFTG conducted 22 sorties in air-to-ground support training for U.S. Army personnel at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. These exercises served to provide realistic tactical training and upgrading of Army personnel as forward air controllers.

During Oct and Nov, 1977, the 184 TFTG supported airborne forward air controller training at Smoky Hill Weapons Range for the 602nd TAIRCW from Bergstrom AFB, Texas, with 49 F-105 sorties.

During Nov, 1977, the unit also supported Strike Control and Reconnaissance (SCAR) continuation training at Smoky Hill Weapons Range for the 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, Bergstrom AFB, Texas, with 24 sorties.

The 184 TFTG demonstrated an exceptionally outstanding logistical support capability, providing the optimum of operationally ready aircraft for accomplishment of the unit mission. Maintenance and Supply problems relative to the aging F-105 presented difficulties that were resolved with extra effort, expertise and professionalism. A large portion of the maintenance man hours were expended for abnormal conditions peculiar to the F-105, such as, the wings-off inspection and landing gear rib cracks. The landing gear rib discrepancy was discovered by unit maintenance personnel and resulted in a Time Compliance Technical Order that restricted the entire F-105 fleet. The 184th personnel also assisted Sacramento Air Logistics Center Engineering in developing a prototype interim fix.

The unit's logistical achievements had consistently exceeded Tactical Air Command standards, Air Force standards, and the reported performance indicators of all other units flying the F-105 aircraft. During calendar year 1977, the Fully Mission Capable (FMC) rate for the 184th's F-105s averaged 73.3 percent compared to the previously accepted Tactical Air Command standard of 71 percent. The Not Capable Supply (NMCS) rate for the unit's F-105s averaged 3.2 percent compared to an Air Force standard of 5 percent. These figures portray outstanding logistical performance in support of the unit mission.

In accomplishing the flying hour program, the average aircraft utilization rate was 21.3 flying hours per month, with an average of 31 man hours per F-105 flying hour. The overall F-105 abort rate was 4.1 percent. This performance was superior in comparison with other units flying the same aircraft.

The unit's flying performance for Aug 1978 was outstanding, flying 550.4 hours with just 16 available aircraft. Even with this number of aircraft, some were not always available due to extensive maintenance. The average flying for 16 aircraft was 34.4 flying hours per aircraft. Aircraft 62-4291, crewed by TSgt Roy Clark, was the high flying aircraft with 50.7 flying hours. This was one of the largest flying months the unit had, and this also made over 40,000 hours flown by the unit in the F-105 aircraft.

During 1978, in addition to performing its primary mission, the 184th participated regularly in close air support missions and exercises, providing training for the U.S. Army at Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Unit aircraft, pilots and maintenance personnel also deployed to provide aggressor mission support for the 12th Air Force IG Team evaluation of other units. The unit had continually provided a safe, viable, cost-effective tactical training program in a complex fighter weapons system.

The 184 TFTG approached another milestone in its long history with the announcement on 29 Mar 1979, of the impending conversion to the F-4D. Although public announcement of the conversion was delayed because of political consideration, actual preparation began during the last part of 1978, as the unit began studying facilities and manning requirements. The first Tactical Air Command Team arrived at McConnell AFB, for the first pre-conversion assistance visit on 15 Sep 1978.

The conversion, which would officially take place on 1 Oct 1979, culminated nine years of an extremely successful flying program in the F-105D and F model, and ended a long tradition of single engine, single seat fighter operations by the unit. The F-4D would be the most modern fighter yet flown by the unit.

F-105 student training continued until 1 Jul 1979, when gradual replacement of F-105s with F-4 began.

For the first six months of 1979, the unit personnel were involved in a flurry of activities, preparing for its conversion from the F105 to the F-4D. Maintenance crews had undergone initial F-4D training since May 1979, and the first arrival of the F-4 would be used for hands-on training.

Since 1971, the 184 TFTG had provided flight training for all Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard pilots transitioning into the F-105. The unit would perform a similar, although much expanded mission for all Air Force related pilots transitioning into the F-4.

In Oct 1979, the last of the two assigned T-39B had been reassigned to the Air Force Systems Command at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, after completing the last operational training flight in Sep 1979. The mission of the specially modified T-39B assigned to the unit was training the F-105 student pilots in the use of doppler and multimode airborne radar.

On 7 Aug 1979, the first F-4D touched down at McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas, marking the addition of a new jet fighter aircraft to the long list of previous fighter aircraft flown by the 184th. After the arrival of the first F-4 the unit continued to receive them until 55 F-4s were assigned as of 31 Dec 1985.

Oct 8, 1979, the 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group was redesignated as the 184th Tactical Fighter Group, with no change in mission, The 184 TFG would continue its mission of training Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard pilots, but in the F-4.

During 1979, the extensive reorganization, training of personnel, and modification of facilities was accomplished to meet the expanding requirements of the F-4 mission. Thousands of hours were spent in training both operations and maintenance personnel to ensure a safe and professional conversion.

In Jan 1980, the 184th Tactical Fighter Group was selected for the award of the "Air Force Outstanding Unit Award" for exceptionally meritorious service from 1 Jan 1978 to 31 Dec 1978, for the second consecutive year. This award was presented to the 184 TFG based on the unit's outstanding professionalism in the accomplishment of its primary mission, training F-105 pilots, during 1978. Contributing also, to the selection of the 184 TFG as the Outstanding Unit was the exemplary safety record maintained during 1978.

Jul 1980 marked the completion of the conversion to the F-4D and 184 TFG was back in business performing its primary unit mission; the training of operationally qualified Pilots and Weapons System Officers (WSOs) for the USAF, ANG; and the AF Reserves. This transition period ended with the arrival of the first F-4D student class on 7 Jul 1980. The 14 students in this first class represented a cross section of the USAF, and AF Reserve units.

Five different courses were offered by the 184 TFG and ranged in length from 30 days to 26 weeks. The syllabus courses upgraded the student pilots' experience levels to those required of the operational units and ranged from recurrency training in the F-4 to pilot training for those pilots who have had no previous experience in tactical fighter aircraft. For the first time, the 184th would be using ANG training syllabi written and produced by instructors from the 127 Tactical Fighter Squadron, and were significantly improved from the TAC Courses used during operations in the F-105 aircraft.

By the end of 1980, the "Flying Jayhawks" operated 55 aircraft and had 54 F-4 qualified Instructor Pilots (IPs) assigned to the unit, along with 29 Weapons System Officers (WSOs).

On Apr 1, 1981, Colonel Theodore C. Coukoulis, was notified that the 184 TFG would receive the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the third consecutive year! The following message was received from Gen William L. Creech, Commander, Tactical Air Command: "I am pleased to advise you that the Secretary of the Air Force has approved the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for 184th Tactical Fighter Group. I extend my congratulations to the men and women who have earned this award and distinguished themselves through their dedicated service. Please convey to each of them my deep appreciation for their outstanding performance." The Outstanding Unit Award cited the unit's accomplishments in the areas of flying training, aircraft maintenance, the unit's hazard abatement program, logistical achievements, flying safety and conversion from the F-105 to the F-4 aircraft. This award was for exceptionally meritorious service during calendar year 1979. The unit had performed with superior effectiveness in its assigned mission of training Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve pilots in the F-105 aircraft while undergoing a unit conversion to the F-4D. Criteria for the award of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award were based on exceptionally meritorious or exceptionally outstanding achievements that clearly set the unit above and apart from similar units. In winning this award for the third consecutive year, the 184th Tactical Fighter Group had set a precedent seldom achieved by an Air Force, Air Force Reserve, or Air National Guard unit in peacetime. This presentation of the award brought recognition to the members of the 184th Tactical Fighter Group for their professionalism, dedication, and devotion to duty which contributed significantly to the combat capability of the United States Air Force.

Nov, members of the 2952 Combat Logistics Support Squadron (CLSS) from Hill AFB, Utah, were called out to help the 184th with replacing the wings on two F-4D. The two aircraft numbers 0798 and 7633 received their new wings, because the old ones had developed irreparable cracks in the centerline area. This was no small task and took many months to complete.

In Jun of 1986, the unit deployed to Alaska with nine F-4 aircraft operating out of Elmendorf

AFB. The purpose of the deployment was to fly Dissimilar Air Combat Tactics (DACT) and Advanced Threat Tactics (ADVT) missions against the 43rd Tactical Fighter Squadron F15 Eagles in support of the F-4 Fighter Weapons Instructor Course syllabus.

In Jan of 1987 the public announcement was made to transition the 184th Tactical Fighter Group from the F-4D to the F-16. The conversion would be a gradual one, with the F-4D commitment reduced, but operating at the 184th until 1990. With this news the commander of the 184th, Colonel Ed Sykes, and the initial cadre of F-16 pilots headed off to school to learn how to fly the F-16.

On Mar 3rd the first F-16A, 78-0371 arrived, piloted by Colonel Sykes, and parked by its' new Crew Chief, TSgt John Befort. The transition had begun. Flight Chief MSgt Tom Twietmeyer and his "B" Flight crew would be the first flight to get the F-16. For the next year efforts would be concentrated on the aircrews learning to fly the airplane and maintenance folks learning to fix it, while still supporting the F4 commitment.

In Mar 1987, the first F-16A, tail number 780371, arrived at McConnell AFB, flown by Col Ed Sykes and recovered by its new Crew Chief, TSgt "Honest John" Befort. "B" Flight was the first flight to convert to the F-16. In Jun the 184 TFG successfully deployed nine F-4Ds and support personnel to Elmendorf AFB AK and flew against F-15s from the 21 TFW. In Sep the unit received delivery of a Beech C-12J. This aircraft provided immeasurable benefit for the unit in transporting personnel around the country for various needs

In Jun of 1987 the 184th once again made its annual pilgrimage to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska with nine F-4Ds to fly against the F-15s of the 21 TFW. As usual, the salmon were running, and fishing was good. At the same time the flyers went north to Alaska, CE went south to Eglin AFB, Florida for training. With the F-16 acquisition steadily moving forward, the F-4D training was still going "full speed ahead". In the F-16 world, the process of aircrew training, maintenance training at Field Training Detachments (FTDs), hands on training and aircraft acceptance trips to Luke AFB Arizona kept everyone who wasn't supporting the "Rhinos" very busy.

In Oct 1987 a disruption to the flying program occurred when major repairs to our aircraft parking ramp began. To accommodate the repairs, all F-4s and supporting maintenance moved to Taxiway 12 to "Tent City". With winter coming on, it was the perfect time to move into a tent! As every F-4 maintainer knows winter is a tough time to work "Rhinos". The frost, ice, and snow coupled with constant hydraulic, fuel, and air leaks or flat struts made for a very cold and busy time for the "Phantom Phixers". For the folks on the F-16s there was little difference. The first winter in the "Vipers" was a real learning experience for maintainers. Learning the idiosyncrasies of this new jet proved to be a real test. From pumping up accumulators for the Jet Fuel Starter (JFS) by hand, massive hydraulic filter leaks, and intermittent flight control self-test malfunctions that fixed themselves, the maintainers had a lot to learn.

At the same time N1987 the 184th Civil Engineers spent two weeks in Wycombe, England for

training. In Mar, LTC Crawford was promoted to Col and the 184th sent nine F-4s to NAS New Orleans for training against the F-15s of the 159 TFG. Then in Jun, surprise, surprise, the 184th Tactical Fighter Group took nine F-4s and 120 folks to Elmendorf AFB Alaska for some hard work and outstanding fishing.

During Aug the F-4 Fighter Weapons Instructor course, taught by the 127 TFS, officially closed down after five years of operation.

The unit flew both F-4s and F-16s with only one aircraft mishap. (Not counting the dented heads from ceiling fans!) "Double Mig-Killer", 66-0271, suffered a major structural crack in the center wing area. It was allowed a onetime flight home to McConnell AFB where it was grounded and became the units F-4D static display aircraft.

The year 1989 came to an eventful, end with the 184 TFG receiving its fourth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

The new decade started off with a bang as we sent the F-16s to Hawaii for a highly successful deployment in Jan.

At the end of Mar, the day finally came when we all watched our last F-4 depart McConnell AFB. A sad day for all, but a "heck of a celebration", with a "Phantom Pharewell" party, the dedication of our static display, 66-0271, and some outstanding flybys. The parking ramp was "wall to wall" Phantoms, as almost every F-4 Guard unit was represented. In May the 184th once again supported and participated in the Wichita River Festival, only this time, our own Colonel Ed Sykes presided over the festival as "Admiral Windwagon Smith the XVII". As the year continued, the unit faced another of the changes so common at the 184th. In Jul the unit began its conversion from the F-16A/B model to the newer F-16C/Ds with the arrival of the first D model 83-0184. Following the first aircraft arrival, other acceptance inspections were conducted at Hahn Air Base Germany, with several 184th members accepting these newer model aircraft. An appropriate tail number to say the least! In Aug, the 184th flew a record 1443 hours and 1198 sorties with a Mission Capable (MC) rate of 84.8% (Well above the National Guard Bureau standard of 70%).

In Oct the first two F-16Cs arrived and the conversion went into full swing as maintainers and aircrew got their hands on this new improved version of the "Viper". Finishing out the year the 127 TFS deployed nine F-16As and 60 support personnel to fly Dissimilar Aircraft Combat Training (DACT) against the F-4s and F-15s at Gulfport Mississippi.

In Jan 1990, the unit received its fourth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for 1989. They also deployed F-16s to Hawaii.

In Mar of 1990 the final F-4Ds departed the 184th. Aircraft 66-0271 was dedicated as the 184th static display. In Jul 1990 the 184th began its conversion from F-16 A/Bs to C/Ds with the arrival of its first F-16D aircraft, 830184. Then, in Aug, the unit flew a record 1443 hours and 1198

sorties with a Mission Capable Rate of 84.8% with the F-16. This was well above the NGB standard of 70%. In Oct the 184th took possession of its first two F-16Cs. In Dec the 127 TFS deployed nine F-16As with 60 support personnel to Gulfport MI for Dissimilar Aircraft Combat Training (DACT) against F-4s from St Louis and F-15s from New Orleans.

In Jan 1991 the 184th experienced a mid-air collision between two of its F-16As which resulted in the loss of Major Cary Carlin.

Mar was a busy month. The Civil Engineering Squadron deployed fifty PRIME BEEF personnel to participate in exercise "FUERTES CAMINOS" to construct a two lane highway through the Panamanian jungle and, our F-16Cs successfully deployed to Tyndall AFB, Florida with a totally Traditional Guardsman support crew.

On Apr 26, 1991 a tornado hit McConnell AFB, and several surrounding communities. There were numerous casualties and damage ran into the millions. CAMS squadron personnel were on the scene, helping the injured and cleaning up the tremendous amount of debris.

Then in Nov the last F-16A left the 184th. The transition to the F-16C/D was complete.

In Apr 1992 eight F-16s, 14 aircrew and a traditional guard maintenance force deployed to Tyndall for a highly successful exercise.

In Jan 1993 eight F-16s and about 60 maintenance personnel deployed to Tyndall AFB FL for "COMBAT ARCHER" and participated in the unit's first live fire of AIM-9M Sidewinders. They successfully launched 9 missiles with no misfires.

In Jul the Air Force announced the 184 FG would transition to the B-1B aircraft. The 184 FG deployed 10 F-16s and approximately 70 personnel to Elmendorf AFB AK. In Dec 1993 the group deployed to Key West for a week in the sun

The year 1993 began with Headquarters moving into its new home in Bldg 65. Also in Jan, eight F-16s and about 60 personnel deployed to Tyndall AFB for exercise "COMBAT ARCHER" where the unit successfully fired its first live AIM-9M Sidewinders from the F-16. In Mar, 53 personnel from Services and Medics deployed to Costa Rica for training and humanitarian aid.

Then in Jul, the "other shoe dropped", as it was announced that the 184th would transition again. This time it would be to the B-1B. The 184th was about to become the first Air National Guard Unit to go into the bomber business! , there were still priorities to attend to, so in that same month, ten F-16s and 70 Maintenance and Operations folks headed off to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska for another attempt to catch the "big one" that got away.

In Jan 1994 the 184th Civil Engineering Squadron deployed to Belize in support of the US Army. In Feb the "transition ball started rolling". The Reduction in Force (RIF) process began as people were moved to new positions on the B-1B manning document. This transition would prove to be

one of the toughest changes the unit had faced in recent years. Not only would we change airframes, the unit would also move its flight line and much of its maintenance to the east side of the runway into the middle of the Active Duty maintenance complex. So for the next year the focus would be transferring F-16s out, accepting the "new" B-1s, training and learning life in one of the largest aircraft in the world. It would prove difficult, but the Jayhawk tradition would survive and thrive in this new environment.

During the next year the changes to ACC continued. On Aug 3, 1994 the 184th flew its first B-1B mission with an all Jayhawk crew, while on the same day another Jayhawk aircrew teamed up with the 384th Bomb Wing to fly 19.4 hours on our first Global Power mission. From Jul 94 to Oct 94 the 184th Engine Shop worked closely with the 384th Engine Shop to begin the Engine Regional Repair Center (ERRC) for the B-1B engine, the GE F101. Detachment 1 from Smoky Hill and 184th Civil Engineers deployed to Camp Dunburn, Saskatchewan in Aug 1994 to participate in an exercise with Canadian forces.

In Feb 1994 the Reduction in Force (RIF) began for the transition from F-16s to B-1Bs. During the spring of 1994, the F-16 era drew to a close with the transfer of all unit aircraft to other units and the acceptance of the first B-1B.

In Feb 1995 the 184th became the first Air Guard unit to drop live munitions from the B-1B when it dropped three MK-82, 500 pound bombs at the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR) near Hill AFB, UT. In May the 184th made their first full bay drop of 28 BDU-50 inert 500 pound bombs at the Smoky Hill Range near Salina and made their first B-1B deployment to Nellis AFB NV. In Jul 1995 the unit deployed two B-1Bs to Mont-de Marsan, France to participate in an exercise with the French military.

The end of 1995 was an eventful time. No longer was the 184th a Bomb Group, it was now the 184th Bomb Wing. Sep UTA was the unit's first ATSO exercise where members learned how to wear and work in our chemical warfare ensemble. Then during the Oct UTA the unit had its first Phase I Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE) to learn how to generate aircraft and deploy. With Dec UTA came the Phase II ORE where members practiced "sucking rubber" in chemical warfare ensembles and operating aircraft at a simulated deployed location. The unit was preparing for the "Big Game" ("Flicker Ball", as LTC Parrot so eloquently phrased it.). Along with preparation to achieve Initial Operational Capability (IOC), the unit flew a 28.5 hour Global Power mission to Saudi Arabia, participated in the Gunsmoke 95 at Nellis AFB, provided a B-1B "flyby" for the New York City Veterans Day Parade and deployed three bombers to Hickam AFB, Hawaii to participate in exercise SENTRY ALOHA. During this same time, the 184th Type IV Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory (PMEL) closed its doors after eight years of service.

In Feb 1995 was the first live munitions dropped by ANG crew in a B-1B. Crewmembers were Maj Art Harrison, Maj Randy Roebuck, Maj Jon Baxt, and Capt Chet Wilson. In May the first full bay (28 MK 82s) bomb drop was flown at Smoky Hill by a 184th aircraft. In Jul two 184th B-1Bs deployed to Mont-de-Marsan, France and participated in an exercise with the French military. In

Oct the 184th Bomb Group became the 184th Bomb Wing. Also in Oct the 184th deployed three B-1Bs to Nellis AFB NV for "Gunsmoke '95". In Dec the unit deployed three bombers to Hickam AFB HI and participated in exercise "SENTRY ALOHA" and they also participated in a 28.5 hour Global Power mission to Saudi Arabia.

With 1996 came a flurry of activity for the 184th as it moved out of conversion to become operational and continued its preparation for the first ORI in thirty years. From additional OREs on Mar, May, Oct and Nov UTAs in preparation for the ORI in May 97 and Jan 98, to the numerous B-1B missions, the year 1996 proved to be a busy year. In May a 184th B-1B made the first successful full bay drop of live munitions at UTTR near Hill AFB UT.

In Feb 1996 the 184th successfully flew a Long Range Power Projection (LRPP) mission to Guam.

In Mar the Wing ended its conversion and became an operational unit. In Jun two primary B-1Bs and a spare departed McConnell AFB for training strike missions in Japan and Korea before arriving at the Indonesia Air Show 96 in Jakarta, Indonesia. As luck would have it, one aircraft diverted into Kadena AFB, Okinawa due to maintenance problems, while the other aircraft proceeded on to Jakarta. Maintenance folks worked to repair the broken B-ONE in Kadena and took care of the jet in Jakarta.

At the same time, the Bomb Wing deployed two B-1Bs to Jakarta Indonesia for the Indonesian Air Show 96. An eventful, but very successful trip. There was one glitch with an air abort for one jet to Kadena AFB, Okinawa. A maintenance team was quickly dispatched and repaired the aircraft, proving once again that the determination of the Jayhawks could overcome just about any obstacle.

The year of 1997 continued at a very fast pace. In Jul, Brig Gen (select) Russ Axtell transferred command of the Wing to Col Greg Gardner. In Nov the Wing deployed B-1Bs to the Key West Naval Air Station in Florida in support of the US Navy.

In Mar, two milestones were accomplished. The Bomb Wing received its sixth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the years 1995 through 1997.

In Jul, the "Fuel Barn", Hangar 10 was finally opened for business, and CEs Prime Beef team deployed to Minnesota for annual training. In Aug the 134 ACS received an "Overall Excellent" in their First ORI using the Modular Control Equipment. On Sep 8th, an Air Force Standardization & Evaluation team evaluated the 184 BW and awarded a rating of "Outstanding". In Dec the Wing deployed three B-1Bs to Hickam AFB Hawaii to participate in exercise SENTRY ALOHA.

In Nov 1997 the 184th deployed to NAS Key West FL in support of a US Navy Carrier Group exercise.

In Mar 1998 the Bomb Wing received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the period 3 Aug 1995 to 31 Jul 1997. In Dec the 184th successfully deployed three B-1Bs to Hickam AFB HI for

exercise Sentry Aloha.

In Dec 1999 the 184 deployed four B-1Bs and 160 personnel to NAS Key West. Also in Dec the 184 BW and 22 ARW were inspected by the Russians for START Treaty compliance. Preparations were excellent and the inspection went off without a hitch.

The 134 ACS deployed to Volk Field in Jun for exercise "Northern Gladiator". The same month the 184th Bomb Wing displayed its newly modified "Block D" modified B-1B, capable of delivering twenty-four 2000 pound JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munitions) GPS guided bombs on twenty-four separate targets on one single bomb run. In Aug the Wing deployed three aircraft and 106 personnel to Nellis AFB for a Green Flag exercise. Then in Oct, with Gen Richard Myers the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff flying in the left seat, a 184th B-1B successfully dropped its first two 2000 pound JDAMs at the Utah Test Range. In the month of Dec, the Wing successfully completed its first Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI).

In Apr 2000 the 184 BW was awarded its seventh Outstanding Unit Award.

The 184th Bomb Wing deployed 95 personnel and three B-1Bs to Australia 5-23 Feb 2001, in support of the Australian Air Show at Avalon in Geelong, Victoria. One B-1B along with aircrew and support personnel deployed to Avalon airport as a static display for the aircraft trade and air show. The B-1 was a huge hit as thousands of air show attendees learned the many capabilities the aircraft had to offer. LTC Brad Link and CMSgt Michael Ebenkamp were busy doing television, radio and print interviews and talking about the 184th and the B-1 B with attendees at the trade and air show. The two additional B-1Bs were based at Amberley Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base near Brisbane, about 900 miles north of Avalon. They flew bombing missions during the week, and then performed low and high speed flybys on the weekend at the air show. Col Randy Roebuck gave many interviews to local media at Amberley and many 184th personnel gave countless tours of the B-1B's to RAAF personnel and visiting groups. There were hundreds of locals lining the fence near the runway for every takeoff and landing the B-1 's flew at Amberley and they were thrilled with the "mini flybys" the aircrews performed. To say that the Aussies were very interested in our B-1's would be an understatement as many would return again and again to watch our aircraft booming through the sky. Getting to Australia was quite the logistical challenge that involved outbound stops in Hawaii and Guam with another stop in Hawaii on the return trip. Deployed personnel flew on three KC-135's one from the 190th Air Refueling Wing from Forbes and two from the 931st Air Refueling Group from McConnell. These units' involvement truly made this a Total Force deployment. Wing personnel were well received by the Australians. Everyone was very friendly and unit members received terrific support from the RAAF. The Australians put on a barbecue (Aussie style) for unit members the last afternoon they were at Amberley, and the Air Training Corps (JrROTC) band also visited deployed members. They Mared to the deployed operations area, and then played for the aircrew as they departed the aircraft following their mission. The renditions of "Waltzing Matilda" and "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" were greatly appreciated by all present. Many 184th personnel came home without their red "Jayhawk" hats, patches, pictures, uniforms and other items which were swapped with RAAF personnel. There were opportunities

during non-duty hours for personnel to explore the beautiful country and enjoy Australia's summer weather. The coast was an hour away from Brisbane and many people found out the sun is much more direct there than in Kansas. Even using sunscreen, there were a lot of sun-burned Jayhawks walking about. Many members saw koalas, kangaroos, crocodiles, Tasmanian devils, and other strange animals. A koala spent a day in a tree right outside the deployed operations location and kangaroos could be seen off the perimeter road at the end of the runway at Amberley. Everyone sure could tell we weren't in Kansas anymore.

In May the unit deployed one B-1B to Le Tube Air base, Istres France for an air show. In Jun the US Air Force announced the "drawdown" of the B-1B fleet Gary from 93 to 60 aircraft and the removal of all B-1Bs from the Guard. The 184th Bomb Wing's future was in doubt. In Aug four bombers flew 13 hour sorties to the Yukon training range in Alaska for "Exercise Ghost Rider." This demonstrated the Ops Group ability to respond to a no notice, long range strike mission tasking. In Sep the Wing tested its surge capabilities by flying 24 sorties with six aircraft in a ten hour period. In Sep the Secretary of the Air Force announced that the 184th would receive ten KC-135Rs to replace the B-1Bs and would maintain existing manning levels. In Dec four aircraft and 100 support personnel deployed to Nellis AFB in support of the B-1B Weapons School.

In 2001 the 184th continued to progress. In Jan Col Ed Flora assumed command of the Bomb Wing from Col Ed McIlhenny, with Col Gene Martin becoming Vice Commander. In Feb one of the more memorable deployments of the B-1B era occurred. The Wing successfully flew four aircraft and support personnel to Hawaii, Guam, and Brisbane, Australia for an air show and flight demonstration with the Royal Australian Air Force.

In Jun the Air Force announced the "drawdown" of the B-1B fleet from 93 to 60 aircraft, and the removal of all B-1Bs from the ANG. The units' future was in doubt, but it continued to fly while the Wing Leadership, the Adjutant General and congressional representatives worked with the Secretary of the Air Force to solve the dilemma. In Aug four 184th B-1Bs flew a 13 hour mission to the Yukon Training Range in Alaska to demonstrate response to no-notice long range strike taskings. In Sep the Wing tested its generation capabilities by flying 24 sorties with six aircraft in a ten hour period. On 10 Sep the Secretary of the Air Force announced the 184th would receive 10 KC-135R to replace the B-1Bs and be assigned several new missions to ensure manning remained unchanged.

In Feb 2002 SATAF I began for the conversion of the 184th Bomb Wing to an Air Refueling Wing. In Mar two 184th aircraft dropped three full bays of 500 pound bombs each without a hitch; 168 bombs off with no hung-stores, thanks to the outstanding performance by aircrew, maintainers and Weapons troops. In Aug the last three B-1Bs departed the 184th for Ellsworth and Dyess AFBs. In Aug the 127 ARS flew its first KC-135R. This event came only days after the last B-1B left the 127 BS. In true "Jayhawk" fashion, the 127 accepted the challenge once again of converting to another aircraft and flying it with skill and professionalism. They proved this with their seamless transition from ACC bombers to AMC tankers. Not only did the 127 train and convert to tankers, they also took on the challenge of training other flyers. In Sep the 127ARS began the Formal Training Unit (FTU) to train new pilots for the KC-135R. The

schoolhouse proposal was spearheaded by Maj Joel Erskin, who coordinated with the Altus schoolhouse and Flight Safety to successfully bring the FTU to the KANG. The FTU was headed initially by LTC Mark Wilson, and later was commanded by LTC Jeff Young. The last class of students trained by the FTU completed the course 30 Sep 2005. Each student averaged eleven sorties, and 73 students were trained during the three year operation. The initial cadre in the KC-135R for the Jayhawks consisted of the following booms and pilots: SMSgt Billy Stacey, MSgt Brian Dillon, Maj Clyde Davis, Maj Frank Froncek, Maj Scott Waddell 1Lt Erik Baker and 1Lt Jeff Woods.

The unit had gone through a summer of 2001 like no other in their history and on Jun 26, 2001 the unit was told their B-1s would be gone by Oct 1, 2001. The unit leadership fought back with all the facts and proof of the unit's successes. At the end of Aug the unit was told that they would be absorbed into the Active Duty tanker wing and the 184th would no longer exist as an independent unit as a result of the Air Force's decision to cut the B-1B fleet from 93 to 60 aircraft. After a guard wide swell of support led by the Kansas State Adjutant General, Maj Gen Gardner and 184th Wing Commander Col Ed Flora, with the focused efforts of Senator Pat Roberts and Congressman Todd Tiahrt, the future of the 184th was secured as an independent unit with ownership of ten KC-135R and specific means to continue the careers of unit members.

On Sep 10, 2001 Senator Roberts, Senator Brownback, and Congressman Tiahrt announced the 184th would transform to perform the following missions: The 184th Air Refueling Wing would be independently unit-equipped with 10 KC-135s. A Phoenix Raven Security Forces Team would be activated The 184th would retain its B-1 engine repair shop and avionics capability 184th Manning would continue at current levels An Information Operations unit would be activated The Air Force would seriously consider McConnell AFB as a candidate for the Airborne Laser During these trying times, Col Gene Martin was appointed to lead the 184th Conversion Team. In Jan 2002, Maj Ross Flynn and SMSgt Gary Wade were appointed MXG conversion Points of Contact and CMSgt Joe Ward was appointed over Wing manning issues. On Feb 26, 2002 Headquarters ACC/XPXB convened a Site Activation Task Force (SATAF) at McConnell AFB to identify actions required to support the B-1 drawdown of the 184th Bomb Wing effective the 4th quarter of fiscal year 2002. In addition the SATAF reviewed actions required to support 7 KC-135R transfers to McConnell from Mountain Home AFB Idaho. The three remaining aircraft would be transferred from within the Air National Guard for a total of ten assigned aircraft. All actions supported the Program Budget Decision (PBD) 824 direction to consolidate the B-1B force and apply the savings to B-1 modifications, engineering, and design support for what was to be left of the fleet. Unfortunately, ACC/ LG did not have representation from LGS, LGT, LGW, or LGR on the SATAF trip. The Logistics Group Chairman represented these disciplines and met with 184 BW personnel to generate the appropriate conversion action items. Preparation to train to the new missions began at an unprecedented pace.

On Feb 11, 2002 a KC-135 conversion support informational gathering team, comprised of unit members, was sent to Mt Home AFB, Idaho, home of the 22nd Air Refueling Squadron, where the 184th would receive their seven aircraft. This was a very sensitive trip due to the fact that

no formal announcement was made that these aircraft were slated for transfer to the 184th. The team was comprised of CMSgt Michael Ebenkamp, SMSgt Lisa Hughey, SMSgt Terry Kerns, SMSgt Keith Dailey, and MSgt Thane Stauffer. The 22 ARS personnel were very cooperative while showing their operations and answering all questions. CMSgt Robert Tock was the 22 ARS representative for all conversion matters and soon became an ardent supporter for the unit's cause.

On Mar 17 another KC-135 conversion planning meeting team was dispatched to Mountain Home AFB in anticipation of solidifying the tanker equipment transfer to McConnell. The team was comprised of CMSgt Michael Ebenkamp, SMSgt Gary Wade, SMSgt Lisa Hughey, and TSgt Mark Jantz. Air Combat Command had sent MSgt James Kepka, as their equipment specialist. Upon arrival it was apparent that ACC was not prepared to discuss anything but B-1 equipment transfers. It was ACC's position that all KC-135 equipment assets were to be dispersed throughout ACC bases, and none of it would transfer to the 184th. Ultimately, ACC's position changed to any equipment needed by the 184th would be supported by ACC and would be transferred to the 184th.

This was the first time that 184th acceptance team maintenance crews ever flew back home on an aircraft they had performed inspections on. Aircraft 61-0277 was the second aircraft to transfer arriving to the 184th May 17, 2002. The second aircraft acceptance team flew to Mountain Home AFB on May 28, 2002 to accept the last three active duty KC-135. The remaining aircraft the 184th would receive were two Mountain Home aircraft returning from depot maintenance and three from other Air National Guard units.

An acceptance team went to Mountain Home AFB, ID to accept the first 2 KC-135R for the 184th on May 1-9 , 2002. 63-8875 was the first aircraft to transfer to the 184th on May 09, 2002, arriving at 1230. This is the first time that an acceptance team had flown back home on a jet they had performed an acceptance inspection on. Aircraft 61-0277 was the 2nd aircraft to transfer, arriving at the 184th on May 17, 2002.

On May 28 - Jun 6, 2002 the 2nd acceptance team went to Mountain Home AFB, ID to accept the last 3 KC-135R from Mountain Home AFB, ID for the Kansas Air National Guard, Aircraft 60-0365 and 63-8004, the 3rd and 4th KC-135R Aircraft to transfer to the 184th arrived on Jun 6, 2002, (The acceptance team flew back on aircraft 60-0365). Aircraft 59-1498 was the 5th aircraft to transfer, arriving at the 184th on Jun 11, 2002.

And finally on 5 Aug 2002 the final three B-1Bs departed McConnell for Dyess and Ellsworth AFBs, following a Bone Voyage celebration on 2 and 3 Aug.

In Aug 2002, the 127 successfully launched its first KC-135R air refueling sortie. The crew was Maj Clyde Davis, co-pilot-1st Lt. Jeff Wood, instructor pilot Maj Wilson, and Boom Operators SMSgt Bill Stacy and MSgt Brian Dillion. Overall, the flight went superbly, with the 127 giving 30,000 pounds of fuel to a five-ship formation of F-16s. On Sep 16, 2002 a formal ceremony was held to stand up the unit as a tanker wing along with an unveiling of the unit patches

representing each new mission area.

Although the unit had been active with the KC-135R mission since Sep 2002, the official unit designation as an Air Refueling Wing did not become effective until Jun 21, 2003.

In Feb 2004, the 127 ARS and the 184th Maintenance Group deployed 130 members to Istres, France in support of Operation Joint Forge, as part of the unit's first Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) tasking in the KC-135R. In May 2004, the 184th conducted a Mini Combat Crew Training School (CCTS) for KC-135R at McConnell AFB. This was the first time there had been Initial Qualification Training (IQT) other than at a formal Air Force schoolhouse in the KC-135's history.

In Feb 2004 the 184th Ops Group was assigned to the 774th Expeditionary Air Base bat support missions in support of Operation Joint Forge. Three jets were deployed with a swap out in the middle of Feb. The Detachment Commander (DETCO) for the trip was Maj Herb Ludwig and the acting Ops Officer was Maj Mike O'Brien. The 184th deployed to Eielson AFB, Alaska in Jun for Northern Edge and then again in Aug to participate in Cope Thunder 2004. The Ops Group acted as the lead unit during Cope Thunder providing four R model jets for the exercise. The Jayhawks were supplemented by the Maniacs from Bangor, Maine, the Bats from Des Moines, Iowa, and the Alaskan ANG to give the Tanker Task Force a total of eight jets. The DETCO was Maj Gary Nash. From 18 Dec to 3 Jan 2005, the 127 ARS again sent two crews to Keflavik, Iceland.

On Jul 11, 2004 Col Ed Flora stepped down as Commander of the 184 ARW and Colonel Eugene Martin assumed command.

On Aug 20, 2004, the Air National Guard transferred control of the Air National Guard's Network Operations and Security Center (NOSC) to the 184th Air Refueling Wing. Also on that date the 161st Intelligence Squadron had a ground breaking ceremony for a future Intelligence facility.

A major change occurred, particularly for operations and maintenance group personnel, with the transition from the B-1B to the KC-135R. The amount of travel required, especially for aircrew and crew chiefs, increased dramatically. The first operational mission flown by the unit occurred less than three months after the first aircraft arrived. The unit transported the Blue Angels maintenance team to Pensacola, Florida. It was a last minute mission at the close of the McConnell AFB air show necessitated after the Blue Angels transport had maintenance problems.

The three most common types of trips were large deployments, small deployments, and daylong trips called out-and-backs. Small deployments, including aircrew and crew chiefs, were almost everyday occurrences. Countries visited during small deployments included Norway, Germany, England, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Peru, Iceland, Canada, and France. Several small trips were also made to Alaska, Hawaii, and in excess of forty locations in the continental United States. Larger mobility packages, including support from specialists and other unit support agencies, occurred two to three times a year. Large deployments were made to Geilenkirchen, Germany, Istres, France, Cope Thunder at Eielson AFB, Alaska, and to Hickam AFB, Hawaii. In

addition to small and large deployments to meet operations and maintenance requirements the tanker was during out-and-backs to transport unit personnel to various locations around the globe to help meet mission requirements. These included taking Communications Flight to Reno Nevada, Information Operations Group to Nellis AFB, Nevada, Medical Squadron to Peru, and the Civil Engineering Squadron to Germany. Unit aircraft had also been used, when available and an en-route refueling was scheduled, to take senior leadership to Washington, DC or to Professional Military Education graduations in various locations.

As a tanker unit the 184th was required to participate in several different types of missions. These included air refueling, air mobility operations, and aeromedical evacuations (medevacs). Air mobility operations included transporting personnel and cargo to a deployed location. The tanker is very versatile and could be used on one of these missions or may complete more than one on a trip. A perfect example of multitasking is when a tanker picks up maintenance personnel and cargo to transport them to a deployed location and refuels their aircraft en-route to the destination.

The most rewarding missions for personnel were the medevacs. These missions instill a deep sense of accomplishment in operations and maintenance personnel whether they were transporting a sick child to a better-equipped hospital in the Pacific or transporting US military personnel, wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan, to hospital facilities throughout the US. Transported evacuees were very appreciative.