

152 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

152 Observation Squadron designated and allotted to NG, 21 Aug 1939
Activated, 13 Oct 1939

Ordered to active service, 25 Nov 1940

Redesignated 152 Observation Squadron (Medium) 13 Jan 1942

Redesignated 152 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942

Redesignated 152 Reconnaissance Squadron (Bombardment), 2 Apr 1943

Redesignated 152 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter), 15 Jun 1943

Redesignated 152 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 11 Aug 1943

Redesignated 37 Photographic Mapping Squadron, 9 Oct 1943

Redesignated 37 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, 29 Mar 1944

Inactivated, 6 Nov 1945

Redesignated 152 Fighter Squadron, and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946

Activated 152 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 15 Sep 1948

Redesignated 152 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Sep 1952

Redesignated 152 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 18 May 1956

Redesignated 152 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, Mar 1969

Redesignated 152 Fighter Squadron

STATIONS

Hillsgrove, RI, 13 Oct 1939

Ft Devens, MA, 31 Jul 1941

Reading AAFld, PA, 8 Jun 1943

Camp Campbell AAFld, KY, 27 Jun 1943

Esler Field, LA, 20 Nov 1943
Muskogee AAFld, OK, 12 Apr-3 Oct 1943
Naples, Italy, 18 Nov 1944
San Severo, Italy, 12 Dec 1944
Bari, Italy, 8 Aug 1945
Naples, Italy, 17 Sep-18 Oct 1945
Camp Patrick Henry, VA, 6 Nov 1945
Theodore Francis Green Airport, Warwick, RI
Tucson, AZ

ASSIGNMENTS

Rhode Island NG, 13 Oct 1939
First Corps Area, 25 Nov 1940
VI Army Corps, 30 Dec 1940
26 Observation (later Reconnaissance) Group, 1 Sep 1941
73 Reconnaissance (later Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 27 Jun 1943
69 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 9 Oct 1943
II Tactical Air Division, 29 Mar 1944
I (later III) Tactical Air Division, 12 Apr 1944
5 Photographic (later Reconnaissance) Group, 15 Nov 1944-28 Oct 1945
162 Fighter Wing
162 Operations Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

O-38
BC-1
O-47
O-52
O-46
O-49
O-58
O-9
A-20
B-25
DB-7
P-39
P-38
F-5
F-47
F-51
F-84, 1954
F-86, 1956
F-84, 1957

F-100, 1958
F-102, 1968
TF-102
F-100, 1969
A-7, 1975
F-16, 1986

COMMANDERS

Maj Paul L. Smith 13 Oct 1939-Dec 1941
Cpt John T. Guice
LTC Ulay Littleton
LTC Mark Jacobson

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM





On a blue disc edged white, a caricatured animal having the head, shoulders, and forepaws of a black cat, the hind quarters of a jaguar orange with black markings, riding astride a jet-powered white rocket speeding to dexter chief, exhaust orange and red; the animal's head, incased in a pilot's helmet, black with white highlights and chin strap dangling, turned to look back over his left shoulder, his whiskers, eyeballs, paws, tip of tail and highlights white; his left forepaw swinging a white bucket trimmed red, holding orange paint, his right forepaw held behind him, applying orange paint to his back with a red-handled brush; outlines and details black throughout. (Approved, 26 Oct 1959)

MOTTO

Tigers

OPERATIONS

In 1939, with war raging on both the European and Asian continents, President Roosevelt increased measures to prepare the Armed Forces for inevitable American involvement. The State of Rhode Island was allocated one of only two new observation squadrons authorized by Congress that year. The 152 Observation Squadron was organized and less than one year later federalized for extended active duty. The training paid off. After American entry into World War II, the 152 Observation Squadron immediately took up its primary mission of anti-submarine patrols along the Northeastern shipping lanes. In September 1944 the unit, now designated the 37th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, transferred overseas. Assigned to the 15th Air Force, squadron pilots flew Photo Reconnaissance missions in northern Italy, southern Germany and the Balkans until the end of the war in Europe in June of 1945.

In 1946 the unit was reassigned back to the State of Rhode Island and designated the 152 Fighter Squadron, SE. Major Donald E. Morris was given the task of forming a new squadron. In September 1948, the 152 received Federal Recognition and was assigned to the Continental Air Command program which tasked Air National Guard units with the defense of United States airspace.

Flying P-47 and later the P-51 the unit trained for this mission. The Air Force, in an effort to upgrade to an all jet fighter force, required Air National Guard ADC units to upgrade to jet powered aircraft, the F-84. This requirement ultimately proved to be the downfall of the 152. The Rhode Island Airport Commission and National Guard authorities found themselves in a conflict over the use of TF Green Municipal Airport in Warwick for tactical jet operations.

The end of World War II and resultant building boom lead to a rapid increase in size of the city of Providence and by 1955 residential housing surrounded T. F. Green Airport. The introduction of the F-84 and its inherent desire to remain on the runway for great lengths of time resulted in many complaints and concern being expressed over low flying aircraft, causing excessive noise while often carrying live ordinance over populated areas.

Temporary relief was sought by moving the aircraft to Westover AFB and later Otis AFB for flight operations. This required transporting pilots and maintenance personnel to these bases for operations. A study of the situation lead to the withdrawal of jet aircraft from the state in the Fall of 1955. The 152 Fighter Interceptor Squadron designation was withdrawn from Rhode Island but would soon reappear and flourish far to the west.

Unable to resolve these differences the Air Force removed the jets from the state; quick negotiations and the National Guard Bureau's desire to have a flying unit located in every state brought a new mission and the numeric designation which is carried to this day, the 143d.

In early 1954, the squadron entered the jet age with the F-84D. Because the Rhode Island airport was not suitable for jets, the unit was officially transferred to, and federally recognized as a unit of the Arizona Air National Guard.

152 FIS, inactivated as a Rhode Island ANG unit on 19 Nov 1955.

The year 1955 found the Phoenix Sky Harbor based 197th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Arizona Air National Guard, experiencing both growth and success. The two major population centers of Phoenix and Tucson were growing and thriving, leading a group of Guardsmen to believe that the State of Arizona could and would support two flying squadrons. The main task was to convince the National Guard Bureau that the City of Tucson possessed the necessary ingredients to be given the opportunity to prove it deserved a flying unit.

Initially, it appeared the 104th Fighter Squadron, Maryland Air National Guard, would move to Tucson. The 104th had outgrown its facilities and the State of Maryland was experiencing difficulty providing a new site. When faced with the possibility of losing a flying unit, the State of Maryland was able to make the necessary arrangements and the 104th remained in Baltimore. By Fall, 1955, it was apparent a solution to the problem being experienced by the Rhode Island Air National Guard could only be solved by a mission and equipment change.

Efforts of the Arizona Air National Guard were then directed toward obtaining the 152 designation. The transfer from Rhode Island to Arizona would be in name only and acquiring

the necessary facilities, equipment, and personnel, would be the responsibility of the State of Arizona. Anticipating the allotment of the 152 Fighter Interceptor Squadron to the Arizona Air National Guard, Major Donald E. Morris, Commander of the 197th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was given the task of forming a new squadron from the ground up.

The selection of Morris for the task was well founded. The formation of a Fighter Squadron from scratch is not an easy task but Morris had been one of the first members of the 197th during its formative years at Luke AFB after W.W. II. He was Operations Officer of the 197th when it was called to active duty in February of 1951 and assumed the same position upon the unit's release from federal service in 1953. His experience, derived from bringing the 197th to combat ready status in both F-51 and F-86 aircraft. would be crucial in organizing a new squadron. To assist with the many details necessary for formation and recognition of the new squadron, a select group of Air Technicians from the 197th moved to Tucson . Included in this initial group were Dan Hitch, Ken Spencer, Ernie Klienschmidt, C. L. Coward, Joe Finnigan, Tom Brown, Lloyd West, and Wayne Butler.

On 15 May 1956, it became the 152 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, and began flying the F-86A. The only commodity in abundance in Tucson at that time was dirt. Unit facilities were so scarce that activation ceremonies were conducted at the Army National Guard Armory. The Squadron consisted of tents, the old CARMA hangar, and a couple of out-houses. Making due was simply a way of life.

The 152 designation was formally allocated to the State of Arizona on 1 May 1956 and a total of 44 Airmen were on board by the 15th. Activation ceremonies Federally recognizing the 152 as a unit of the Arizona Air National Guard were held on the evening of 18 May 1956 at the National Guard Armory on Silverlake Road, with Governor Ernest W. McFarland and Mayor Don Hummel among those in attendance. While recruiting remained a priority, the preparations for eventual flight operations began in earnest.

Hangar space being at a premium at Tucson Municipal, most maintenance functions would have to be conducted outside. Equipment and spares arriving were stored wherever possible, still? progress toward self-sustaining flight operations continued.

The first F-86A arrived at Tucson on 27 June and flights activities began immediately. During July 23 members of the unit attended summer camp with the 197th at Boise, Idaho. The 146th Fighter Wing comprised of the 197th, Phoenix, 196th Ontario, 195th and 115th at Van Nuys, held summer camp each year at Gowan Field in Boise. Competition between units was fierce, especially in aerial gunnery. Major Morris officially entered the 152 into the fray and alerted other units of things to come by winning the Crusher Trophy, emblematic of top marksmanship in gunnery competition.

Precedence was now set and the remainder of the 152 would now take heed and actively accept all challenges in the years to come. December saw the unit preparing for and successfully completing its first I. G. Inspection. The 152 was described as 'Progressing Well.'

The successful I. G. Inspection indicated" the 152 could handle challenges regardless of conditions and we would not have long to wait before being tried again. 1957 opened with notification of an equipment change and May saw the arrival of the first F-84F at Tucson Municipal Airport. The assignment was readily accepted and by the end of June, 24 Thunderstreaks were perched on the ramp. The month of June also brought about other major events. Major Norman L. Box was assigned as the first Air Force Advisor to the 152 and a contract was let to the M. M. Sundt Construction Company for the construction of a permanent Air National Guard facility to be located on a 60 acre site along Valencia Road.

The \$2.5 million dollar contract was for a hangar with adjoining office space and shops, a rocket storage facility, aircraft ramp and taxiways. Finally, a facility with a little elbow room was approaching reality.

In Mar 1969 the squadron was redesignated the 152 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron and chosen by the National Guard Bureau to become the first Tactical Fighter Training Unit in the Air National Guard. The squadron began training students for the first time in 1970, flying F-100F aircraft. During the 9-year period of F-100 training, the squadron graduated 1355 pilots and ground crews from the United States and several other countries.

The first summer camp was held in August at Tucson Municipal in order to complete transition and training into the F-84F. Assisting Major Morris during the first encampment were Captain John Guice, Operations Officer (later to become Chief, Air National Guard), Captain Dan Hitch, Maintenance, Captain Ken Spencer, Supply and Lt. Ernie Kleinschmidt, Adjutant. The camp 'concluded with a parade and awards presented by Governor McFarland to Msgt. C. L. Coward for Outstanding NCO, A3C Wilber Minderman, Outstanding Airman, and 'C' and 'D' Flights commanded by Captains Buck O'Rielly and Bill Peyton, Outstanding Flights.

The year ended with recruiting having achieved 85% of the authorized strength, ground broken and construction started on the new facility and the F-84F now the primary aircraft of the 152. The new year began with great expectations. The possibility of Group Status, participation in the annual Governor's Day festivities for the first time and the completion of the new facility were eagerly anticipated. Not anticipated was the announcement in February by Governor McFarland that the 152 would be one of two Guard units to receive the F-100A Super Sabre.

The Air Force questioned whether the Air National Guard could support and operate Century Series aircraft. It would be up to the 152 and the 188th at Albuquerque to prove the Guard was capable of operating a modern, up-to-date fighter. This would be the acid test. It would also be the second unit conversion in two years, and, resting on the outcome would be the decision on whether other units would receive Century Series Fighters. First things first, , and on 10 February, 100 Airmen and 16 F-84's participated along with the 197th in the annual Governor's Day ceremonies at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. Award winners on that day were 'D' Flight, commanded by Captain Bill Peyton, Outstanding Flight, Lt. Mel Sisk, The Barry M. Goldwater Aerial Gunnery Trophy, and Ssgt. Woodrow (Woody) Ellwood, Outstanding NCO.

A major milestone occurred during the month of May when exactly two years since its inception as a Fighter Squadron, the 152 would achieve Group Status and henceforth be known as the 162nd Fighter Group (AD). Unit strength would jump from a complement of 475 to approximately 800. Activation ceremonies took place on the 18th with Governor McFarland, Senator Goldwater, and Mayor Hummel among those in attendance.

With the arrival of the F-100A, the settling into a new and permanent home, and the adoption of 'El Tigre,' (a jaguar at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum) as its mascot, the 162nd embarked on a new era. The next decade, the Sixty's would see the unit experience growth, prestige, and above all, an aura of pride and camaraderie that only those involved could appreciate and attest to. The 'Saturday Morning Flying Club' was alive and well in Tucson.

Sun-up to sun-down alert began with the new year and would eventually grow to a 24 hour commitment. Before it was over, alert would be the savior to many; assisting them in their quests for education, and having a profound effect on many future endeavors. The exercises and tasks associated with an alert commitment would provide the basis of the team work, pride, and self-esteem that would flourish in the coming years. The scrambles, up-loads, down-loads, quick turn-arounds and other aspects of true fighter operations provided a bond among all members of the unit.

Spring of 1969 found the 162nd accepting still another challenge. We would join the Tactical Air Command as a Tactical Fighter Training Group and the F-100 would return for another tour of duty. This time it would be the 'E', 'D', and 'F' models as they were phased out of the Air Force inventory. Although the Air Force was saying goodbye to the 'Hun' there were still many in the Guard and someone was going to have to provide the training for pilots. This was a new concept. Prior to this all Guard pilots had received their training in Air Force Combat Crew training squadrons and now the 162nd was going to have the opportunity to see if the Guard could handle still another mission new to its tasked requirements.

The effects of the mission were felt immediately as the number of assigned aircraft doubled and the Air Technician detachment exploded. New faces were everywhere as preparation for the first class of students progressed. The new buzz words sprinkling conversations included 'Long Course,' 'Platform Instructor', 'Short Course', 'IP Upgrade', 'Phase I & II', 'Chase and TR'. The Saturday Morning Flying club was dissolved and many of the old hands sought slots in other units rather than make the conversion to instructor status.

Techniques of instruction, syllabus writing and revision, grade book completion, and other facets of the training program would require an inordinate amount of time in addition to attaining and maintaining IP status. The new mission would eventually signal the beginning of the end of the weekend pilot. We started the new decade on a positive note, and the first class of six students graduated in June.

Although there is always a certain sense of accomplishment derived from the completion of a task we also learned as we progressed with the students. Planning, scheduling, and preparation

were soon found to be paramount to a successful training program. Program progression would identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to be evaluated, and the beginning of the constant process of revision and refinement was seen. Many unknowns had to be identified, analyzed and resolved. A new ingredient, the human factor had to be dealt with on a much higher level than ever before.

Rumors of a new aircraft would be confirmed with the announcement that the A-7D would join the unit and be operated along side the F-100 until the eventual phase out of the 'Hun'. The F-100, loved by many would finally leave Tucson International for good in April of 78 after earning the respect of many pilots. The increased interest shown in the Guard by women was attested to by the fact they now comprise approximately 10% of the unit's strength. Deployments in support of Coronet Cove - Panama and Sentry Tigre - Hawaii, were popular with those involved. The A7K made its initial appearance hinting at things to come. and then we paused once again to change command as Col. Wess Chambers left to become Deputy Director of the Air National Guard and Lt. Col. John Hartnett assumed command.

In July of 1975, the squadron began yet another conversion, this time to the A-7D. The squadron began training A-7 students in Jan 1977, and for two years trained students in both the A-7 and F-100. A-7 training in basic, conversion and Fighter Weapons School courses continued until 1991, with the squadron training both Air Force and Air National Guard A-7 pilots.

The F-16 arrived at the unit in 1986 and 152 F-16 training began in 1991. From 1993 until 1995, 152 training was dedicated to the F-16A Fighter Weapons School. In 1995, the squadron transitioned to the newer F-16C which has improved avionics over the F-16A. Currently, the 152 Fighter Squadron's primary mission is that of international training, to include students from Turkey and Bahrain.

Mountain Home Hosts Singaporean F-16 Student Pilots More than 30 Arizona Air National Guardsmen, five F-16s, and Singaporean student pilots from the 162nd Fighter Wing in Tucson visited Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, in August to help train Singaporeans in air-to-air combat maneuvers, according to a Mountain Home release. "Back home, it's very hard getting every student the required amount of flying hours, so we bring them up here and fly as red-versus-blue air forces," said Lt. Col. Julian Pacheco, Tucson's 152 Fighter Squadron assistant director of operations. Tucson is home to Air Guard-led F-16 fighter pilot training. Another advantage of spending time at Mountain Home is the ability of the Singaporean F-16 pilots to train with the base's F-15s, including Singaporean F-15SGs flown by their countrymen who train at the Idaho air base, states the Aug. 27 release. "This is a huge benefit because it's their own countrymen they are training and fighting against, who fly a completely different aircraft," said Pacheco 2013

The only distinguishing marking used by the 152 TFTS on its camouflaged Huns was the state's name lettered in white on the vertical tail.

The 152 flew F-100As in a natural metal finish from mid 1958 to 1961. Markings consisted of yellow alars on the fins that were trimmed in black. One leg of the alar was just over the tail number, and the other was parallel to the leading edge of the fin. The nose had a yellow band around it that was also edged in black. ARIZ AIR GUARD was lettered on each side of the forward fuselage. In 1961-62, all Air National Guard markings were removed and replaced by standard USAF/TAC markings.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.