

148 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

347 Fighter Squadron activated by special authority prior to constitution, 2 Oct 1942

Constituted, 2 Oct 1942

Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945

Redesignated 148 Fighter Squadron and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946

Activated 27 Feb 1947

Redesignated 148 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, Dec 1952

Redesignated 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Jul 1955

Inactivated, 1956

Activated as 148 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 15 Oct 1985

Redesignated 148 Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Bushey Hall, England, 1 Oct 1942

Snailwell, England, 4 Oct 1942 (ground echelon, which was formed in US, was at Harding Field, La, until 2 Nov 1942)

Kings Cliffe, England, 8 Dec 1942-4 Jan 1943

Casablanca, French Morocco, 20 Nov 1942

Oujda, French Morocco, 6 Jan 1943

La Senia, Algeria, 12 Feb 1943

Orleansville, Algeria, 9 Mar 1943

Le Sers, Tunisia, 21 Apr 1943

Djidjelli, Algeria, 14 May 1943

Rerhaia, Algeria, 18 Nov 1943

Corsica, 6 Dec 1943 (detachment operated from Capodichino, Italy, 10 Feb-Mar 1944)

Sardinia, 19 Jul 1944
Tarquinia, Italy, 15 Sep 1944
Pisa, Italy, 2 Dec 1944-14 Jul 1945
Seymour Johnson Field, NC, 25 Aug-7 Nov 1945
Reading, PA, 1947-1956
Tucson, AZ, 1985

ASSIGNMENTS

350 Fighter Group, 1 Oct 1942-7 Nov 1945
4710 Defense Wing 6 Feb 52
162 Operations Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-39, 1942
P-400, 1942
P-38, 1943
P-47, 1944
P-47, 1947
A-26
F-51
F-84, May 1951
F-94, 1951
F-16

Support Aircraft

C-47, 1947
AT-6, 1947

COMMANDERS

Maj Russel R. Ogan
LTC Richard B. Posey
Maj Nicholas J. Bereschak, May 1956
LTC Jim Fiorelli
LTC Lee Studsten
LTC Ulay Littleton
LTC Carl Thoma
LTC Scott Cole
LTC Greg N. Stroud
LTC Michael T. McGuire, Apr 2008 - Jan 2010

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Tunisia

Sicily

Naples Foggia

Rome-Arno

Southern France

North Apennines

Po Valley

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Italy, 6 Apr 1944

EMBLEM





Approved, 27 Oct 1944

MOTTO

NICKNAME

Kickin' Ass

CALL SIGN

OPERATIONS

During World War II, the 347th flew missions in Casablanca, French Morocco; in Algiers at LaSenia and Orleansville; LeSers, Tunisia; Corsica; and at Capodichino and Pisa, Italy.

The 347 Fighter Squadron was inactivated on 7 November 1945 at Seymour Johnson Field, NC, and was reallocated to the Air National Guard on 24 May 1946 as the 148 Fighter Squadron.

In addition to the 148 Fighter Squadron, it was announced that the other three support units

would also be manned in conjunction with the fighter squadron. The largest would be Detachment C, 212th Air Service Group with 168 men and 9 officers responsible for maintaining the aircraft which would eventually be based in Reading; the 148 Utility Flight comprised of 29 men and 6 officers to assist in maneuvers, training, and administrative duties; and the 148 Weather Station made up of 5 men and 3 officers. Newspaper reports said the full strength of all four Air National Guard units at Reading would eventually be more than 325 members. In addition to the guardsmen, the state was to employ about forty persons in maintenance, supply, and administrative areas — the forerunners of the present day air technician.

Within three weeks of that 30 October announcement, it was reported that Major Milton F. Glessner was appointed to permanent duty as the flying instructor for the 148 Fighter Squadron. The appointment was made by Major General Thomas J. Hanley, commanding general of the 11th Air Force in Harrisburg. Major Glessner's first task was to find a qualified commander for the 148. He was looking for a young man who had training as a combat pilot and saw active service during World War II.

That selection process ended 27 November 1946 when Richard B. Posey of Wyomissing was appointed operations officer and commanding officer of the 148 Fighter Squadron. After receiving his commission from the state Adjutant General's office, Major Posey immediately began organizing the recruitment of 49 additional officers and 300 enlisted men for the fighter squadron and its support units.

His first appointments were Captain Robert Krug as operations officer and Lieutenant Russell Ogan as a flight leader. Commissions and enlistments were available to all Berks County (Reading area) residents providing they served six months or more in any branch of the armed services during World War II.

Each recruit was expected to perform a minimum of two hours service per week plus fifteen days of field training each summer. For each two-hour training period, a master sergeant earned \$5.50; a technical sergeant \$4.50; staff sergeant \$3.83, sergeant \$3.33; corporal (comparable to a senior airman) \$3.00; private first class (airman first class) \$2.67; private (airman) \$2.50. The total annual pay for training assemblies and summer encampment amounted to about \$400 for a master sergeant.

It wasn't until 27 February 1947 that the newly formed 148 Fighter Squadron and its allied units began their weekly Monday and Thursday evening training periods in a few empty buildings in the North Squadron area of the Reading airport with no aircraft and no equipment. Aggressive recruiting efforts continued as the squadron had to reach a required strength in order to receive federal recognition, equipment, and airplanes.

In February, Major Posey announced that the 148 personnel requirements of 25% of officer strength (16 members) and 10% enlisted strength (34 members) had been achieved, culminating a drive that began in December 1946. With that announcement came a request to Brigadier General F.A. Weber, State Adjutant General, for federal recognition of the 148 Fighter

Squadron and its support units.

On 27 February 1947 the federal recognition inspection of the 148 was conducted by the Senior Air Instructor to Pennsylvania, and the 148 Fighter Squadron became the first Air National Guard tactical unit in Pennsylvania to be granted federal recognition. Detachment C, 212th Air Service Group and the Utility Flight also received federal recognition on 27 February 1947. The 148 Weather Station was recognized 30 June 1947.

In April 1947, the 148 received its initial shipment of seven P-47 from the Air Materiel Depot at Olmsted Field in Middletown. The aircraft were scheduled to go into service around 15 May 1947 after a thorough inspection. More planes would be assigned later in 1947.

Flight training in the P-47s began mid-May as pilot trainees were required to take fifteen hours of transitional flying on an AT-6 before they were permitted to fly the P-47s. Pilots were expected to log a minimum of four flight hours a month and were to receive three hours of check flying before doing solo work.

By 3 July 1947, Major Posey announced that the 148 Fighter Squadron was fully equipped with 25 P-47s, 4 AT-6, 4 A-26 for towing targets for gunnery practice, and 1 C-47 to be used for utility and transportation flights. Recruiting was still a priority as the 148 had vacancies for 142 enlisted men and 16 officers including eight pilots.

The public "coming out" ceremony for the 148 was 1 Aug 1947 when an open house was held at the Reading Municipal Airport in conjunction with Army Air Force Day. All aspects of military aviation operations were on display for the one-thousand Berks County residents who attended the air show.

Just six months old and fresh from its public debut, the 148 conducted its first summer encampment at the Reading Municipal Airport, 16 through 22 August 1947 for its 77 enlisted men and 24 officers. Training consisted of current events lectures, close order drill and arms study, plus on-the-job training. Pilots received classroom training as well as advanced and night flying experience. The highlight of the first encampment was a visit by the entire staff of Headquarters, 11th Air Force. Written reports indicated that the staff was favorably impressed with the 148 training program.

The guardsmen were required to stay "on base" during the encampment and used barracks vacated by the regular Army Air Force following World War II. Nearly a ton and a half of food was brought in from the supply depot at the Indiantown Gap Military Reservation, and 22,000 gallons of 100-octane gasoline was consumed by the aircraft. The encampment payroll totaled \$6,000 for the seven days with the largest check for \$145 and the smallest for \$17.50. Incidentally, the first pay voucher was not made out until 1 May 1947. Other pays were retroactive to 27 February 1947, the date on which the federal inspection for recognition was made.

The Squadron's first community service project was "Operation Santa" conducted on three consecutive Saturdays prior to Christmas 1947. Gift certificates wrapped in containers attached to parachutes were dropped from the P-47s as they flew in formation over Berks County.

A reward for their recruiting efforts, 25 enlisted men received the unit's first three day morale trip to Miami, on 27 December 1947 in a C-47. The flight crew also got their required instrument and night flying training.

1948 Just two days into the new year another morale trip left Reading . . . this one destined for New Orleans. Again, twenty-five unit members were rewarded for their extra duty work in planning and completing a successful recruiting campaign in the fall of 1947. The flight crews again received instrument flying instruction from Major Glessner.

On 15 February 1948, after a full year of operation, the 148 and its support units received a "satisfactory" rating by an 11th Air Force inspection team. It was the first annual inspection of records, equipment, personnel, and training. A satisfactory rating was the highest attainable.

Celebrating its first anniversary, the 148 boasted of a strength around 200 enlisted men and 48 officers and still recruiting to reach authorized strength of 300 enlisted personnel and 50 officers. The organization's first group of 44 full-time air technicians to serve as "caretakers" were authorized to be hired.

The Squadron's 48 pilots were flying the same type aircraft as the regular Air Force, meeting the same flying standards, and were maintaining a proficiency that enabled them to fly side-by-side with the Air Force if necessary. Bombing proficiency was accomplished by flying over the Atlantic Ocean off the New Jersey coast and bombing targets towed by the unit's other support aircraft. Land bombing proficiency was conducted at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation. Simulated attacks were flown over many cities in central Pennsylvania and southern New York.

By early 1948 the 148 and attached units were rated at full strength in manpower and material and were ready for action almost immediately upon federal mobilization. Because of its state of readiness, the squadron was considered the best organized in the state's 53rd Fighter Wing, rated well ahead of comparable squadrons in other states. The aircraft in service included 25 P-47 and 12 other utility craft including four A-26 used for towing targets over the ocean, four AT-6, and one C-47 cargo and administrative transport.

The misfortunes of a cold and snowy February 1948 gave the 148 an opportunity to aid in a domestic emergency. Fifty bales of hay were dropped from the C-47 to feed deer roaming the snow-choked Blue Mountains between Shartelsville and Summit Station, Berks County.

The second summer encampment of the 148 and associate units was held 31 July through 14 August 1948, but it was very different from the first. The entire organization participated in a full-scale training encampment at Dover Air Base, Delaware, with 1,200 Air Guardmen from Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia all fighter squadron components

of the 53rd Fighter wing.

From the 148, 250 enlisted members and 45 officers participated with the initial group of 200 leaving Reading in forty vehicles ranging from jeeps to thirty-ton tractor trailers. By 0900, Saturday, 31 July 1948, 24 F-47s, one A-26, three AT-6s, and one C-47 left Reading, and by noon that day, the entire component had arrived at Dover.

The first mission for the fighter planes at the encampment was to participate in a huge air show to be reviewed by President Harry S. Truman at the dedication of New York City's Idlewild Airport (now Kennedy International Airport) in New York City.

Other training stressed air-to-air gunnery proficiency (5 miles from the coast over the Atlantic Ocean), air-to-ground gunnery practice (at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation in Pennsylvania), air interception, and formation flying. The maintenance and services units took proficiency training in their specialties. While at the encampment, Major Posey received word of his appointment as full-time base detachment commander of the air technicians in addition to his military assignment as squadron commander. At the conclusion of the summer encampment, the 148 was honored for achieving the highest score of all four squadrons competing in the aerial gunnery competition. Major General Kenneth F. Cramer, Chief of the National Guard Bureau in Washington, was present at the Camp's conclusion and praised the squadron's marksmanship.

But 1948 would not end without tragedy. On Saturday afternoon, 11 December 1948, two of the squadron's F-47s collided in mid-air during a routine formation and plunged to the ground in Muhlenberg Township, Berks County. Both pilots, First Lieutenant Raymond W. LeFever, 24, of Reading and Second Lieutenant William T. Porter, 27, of Bala-Cynwyd, were killed. This was the first fatality suffered by the 148.

On 19 and 20 March, 28 pilots and 17 planes of the 148 participated in two simulated bombing missions from Reading. The maneuvers were flown over Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. Within that week, the 148 was assigned a radar calibration detachment consisting of 35 enlisted members and nine officers with Captain Frank Conley serving as Commander.

Also announced on 24 March 1949 was the commissioning of an additional 21 officer pilots; fifteen were fighter pilots and assigned F-47s. The remaining six were assigned to fly bomber or transport planes.

By June 1948, Lieutenant Colonel Milton F. Glessner whose permanent Air Force assignment was flying instructor for the 148, was reassigned to the Air Commander Staff School. His successor was Major Winfield Brown.

The third summer encampment of the 148 was again held at Dover Air Base, Delaware from 13 to 27 August 1949, together with other units of the 53rd Fighter Wing.

One of the training assignments at the encampment was a four-day aerial gunnery and dive bombing problem staged under simulated combat conditions. The units were graded on all phases of operation including administration, supply formations, combat flying, gunnery, take-offs, landings, night flying, and repair efficiency. Pilots were graded on gunnery proficiency. This type of aerial gunnery practice tested the very intensive flying ability of the pilots as well as the ability of personnel to keep the 50 caliber guns on the Thunderbolts cleaned and loaded.

The 148 had 25 F-47s, one B-26, one AT-6, and one C-47 at the encampment. The aircraft did not remain at Dover for the entire encampment. They returned to Reading, Wednesday, 24 August, due to the threat of an approaching hurricane that lashed the Atlantic coast. Most of the aircraft were able to return for an aerial and ground review by Governor James H. Duff and other Air Force officials on Friday, 26 August.

During the summer encampment, a new C-47 equipped with all-weather radar instruments was delivered to the new 103rd Radar Calibration Detachment of the 148 Fighter Squadron. A second new C-47 (actually the third C-47 at Reading) was delivered a few days later. The planes were used to calibrate all types of radar equipment everywhere in the country.

The annual inspection of the 148 Fighter Squadron and its subordinate units began 06 December 1949 by representatives from the Headquarters of the Ninth Air Force, Langley Field, Virginia. The inspection lasted three days and covered all phases of ANG activities including maintenance and operations.

1950 The new year dawned with a change in command for the 148 Fighter Squadron. Lieutenant Colonel Richard B. Posey, the unit's successful founding commander, was reassigned as commander of the 112th Fighter Group, headquartered in Pittsburgh.

Major Russell G. Ogan, Operations Officer for the 148, was advanced to commander of the Unit. Major Ogan was a charter member of the squadron and an element leader.

Although the 112th Fighter Group was activated in May 1949, it never had a permanent commander. LTC Posey's Group Command included the 146th and 147th Fighter Squadrons both located at the Greater Pittsburgh Airport as well as our 148 Fighter Squadron in Reading. All of the squadrons were flying F-47.

Just two months later, another major change occurred when Major Ogan announced in early March 1950 that the role of "interceptor" has been assigned to the 148. The responsibility of the 148 was to rise and meet any invading enemy.

In giving the interceptor assignment to the Air National Guard, the Air Force Continental Air Command declared that Reading was a "strategic city" and "is located in the nation's first line of air defense." All fighter squadrons along the eastern seaboard were redesignated as interceptors.

The 28 F-47s of the 148 were equipped with the usual armament, all of which were in "excellent firing condition." To insure that unit personnel could get all 28 fully armed fighters in the air within 30 minutes after a mobilization call, the unit announced that its first mobilization drill was to be carried out "sometime" before July 1950.

"We want to summon our personnel on a moment's notice to see how quickly we can get planes into the air," Major Ogan said. "We want the public to have advance warning about the mobilization so that there will be no hysteria when the order is given by radio and telephone. It will be a drill and not a war."

Meanwhile many Air National Guard fighter units were converting from propeller to jet engine aircraft. The National Guard Bureau and U.S. Air Force runway length requirement to operate jets was 6,000 feet. Reading's longest runway was 5,150 feet.

A Reading newspaper columnist was suggesting, as early as January 1950, that someone "start the ball rolling to lengthen the runway" so the Reading unit could acquire jets. By March 1950 a formal request to the City of Reading was made by representatives of the 148 and the Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs that one runway be extended. The National Guard Bureau in Washington had assured state and local guard officials that the 148 would be given F-80 if a runway was increased to 6,000 feet.

By August 1950 there was still another change in store for the 148 when the squadron changed from its familiar F-47 to the F-51. The F-47s were termed "obsolete" by the National Guard Bureau. Originally the unit was scheduled to get jet fighters instead of the F-51s, but the runways at the Reading Airport were termed too short for high speed plane operations. The Mustangs were received from the Iowa Air National Guard at Sioux City.

Summer camp in 1950 was an "all Pennsylvania" encampment, 12 through 26 August, at Dover Air Base, Delaware. Much of the time was used by the 353 members of the 148 and its attached units to make the transition from the F-47 to the F-51. Gunnery formation flying and radar-controlled interception skills were mastered in short order.

As hostilities in Korea were increasing, an air of anticipation was building with the 148. But that anxiety was short-lived because on 22 December 1950, the 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron was notified that it would be called to federal active duty 1 February 1951 and assigned to Dover Air Force Base, Delaware.

The base assignment was made because the U.S. Air Force's 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing based at Dover was reassigned to duty overseas. The 148 mission, while at Dover, was to intercept any and all unidentified aircraft penetrating the eastern seaboard of the United States during daylight hours.

While assigned to Dover AFB, the 148 would also have the responsibility of operating base functions, maintenance, and improvements in addition to its primary mission.

1951 The actual order activating the 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron and its associate units came 1 February 1951 with a reporting date of 15 days later, 16 February. The squadron was then attached to the 26th Air Division of the Eastern Air Defense Force.

For 15 days personnel received orientation and organization briefings, and by March, the unit's members became accustomed to the routines of active Air Force life. Written reports indicated that all personnel have noticed a big difference in USAF policies as compared to those of the ANG. "As one goes about Dover AFB, military courtesy and bearing is becoming more evident in the conduct of the personnel," wrote one unit member.

Lieutenant Colonel Thaddeus D. Harris, Provost Marshal, Eastern Air Defense Force, visited Dover AFB and spoke "straight from the shoulder" about discipline. He deplored the "buddy-buddy" atmosphere in the sense of calling non-commissioned officers by their first names as well as "non-coms" calling men of lower rank by their first names while on duty. LTC Harris implored the units to tighten up on the "buddy-buddy" and think in a businesslike manner. By 31 March 1951, the official strength of the units was 334 enlisted and 53 officer personnel. there was a constant turn-over of squadron personnel as the Air Force relied on its reserve component for skilled personnel, particularly those with World War II service experience, for overseas duty.

There was a great deal of apprehension among the squadron's pilots who were low on overseas credits. Written reports stated, "at the rate transfers have been coming through, it is difficult for any of them (pilots) to plan for the immediate future. It is believed that many more of our pilots will be transferred to overseas assignments."

September 1951 brought the unit's second change in command when Major Ogan was reassigned to the Alaskan Air Command to serve as Director of Combat Operations for the northern half of Alaska. A regular Air Force officer, Lieutenant Colonel Robert V. McHale, served a short time as interim commander.

By April 1951, the third month of active military service, the 148 had completed its 90-day indoctrination program and began converting from its familiar F-51 to F-84D and the T-33, its instrument flying trainer. Five of the F-51s were transferred to other guard units in Minnesota and South Dakota. Eventually, all F-51s would be reassigned when 25 F-84Ds were delivered to Dover AFB.

Before long another aircraft change was begun. The F-84s were replaced by F-94

1952 As the 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron tended to its mission and responsibilities at Dover AFB, plans were being made at the Reading airport, Spaatz Field, for their anticipated return in November 1952.

Finally, on 31 October 1952, the long 21-month active duty tour for the 148 ended when it was

relieved from active duty at Dover AFB. The unit was back home at Reading's Spaatz Field and reactivated in the Pennsylvania Air National Guard on 1 November 1952.

Of the 334 airmen: who went on active duty 1951, approximately twenty enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. 100 separated from the guard after release from active duty and five of the original members gave their lives to the service of their country. They were Lieutenant Colonel Milton F. Glessner, Jr., former Senior Instructor for the 148 who was reported missing after his F-51 crash landed in Korea; Captain Charles E. Mack, Reading; First Lieutenant William M. Glaser; and First Lieutenants Donald G. Grey, Pottstown, and David H. Morris, Allentown, who both lost their lives in Korean combat flying F-84s.

Now back home on the still too-short runways, the 148 was reassigned F-51H. The unit's primary focus was to rebuild itself to a high level so it could again perform its federal mission, if required.

On 1 December 1952, the unit was redesignated the 148 Fighter Bomber Squadron with a mission to intercept and destroy enemy airborne weapons or enemy surface targets.

1953 In January, the Air Guard responded in a rather unusual way to a domestic emergency. Col Robert C. Boden. Commander of the 112th Fighter Bomber Wing and LTC Richard B. Posey, Commander of the 148 Fighter Bomber Squadron were credited with bringing an end to several days of rioting at Rockview Penitentiary (in Bellfonte). LTC Posey, flying an F-51, and Col Boden, in a C-47 buzzed the huge prison 14 times and shortly thereafter the rioting prisoners surrendered unconditionally.

The summer encampment for 1953 was held in August at home station, Spaatz Field, for the first time since 1947. It was a successful one as the 148 captured the coveted LTG Frank Weber Trophy which was awarded annually to the PaANG unit that completed a summer encampment with the highest composite score in all phases of operation.

On 2 August 1953, Major Peter R. Phillipy, formerly the squadron operations officer, was named commander of the 148. Captain Wilmer R. Hepner was named operations officer. By the end of 1953, the assigned strength of the 148 was 233 enlisted men and 27 officers.

1954 As a portion of Spaatz Field in Reading had been rehabilitated to serve as a permanent training site for Air National Guard use, more than 1,100 Air Guardsmen from New York and Pennsylvania began their summer encampment 10 July through 24 July 1954.

Members of the 139th Fighter-Bomber Squadron from Schenectady, New York, and the 111th Fighter-Bomber Wing, Philadelphia, had flown in 55 aircraft which would later perform air-to-ground gunnery at Indiantown Gap Military Reservation.

The 112th Fighter-Bomber Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, composed of Pittsburgh's 146th and 147th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons as well as our own 148 performed annual training

at Spaatz Field 14 to 28 August 1954.

The annual federal inspection of the 148 was conducted in February and was rated as satisfactory. The inspection report indicated that the operations and training of the unit was excellent. But the report continued, "Flying training is being hampered by the assignment of obsolete F-51s."

The first change in 1955 came when the unit was redesignated the 148 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. All fighter squadrons on the east coast were given that designation because of their geographic location near the seaboard. The mission of protecting the United States against any and all aggressors remained.

This promotion resulted in the promotion of squadron commander Major Peter Phillipy to base commander at General Spaatz Field. Major Phillipy was performing a dual role base commander at Reading as well as Commander of the 112th Fighter-Interceptor Group (146th and 147th at Pittsburgh and the 148 at Reading). Major John (Jack) W. Martin assumed command of the 148 in April 1955. Another first for the 148 was its summer encampment at Hancock Field in Syracuse, New York. 23 July through 6 August 1955, along with other units in the 112th Wing.

Rather than flying over the Atlantic Ocean for gunnery practice, the bomber pilots flew over Lake Ontario. Although there was intense rivalry between pilots for accuracy and proficiency, our 148 won the Adjutant General's Trophy for the most proficient flying record during the encampment. The trophy was presented at Hancock Field by Major General Anthony J. Drexel Bid-die, Jr., Adjutant General of Pennsylvania.

An announced change that had perhaps the most profound effect on the 148 was a published report that the "local air guard unit (148)" would be transferred to a new airport near York, Pennsylvania, and a new transport squadron would be assigned to Reading to replace the 148 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron.

In the post-Korean modernization of Air Guard flying units, jets were rapidly replacing propeller-driven fighters such as our F-51H. With the introduction of jet aircraft, the Reading unit faced a dilemma the airfield characteristics of Spaatz Field plus the mountainous terrain around Reading could not safely accommodate the jet aircraft to which fighter squadrons were converting

As negotiations and preparations for the transfer of the 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron to the proposed airport at Admire (York County) proceeded, the Air Force and the National Guard Bureau continued with plans to organize and activate the transport squadron at Spaatz Field, Reading.

The glorious days of the fighter planes finally came to an end for Reading's 148 on 1 May 1956. The nine-year old 148 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was put on inactive status while awaiting its reassignment to the New York County Airport. Meanwhile, the 140th Air Transport Squadron

Medium (AE) was organized and federally recognized at Spaatz Field.

All of the 148 members became members of the 140th, and the herculean task of converting everything from a fighter unit to a transport unit began. One of the biggest adjustments was that of converting aircraft from F-51s to 40 passenger C-46s.

31 October 1957, the 148 Fighter Interceptor Squadron era ended when plans for its new home airport in York County fell through and the 148 was deactivated. The squadron had been on inactive status since 1 May 1956 and died after a glorious life of 10 years and 8 months. The only remaining component of the 148 was the Weather Flight which continued to provide weather data to the 140th Aeromedical Transport Squadron.

When in 1985 the Arizona ANG was authorized to organize a replacement training unit to train F-16 pilots for the Guard, the new squadron was given the numerical designation of the 148 F-BS, which had been inactivated as a Pennsylvania ANG unit on 31 October 1957.

The Arizona Air National Guard's 162nd Tactical Fighter Group was officially activated in a recent ceremony at Tucson International Airport. With the activation, Tucson becomes the 29th F-16 site worldwide and the second Air National Guard unit to receive the Fighting Falcon. The ceremony was punctuated with an old-and-new aircraft flyby as one F-16 made a pass of the airport, followed by four A-7s. The unit's F-16 squadron, the 148th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, joins two A-7 training squadrons in the 162nd TFG. Col. Glen Van Dyke, 162nd TFG Commander, was master of ceremonies. Dignitaries present included Maj. Gen. Donald L. Owens, Adjutant General of the Arizona Air National Guard, and Dr. Ted Webb, Vice President F-16 Programs, General Dynamics Fort Worth Division. The Arizona ANG F-16s are painted with a distinctive tail flash featuring a red and yellow sunrise pattern around an orange star, over a blue field. The tail also has "Arizona" painted on it in stylized, cursive lettering. The 148th TFG will train Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve pilots in air defense and tactical fighter roles. This training task is a large one, since the F-16 will constitute about half of the Air National Guard's fighter forces by the early 1990s.

15 Oct 1985: 148 TFG extended federal recognition at the Tucson IAP as a TAC-gained unit and equipped with F-16A/Bs as a replacement training unit for the Guard. Arizona's good flying weather, uncongested airspace, and proximity to the Barry M. Goldwater Bombing and Gunnery Range are valuable assets for the tactical training unit.

In 1989 the 148 began its international student training program with the Royal Netherlands Air Force. The 148 also trains students from Belgium, Holland and the United States.

Jan 1990: Added 14 F-16A/Bs (four from US inventory and 10 from the Netherlands) and five Dutch instructors.

On 25 September 2003 at 1341 local time (2041 Zulu), while in controlled flight, an F-16B, SN 81-0821, impacted power line guide wires near Libby Army Air Field, Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

The mishap aircraft (MA), assigned to the 148 Fighter Squadron, 162d Fighter Wing, Arizona Air National Guard, Tucson International Airport (IAP), was part of a single ship, syllabus directed, transition training mission. The mishap student pilot (MSP) and the mishap instructor pilot (MIP) were unharmed and the MA recovered safely to Tucson IAP.

The MA damaged 10 electrical power poles and three sets of power line guide wires belonging to two private power companies. The windshield of one privately owned vehicle and the rear section of another privately owned vehicle were also damaged. The MA sustained damage to the engine air inlet, left strake, left wing spar, ram air diverter, nose landing gear, leading edge flap, wing underside, flaperon, left horizontal stabilator, and left speedbrake. No individuals were injured. Shortly before flying into the guide wires, the MA was performing a straight-in simulated flame out (SFO) approach to runway 26. The MSP occupied the front cockpit and was flying the aircraft.

The MBP provided instructional techniques from the rear cockpit. During the round-out phase (transition to a normal landing approach angle) of the SFO approach, the aircraft descended to approximately 4,605 feet Mean Sea Level and was 2,250 feet from the threshold of the runway. At this point, the aircraft flew through three guide wires suspended approximately 48 feet above the ground. The MIP took control of the aircraft, climbed to a safe altitude, accomplished a damage assessment and controllability check, and landed uneventfully at Tucson IAP. The AIB President found clear and convincing evidence the cause of this mishap was the MIP's failure to maintain situational awareness (SA) throughout the SFO approach. At the beginning of the SFO, the MIP directed the MSP to place the flight path marker (FPM) on the runway threshold. However, the MSP placed it well short of the threshold. The MIP channelized his attention on the rear cockpit Heads Up Display repeater and failed to cross check the aircraft's flight path and the misplaced FPM in relation to the intended landing area.

The misplaced FPM resulted in an approach significantly shorter than desired. During the round-out phase of the approach, the MIP failed to cross check outside references, allowing the approach to continue longer than was safe. The mishap SFO approach was the MSP's first in the F-16. In addition the AIB President found substantial evidence to conclude three factors substantially contributed to the mishap. One, the MIP briefed a straight-in SFO approach technique that was inappropriate for the situation. Two, flying publications lack specific guidance concerning straight-in SFO approaches and the terminal phases of SFO approaches, including round-out and transition to landing. Lastly, the MSP's SA was degraded due to his lack of proficiency, his motivation to comply with the MIP's instructions, and the repetitive communications from the MIP which diverted the focus of his attention.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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