

131st TACTICAL FIGHTER GROUP



LINEAGE

364th Fighter Group constituted, 25 May 1943
Activated, 1 Jun 1943
Inactivated, 10 Nov 1945
Redesignated 131st Fighter Group Allotted to ANG (MO), 24 May 1946
Extended federal recognition, 15 Jul 1946
Redesignated 131st Composite Group, Nov 1950
Redesignated 131st Fighter Group, Feb 1951
Ordered into active service, 1 Mar 1951
Redesignated 131st Fighter Bomber Group, Apr 1951
Redesignated 131st Bombardment Group (Light)
Organized 15 Oct 1962

STATIONS

Glendale, CA, 1 Jun 1943
Van Nuys, CA, 12 Aug 1943
Ontario AAFld, CA, 11 Oct 1943
Santa Maria AAFld, CA, 7 Dec 1943-11 Jan 1944
Honington, England, Feb 1944-Nov 1945
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 9-10 Nov 1945
Lambert Field, MO, 1 Mar 1951
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 10 Mar 1951
George AFB, CA, 7 Aug 1951-1 Dec 1952

ASSIGNMENTS

Eighth AF
Strategic Air Command
Tactical Air Command

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-38J, Feb 44-29 Jul 44

P-51D, 28 Jul 44-Oct 45
B-26

Support Aircraft

COMMANDERS

LTC Frederick C. Grambo, 12 Jun 43-29 Feb 44, KIA
Col Roy W. Osborn, 29 Feb 44-9 Sep 44
LTC Joseph B. McManus, 9 Sep 44-23 Oct 44
LTC John W. Lowell, 23 Oct 44-2 Nov 44 (Acting)
Col Roy W. Osborn, 2 Nov 44-3 Jan 45
LTC Eugene P. Roberts, 3 Jan 45-Nov 45
Col Harry B. Johansen, #1947
Charles H. DuBois, 1948
Col William W. Cannon, #1973

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Frankfurt, Germany, 27 Dec 1944

EMBLEM

Azure, on a pile issuing from sinister chief argent an aircraft rocket sable banded of the second leaving a trail gules between two general purpose aerial bombs in bend sinisterwise of the third. (Approved, 29 Mar 1954)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

PARATI AD AGENDUM—Ready for Action

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Moved to England, Jan-Feb 1944. Began operations with Eighth AF in Mar. Flew escort, dive-bombing, strafing, and patrol missions in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. At first, operated primarily as escort for heavy bombers. Patrolled the English Channel during the Normandy invasion in Jun 1944, and, while continuing escort operations, supported ground forces in France after the invasion by strafing and bombing locomotives, marshalling yards, bridges, barges, and other targets. Converted from P-38's to P-51's in the summer of 1944 and from then until the end of the war flew many long-range escort missions for B-17's that attacked oil refineries, industries, and other strategic objectives at Berlin, Regensburg, Merseburg, Stuttgart, Brussels, and elsewhere. Received a DUG for an escort mission on 27 Dec 1944 when the group dispersed a large force of German fighters that attacked the bomber formation the group was escorting on a raid to Frankfurt. Also flew air-sea rescue missions, engaged in patrol activities, and continued to support ground forces as the battle line moved through France and into Germany. Took part in the effort to invade Holland by air, Sep 1944; the Battle of the Bulge, Dec 1944-Jan 1945; and the assault across the Rhine, Mar 1945. After the war, remained in England until Nov 1945. Returned to the US.

First Mission: 3 Mar. 44. Last Mission: 6 May 45. Total Missions: 342.

A/c MIA: 134 E/a Claims: 256.5 air; 193 ground

364th FG P-38J: olive and grey factory finish, and natural metal. Squadron codes: 383FS—N2; 384FS—5Y; 385FS—5E. Codes not repainted when obscured by Invasion Stripes. Squadron symbols on vertical tail: 383FS—circle; 384FS—square; 385FS—triangle. Group markings: white spinners and 12 inch cowling bands: April 1944 Droop-snoot decoy markings. P-51B, C, D & K natural metal with some field applied dark green camouflage. Squadron codes as P-38, but painted aft national insignia on both sides of fuselage. No individual a/c letter carried on fuselage. Squadron symbol, as P-38, in black on vertical tail (approximately 30 inch dia.) with individual a/c letter superimposed in white. Group markings: white spinner; 12 inch cowl band divided into 6 inch medium blue and white longitudinal stripes. OTU a/c with numerals for individual identity. 1st Scout Force, 385FS a/c with red outline to tail, red spinner and 12 inch white cowl band.

Station Callsign:

Outside

Group Callsign:

Sunhat (A Group)

Weekday (B Group)

Harlop (C Group)

(No Squadron Callsigns in C Group)

Tragedy struck the 131st Tactical Fighter Group on May 7, 1966, as Group Commander Colonel Elmer R. Parrish was killed when his F-100C crashed and burned at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Col. Parrish crashed while he and the air advisor, Lt. Col. Nevin Christensen were flying a close air support mission for a Marine Reserve unit on maneuvers at Ft. Leonard Wood. Christensen said he had lost radio contact with Col. Parrish and when he circled back he discovered the crash. The accident occurred about three miles from Ft. Leonard Wood's Forney Air Field. The two aircraft had taken off from their home station at Lambert-St. Louis Airport at about 3 p.m. and the accident occurred at about 4 p.m. Col. Parrish had been Group Commander since October

1962. He was survived by his wife, Virginia and two daughters, Patricia and Pamela. Col. Parrish was buried in the National Cemetery at Jefferson Baracks.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources