

174th AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



LINEAGE

386th Fighter Squadron constituted, 27 Apr 1943
Activated, 15 May 1943
Inactivated, 22 Sep 1945
Redesignated 174th Fighter Squadron and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
174th FS (SE) extended federal recognition 2 Dec 1946
Redesignated 174th FS (Jet), 1 May 1950
Redesignated 174th Fighter Bomber Squadron, Jun 1952
Redesignated 174th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955
Redesignated 174th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 10 Apr 1958
Redesignated 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 May 1961
Redesignated 174th Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992
Redesignated 174th Air Refueling Squadron

STATIONS

Richmond AAB, VA, 15 May 1943
Langley Field, VA, 19 Jul 1943
Dover AAFld, DE, 12 Aug 1943
Richmond AAB, VA, 19 Nov-4 Dec 1943
Gosfield, England, 23 Dec 1943
Beaulieu, England, 5 Mar 1944
Azeville, France, 27 Jun 1944
Lignerolles, France, 31 Aug 1944
Bretigny, France, 3 Sep 1944
Juvincourt, France, 11 Sep 1944
Chievres, Belgium, 4 Oct 1944
Metz, France, 29 Dec 1944
Florennes/ Juzaine, Belgium, 30 Jan 1945

Aachen, Germany, 17 Mar 1945
Fritzlar, Germany, 12 Apr 1945
Suippes, France, c. 29 Jul 1945
Antwerp, Belgium, 22 Aug-11 Sep 1945
Camp Myles Standish, MA, 20-22 Sep 1945
Sioux City, IA

ASSIGNMENTS

365th Fighter Group, 15 May 1943-22 Sep 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-47D, 1943
P-51D, 1947
F-51D, 1951-1953
F-84B, 1950
F-80C, 1953-1956
F-84E, 1956-1958
RF-84F, 1958-1961
F-100C, 1961
F-100D,
F-100F
A-7D, 1977-1991
F-16, 1991-2003
F-16C
F-16D
KC-135E, 2003-2007
KC-135R, 2007

Support Aircraft

T-33

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

F-51: 473142; 473586; 511584
T-33: 35962
F-80: 0-485293
F-84: 92322; 92328; 92051
RF-84: 27424

F-100
41994
XX972
52809
XX845
54-1994
31739

42020
41994
XX809
XX821

A-7
71327
69230
XX405
72193
75406
XX932
72193

A-7K
81-0073

F-16					
85547	86042	85565	85554	85563	85545
85557	85551	85569	85432	85570	85483
85566	85556	85449	85548	85511	85550
85568	85561	85482	85560	85436	86249

KC-135
80082
72608
XX1434
X71421
XX1447

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

F100C: A
A-7D: HA
A-7D: IA
F-16: HA
KC-135: HA

UNIT COLORS

In 1974, the 174th TFS replaced its tired F-100Cs with tired F-100Ds. The only marking to indicate the aircraft's assignment was the word IOWA in white above the circular ANG badge.

F-100 The original yellow and black markings are illustrated here, and they can be seen on the nose, fuselage, and tail. Remnants of the aircraft's former Air Force markings, applied during service with the 36th TFW, can be seen on the nose and center fuselage.

COMMANDERS

LTC Morgan R. Harrison, Dec 1946
Maj J. Allen Orr, Sep 1947
Maj Robert C. Ruby, Aug 1948
Maj Rollin M. Matten, Jr., Feb 1952

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

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

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Germany, 21 Oct 1944
Germany, 20 Apr 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1986
1987
1990
1991
2007
2008

Cited in the Order of the Day, Belgian Army

6 Jun-30 Sep 1944
16 Dec 1944-25 Jan 1945

Belgian Fourragere

EMBLEM

Vietnam also spawned the nickname Bats. The “Bat” depicted on the tails of the aircraft and the shoulder patch of the pilot became a legendary symbol of the 185th when its 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron was called to duty in Vietnam. “Bat” was the call sign of the 174th, and the “Bats” became renowned for their outstanding performance. Day or Night, the members of the 174th could be counted on to do the job. The other symbol often associated with been the Indian Chief that is part of the unit patch as well as part of the paintwork on the aircraft. The Indian

Chieftain is symbolic of the brave Indian warriors, like War Eagle, who once lived in the Siouxland area. The pride, courage and determination found in these “True Americans” are traits also displayed by the members of the 185th.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 22 Feb 1944-4 May 1945

For three years, the 174th flew the P-51 In 1949-50, the unit received its first jet, the F-84B The squadron was called to active duty on April 1, 1951 for service during the Korean conflict and moved to Dow AFB in Bangor, Maine. Most jet pilots transferred to USAF units in Europe and the Far East and the squadron was re-equipped with the F-51D. The unit finished their tour and was transferred back to state control on December 31, 1952. In July 1953, the unit converted from F-51Ds to Lockheed F-80C

IN 1955, the 174th was re-designated the 174th Fighter Interceptor Squadron and was transitioned to the F-84E As a component of the 132nd Fighter Interceptor Wing, the unit won the ANG Gunnery Meet. They also placed third in the USAF Fighter Weapons meet that year. For their accomplishments, the 174th was awarded the Spaatz Trophy as the most outstanding Air National Guard squadron in the nation in 1956. The accolades did not stop there as the unit also was awarded the Wing Flying Safety trophy that year as well. In 1958, the unit changed aircraft and its primary mission.

They became the 174th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron and flew RF-84F As a reconnaissance unit. In 1961, the unit was redesignated the 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron and converted to flying F-100C On October 1, 1962, reorganization nearly doubled the authorized personnel of the unit to over 800 officers and airmen. The 185th flew the F-100 from 1961 until 1977, a period of 16 years.

On January 26th, 1968, the 185th was recalled to active Federal service as a result of the “Pueblo Crisis”. The 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron of the 185th augmented by many of the other personnel from the Group, deployed with their F-100s to Phu Cat, Vietnam on May 11th, 1968. During the course of the next 90 days, the balance of the 185th was deployed to six military bases in Korea and several others within the continental United States. During their year in Vietnam, the 174th flew 6,539 combat sorties totally 11,359 hours of combat time. One pilot was killed in action, as well as 2 airmen who were killed on active duty. The unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and the Air Force Outstanding Unit award. Individually, its members were awarded 12 silver stars, 35 distinguished flying crosses, 30 bronze stars, 115 commendation medals, 325 air medals, and 1 purple heart.

While in Phu Cat, one distinguished Air Force pilot that flew one of our planes was Dick Rutan. Dick went on to become the first pilot to take a non-stop un-refueled trip around the world. Later this year, Mattel toys will introduce a die-cast model of the Sioux City based F-100 that Dick

Rutan flew in Vietnam, tail # HA 076. Dick was one of the famous Misty pilots, a top-secret squadron that flew high-risk missions during their tours. As for the 174th, on May 28th, 1969, the personnel and aircraft were recalled with the 185th and returned to Sioux City and released from active duty. Also in 1969, the 174th Fighter Squadron won the Outstanding Unit award with a designation of valor.

The 350 men flew to Vietnam via Hawaii and Guam. The planes were refueled in the air. The personnel consists of the 174th and the bulk of the consolidated aircraft maintenance squadron and individuals from other support squadrons.

174th TFS Pilot Killed in Action. 1Lt Warren K. Brown, 29, of Sioux City, a fighter pilot with the 185th TFG stationed in South Vietnam, became the group's first casualty of the War. According to an Air Force announcement, Lt Brown was flying an F-100 Sunday on a combat mission over South Vietnam and reported his plane had been hit by hostile ground fire. After reporting he was ejecting from the plane, the announcement said, he was not heard from again. Following an extensive ground search by military authorities, his body was recovered.

Captain John Haley, received the Silver Star for operations against an armed enemy force in Quang Ngai Province. In awarding him the Silver Star, the citation read: "Captain Haley selflessly disregarded the extreme hazards presented by intensely accurate anti-aircraft fire and inclement weather to make repeated low altitude attacks against fortified, hostile gun emplacements. Captain Haley's superb skill and relentless courage silenced the hostile position and eliminated the threat to beleaguered friendly forces."

Air Guard Returning from Korea Men of the 185th TFG who have been stationed in South Korea during the last year will return to Sioux City at 1400, Saturday, May 16, 1969. LTC Konopis, commander of the contingent announced that the 165 airmen will return to Sioux City aboard a charter United Airlines DC-8. Members of the Group who have been stationed at Air Force bases in the United States have been arriving home on an individual basis throughout the week. Many of those 185th troops arrived by car. Colonel Don Forney, commander of the 185th when it was activated and presently commander of the 354th TFW in South Korea, will return to Sioux City in the middle of June to resume command of the 185th.

Captain Sherman Swin was awarded the Silver Star for heroic action when he destroyed anti-aircraft guns which were hampering supply efforts for a free world forces outpost.

The 174th Tactical Fighter Squadron "Bats", an F-100C unit from Sioux City, Iowa, was similar to the 120th TFS in that it was assigned to the parent 140th TFW, Buckley ANG Base, Colorado. Similarly, the Bats were activated on 25 January, 1968, and were told to be prepared to depart for overseas within 72 hours. The 174th's departure was delayed until 14 May and did not arrive in Vietnam until 17 May. Subsequently, it was transferred to the 37th TFW, Phu Cat Air Base, Republic of Vietnam.

The activated 174th, which included teachers, farmers, a local weather man, three father-son combinations and four brothers, were augmented with personnel from their parent 185th TFG which was, in effect, dissolved by the departure of its personnel.¹⁹ In other words, the

augmentation provided to support the deployment of the 174th so depleted the ranks of the 185th TFG that it did not have enough manpower to continue operations in their absence. Of the deploying group, Lt Col Gordon L. Young led 129 airmen and 29 officers specifically assigned to the 174th after their arrival in Vietnam. The Bats brought a total of 22 F-100Cs to Vietnam.

As an indication of their readiness and professionalism, all of the pilots of the 174th were Operationally Ready (OR), which included theater indoctrination and three missions, within 11 days of arrival in Vietnam. By the end of September, every pilot of the 174th was flight lead qualified for combat missions in Vietnam. Additionally, the 174th TFS picked up an alert commitment during June, which included two alert aircraft prepped to support possible TIC situations, loaded and maintained on 15 minute alert status with two alert crews, day and night.

Within barely one month of flying combat missions, most of which were under the control of FACs, the Bats had flown over 1300 hours and were credited with 17 confirmed KBA, 111 destroyed VC structures, 54 destroyed fortifications and at least 2 destroyed gun positions. During the subsequent three month period, the 174th flew 2048 combat effective sorties, which was the highest combat sortie count of the four squadrons in the Wing. Additionally, the 174th dropped between 32 percent and 33 percent of the total bombs for the entire Wing, which included four fighter squadrons, during this period. Lastly, the 174th's first full three month reporting period ended with over 400 confirmed KBA, over 300 destroyed hostile structures, 25 destroyed gun positions, and a host of bridges, trucks, tunnels, sampans, and other structures destroyed. Their accomplishments were on par, if not surpassing, many of their active duty counterparts.

The 174th TFS's maintenance section was superb, as well. During the July – September 1968 reporting period the 174th was “consistently C-1 throughout the period” which reflected “the exceptional esprit de corps and high professional standards for which the squadron has become known and respected.”²⁰ As a matter of fact, the 174th TFS was the only squadron whose mission readiness (“C”) rating did not drop below C-2 during this period, having the C-2 rating for only a period of six days. This meant that the squadron maintained the highest level of mission readiness possible during the entire quarter, except for six days. The squadron's performance helped the entire wing by significantly bolstering the TFW's overall “C” average. Unfortunately, the 174th experienced its first loss on 14 July 1968 when 1Lt Warren K. Brown was shot down by enemy ground fire while on an airstrike in the A Shau valley. Lt Brown was killed when his parachute failed to fully deploy after he ejected from his disabled aircraft.²² The 174th lost another aircraft, but rescued the pilot, when it went down due to suspected battle damage on 22 September, 1968. On that day, shortly after takeoff, 1Lt Kuldar Visnapuu felt a “thud” and his F-100C quickly decelerated. 1Lt Visnapuu attempted to return to Phu Cat but had to eject near the ocean. An Army helicopter crew picked him up, returning him within 30 minutes from the time he took off.

During the October – November 1968 timeframe, the Bats began flying missions over North Vietnam, due to a 37th TFW commitment, only to have the emphasis changed again, due to the 1 November “bombing halt” of North Vietnam, to Laos against infiltration routes²⁴. These missions constituted 60-80 percent of the squadron's daily sorties and the enemy normally fired at the pilots with a combination of 12.5mm, 14.7mm, 23mm, 37mm, and 85mm anti-aircraft fire.

The heavy concentration of ground fire caused the 174th to fly higher, in order to avoid most of the anti-aircraft fire, and drop a large number of “hard loads” on their missions. A hard load is slick bombs that can accurately travel from the higher release altitudes, caused by the anti-aircraft fire avoidance maneuvers, and still hit the target with a high degree of reliability. The change in weapons had little effect on the Bats’ results. During the October – December timeframe the 174th TFS was credited with over 50 confirmed KBA, over 190 destroyed hostile structures, over 150 destroyed bunkers, 25 destroyed gun positions, and various other enemy emplacements and sites.

Despite their prowess of bringing destruction to the enemy, the 174th TFS showed itself a friend to those in need. As Christmas approached, the men of the 174th sponsored a drive to help the children of the Kim Chau orphanage, which was located about 10 miles from their base at Phu Cat. By Christmas, the 174th had received and distributed more than 300 boxes of gifts for the orphans, received from individuals and small organizations in Iowa. Sioux City doctors also sent many boxes of medical supplies to one of their associates deployed to the combat zone. In fact, so many packages were received for the orphanage that parts of the packages were taken to the Qui Hoa leprosarium near Qui Nhon and the refugee center in Phu Cat village.

It did not take long for the 174th’s accomplishments to become widely known. By the spring of 1969 the Bats had been awarded the AFOUA, the Presidential Unit Citation, and were key contributors to the 37th TFW being awarded the Southeast Asia Outstanding Fighter Wing Award. Even the 37th TFW’s outgoing commander, LeRoy J Manor, lauded the “outstanding skills of the Air National Guard personnel.”

Although the 174th began preparing for their departure in May, 1969, their performance never lagged. During this time the 174th continued to lead the Wing in such important areas as low dud rates for munitions, repeatedly being the best of the four squadrons. This was especially important since the enemy often used “dud” munitions, or those weapons that were released but did not explode, as booby-traps, on friendly personnel. The enemy did this by disassembling the dud weapons and using the explosives against friendly ground personnel. Additionally, the 174th continued to rack up amazing statistics such as having over 98 percent of its sorties effective and consistently having the highest OR rates in the Wing.

The 174th redeployed from Phu Cat on 12 May 1969, and arrived in Sioux City, Iowa, on 14 May 1969 and prepared for subsequent deactivation. The Bats left behind a memorial of achievements and a legacy of greatness. Prior to their departure from Phu Cat, Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Forces (CINCPACAF) sent his congratulations and thanks to the officers and airmen of the 174th for their “splendid contribution to the war effort in Vietnam.”²⁸ The men of the 174th brought home 12 Silver Stars, 35 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 30 Bronze Star Medals, 115 Air Force Commendation Medals (AFCMs), and some 300 Air Medals.²⁹ Best of all for the men of the 174th, when they returned home they got something that few Vietnam Veterans received, that is, a hearty “Welcome Home” by an entire community that was thankful for their service to its country.

The 185th converted to the A-7D in 1977. While flying the A-7s, the unit won the Spaatz trophy for the second time in 1990, recognizing them as the best Air Guard unit in the Country. The

Unit also was awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit award five times – 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989, and 1991. In addition, the 185th's Logistic Group is a two-time winner of the Daedalian Trophy which recognizes the best maintenance team in the ANG.

In 1989, the unit won the 12th Air Force A-7 gunnery meet for the second time. Also in 1989, the 185th received the Gunsmoke A-7 Maintenance Team Award for its aircraft.

National attention focused on the unit in 1989. Crippled United Airline Flight 232, outbound from Denver to Philadelphia via Chicago, and under the guidance of Captain Al Haynes, was forced to crash land at the Sioux City Airport. With one engine out, and its' hydraulic and backups not operating, the pilot could only turn the plane in one direction. With its' key role in the crash recovery and rescue of survivors in the crash, the quick efforts of the 185th undoubtedly saved numerous lives and showed the nation the true heart of the unit. A photo of Colonel Dennis Neilson carrying a 2-year old Spencer Baily from the wreckage became a symbol of compassion. Journalists from around the country called Colonel Neilson a hero. He simply stated, "God saved this child, I only carried him."

On December 19, 1991, the 185th received its first F-16s. On March 16, 1992, the 185th Tactical Fighter Group was redesignated the 185th Fighter Group. On April 15, the unit was rated operational. As the Air Guard standardized its' structure, the 185th was designated the 185th Fighter Wing. The F-16 would be the last jet that the unit would fly before conversion to KC135 tankers in 2003. The 185th continued to be an award-winning unit. In 1994, the unit picked up the Winston P. Wilson Award as well as the Air Force Association Outstanding Air National Guard Unit Award. In 1999, Congress appropriated \$6.5 million dollars for the Air National Guard Aircraft Paint Facility located on base. The facility at the 185th has become top-notch, reflecting the quality of work that has been synonymous with the unit for over 50 years.

As there continues to be turmoil in the world, the 185th Fighter Wing has proudly served wherever needed. From our active duty foundation during World War II, our involvement in Korea and Vietnam, to our present day missions or Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Enduring Freedom, the 185th has consistently been the tip of the sword, leading the way. The Rainbow concept of units swapping out started during Operation Provide Comfort 10 years ago. The initial trial of this concept included Air Guard units from Sioux Falls, Denver, as well as the 185th. It worked so seamlessly, and so successfully, it has become part of the Air Force Standard. The unit has always been ready to answer the call. The 185th trains for real-world missions. The unit has always been ready to support all worldwide missions whether it's abroad in Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Curacao, Belgium, Turkey, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Denmark, Iraq, England, Italy, and Germany or in the states.

On March 12th, 1998, 93 members of the 185th Fighter Wing deployed to Al-Jabar Airbase in Kuwait to take part in Operation Southern Watch under the command of Colonel John Janson. The contingent of airmen and officers departed Sioux City in subzero temperatures and would be among the 140 who would serve the 5 week deployment in hot and humid Kuwait.

Operation Southern watch was the joint-forces effort of enforcing the southerly no-fly zone in the Middle East, established at the conclusion of Operation Desert Storm. It would be the second

trip to the Gulf Region by the 185th (following a 1996 deployment to Turkey). Al-Jabar AB was located 50 miles from the Iraqi border, allowing for quick response times to crisis situations in the hostile areas.

The 185th served side-by-side with the 27th Fighter Wing (active duty) from Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico. The units performed exceptional, attested by the fact all flights were on schedule and no major maintenance problems. On April 17th, the final members of the unit returned home, leaving behind the 115 degree heat of Kuwait.

On December 20th, 2002, the 185th marked the last day of Operational Flying for the 185th Fighter Wing, as pilots Jim Walker, Chuck Taylor, Dave Page, and Dave McKinney walked off the flight line following their flight.

On January 16, 2003, the biggest change in the long and storied history of the 185th Fighter Wing took place as the final of five F-16 's left the base headed for Syracuse, New York. Minutes later, the hundreds of people who gathered for the final farewell to fighter planes at the 185th got a glimpse of the future as a KC-135 tanker arrived on base.

In November 2003, the first KC-135 flew out of Sioux City. Within a year, the 185th was flying KC-135 out of Geilenkirchen, Germany supporting NATO AWACS refueling missions. Closer to home, the KC-135s out of Sioux City flew multiple missions transporting troops and supplies in response to Hurricane Katrina's devastation of the Gulf Coast.

2003- On Jan 16th, the final F-16 departs as the transition to the KC-135 begins in earnest. On Apr 23rd, the first KC-135 aerial refueling tanker arrives in Sioux City. On June 1, the unit officially is designated as the 185 Air Refueling Wing and transitions from the Air Combat Command (ACC) to the Air Mobility Command (AMC). On October 21st, the first mission with an all Sioux City crew flies out of Sioux City. On a sadder note, BG Don Forney passes away. General Forney served as commander of the 185th for over 23 years, the longest tenure of any commander. He was also a charter member of the unit in 1946.

2004- The unit was part of several milestones, in August, the unit participated in its first ever deployment exercise as a tanker unit. As part of Cope Thunder, the unit deployed 2 tankers, along with 57 personnel, and flew 11 sorties totaling 48 hours, completing 62 hook-ups and downloading 261,200 pounds of fuel. The following month, the unit deployed to Geilenkirchen, Germany (NATO AB) as part of air refueling support for the AWACS. The unit continues to prove its relevancy to the national defense and will continue to do so for years into the future.

In March of 2003, members from the 185th headed to Spokane, Washington as part of the Aircraft Acceptance Team. Headed by Captain Larry Fillipi, Maintenance Logistics Officer and Chief Master Sgt. James Hagerty, Maintenance Control Supervisor, over 40 members went to Fairchild AFB to receive additional training on the KC-13 5E aircraft the unit would soon be receiving.

Major Brian Miller, a 12-year veteran fighter pilot, admitted he was "less than enthusiastic" when he first learned about the conversion to tankers. "I owe the tankers guys an apology. I have

given them a lot of crap over the years," he laughed. "I figured if I can fly fighters, tankers would be simple. But it's not. I'm still challenged. It's actually harder to fly than a fighter." As you can imagine, these flying giants require a large crew. "I enjoy having someone to talk to up there," said Miller. "It's nice to get up and be able to stretch your legs on long trips. That's something you just can't do in a fighter. I'm not going to miss flying over the ocean and being cramped in the little thing (F-16). The tankers present an entirely different set of challenges to what is required to fly a fighter. "There isn't a quick response time when "flying a heavy" (large cargo-style plane). And you have to think a lot more about what doing and how to do it," said Miller.

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The crowd included former guard members and current military officials and they saw the last planes leave bearing the logo of the Syracuse New York base that would then be their new home. When the KC-135 arrived, the 136-foot-long plane looked monstrous compared to the sleeker smaller fighter planes the base was used to seeing. The fighter plane history is as old as the 185th, which was established in 1946 when the first P-51 arrived. Since then, the unit has flown single seat fighter aircraft.

During the unit's tour in Vietnam, the unit flew 6,359 combat sorties totaling 11,359 hours of combat time in the F-100. Gordon Young, who was commander of the squadron over in Vietnam was proud of the outstanding job done and recounted that the unit was "more qualified and experienced than any of the Air Force units over there. Our maintenance was so superb that we flew many more missions than any other unit in Vietnam in that year we were there. We could have almost all of our aircraft in commission almost every day, which is unheard of today."

On December 19th, 1991, the 185th received its first F-16s. The F-16 is the last jet the unit would fly before the conversion to the KC-135. When the unit converted to the F-16, it gave the State of Iowa two Air Guard fighter jet units. Only a small handful of states in the country had such a distinction. With the downsizing of the military in today's world, the leaders of the Air Guard in the State of Iowa made sure the state could still have two Air Guard units and looked for other options.

The change to a tanker unit will ensure the 185 remains in Sioux City for many more years due to the high demand for tanker units in the military. Commander during the conversion process. Colonel John Janson, said for every need since the 1991 Gulf War there have been more than enough fighter units, so they were called up less frequently. "But every tanker unit has been involved in each contingency since Desert Storm, he noted. The tankers refuel the fighters, giving them a "bridge" to cross the country or the oceans without needing to land on the ground

for refueling. Instead, the fighter planes then refuel in the air saving the military time, money, and other valuable resources.

On April 23, 2003, members of the 185 and local media stood outside the main hanger, bracing themselves against the unrelenting wind, and watched as a KC-135E taxied onto the ramp and rolled into position next to an underground fueling station. The tail proudly displayed a stripe of gold with a bat head adorning the words "Sioux City" and a black outline of the state of Iowa with "Pride of Siouxland" painted in gold.

For members of the 185, the eight months between the departure of the fighter jets and the arrival of the first operational tankers offered no lull. Before pilots could start flying the tankers locally, a lot had to happen, both in training and construction.

David Dietrich was one of the first 185 Guardsmen to complete his four months of boomer training. He graduated on December 20th, the same day the 185th flew its last fighter jet mission. He had been practicing mid-air refueling with the guard in Grand Forks, North Dakota. "I refueled a B-52 yesterday," he said. It was really nice. I made three or four successful contacts."

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Captain Adam McLean, who is an instructor and pilot with the 185, had about 2,500 hours flying time in the KC-135 prior to coming to the 185th. McLean became a part of the unit after flying tankers with the Air Force in Grand Forks, North Dakota. McLean worked with other pilots in the unit to get them qualified in flying the KC-135, which is capable of carrying 200,000 pounds of fuel.

"A pilot needs about 60 hours of flight time in a KC- 135 to become initially qualified." said McLean. "For someone fresh out of pilot training, it takes about 1.000 hours to go to aircraft commander and about 1,500 hours to be an instructor pilot. But obviously, for other people here

who have flown other aircraft, that process is accelerated a little bit.

The base had to undergo nearly \$40 million in upgrades during the conversion process to make room for the larger KC-135 and reconfigure facilities for changes in personnel and operations.

In October of 2003, a new Fuel Cell/Corrosion Control Hangar was completed at a cost of nearly \$7.9 million. The new hangar allows the KC-135 to be fully enclosed in a facility, and is now the home of the fuel shop personnel. The old maintenance hangar (building 261) was remodeled and altered fire station opened with a final price tag of nearly \$4.5 million. The new station was in response to the increase of 11 fulltime firefighters and additional vehicles required to fulfill the new mission due to the larger passenger capacity of the new tanker and the potentially explosive fuel on board and on the ground.

With the additional space, all the fire vehicles and trailer equipment can be housed and maintained indoors. A special exhaust system allows for the vehicles to run indoors while doing maintenance and preventing the build-up of toxic fumes.

Another interesting feature of the new facility is the two traditional brass fire poles. These poles allow firefighters to quickly get from the second floor to the first floor when the fire alarm goes off. There are also separate bunk rooms for on-duty firefighters instead of the open bay situation of the old fire station, allowing for individual privacy at night. "The new fire station is just a more enjoyable place to come to work,"

Of the 30 former F-16 pilots, 22 are like Miller and have stayed with the unit to make the transition from the F-16 to the KC-135. The 185th still had people at various bases around the country getting training and gaining experience flying and working on the tankers. Miller said he had about 25 training flights before taking part in the historic flight Sioux City.

"It was really nice flying with the people you are going to be doing your job with. It just went to show that all of the training worked." said Miller. The main difference between flying an F-16 and a KC-135 is there are several pilots on board as opposed to the single scat F-16's once flown here.

According to Miller, the F-16 is much more automated than the KC-135. The KC-135 requires the pilots to rely more on their own thinking versus having a computer do a lot of the thinking. "It was nice having someone else help double check to make sure there were no problems," said Miller.

The boom operator for the flight was Senior Master Sgt. Jay Doran, who refueled a B-52 from Minot, North Dakota. "We caught up with them around Wyoming or Montana. We had 12 contacts with that one B-52," said Doran.

There were now three tankers at the 185th, with two being flown and the other being used for training of the maintenance crews. Miller said everything worked exactly the way it was supposed to work.

"Everyone else doing their job makes my job as a pilot stress-free. This flight was so smooth, it was just like we had been doing this type of flying for years," said Miller.

The unit also had two KC-135 at Forbes Air Force Base in Topeka, Kansas, where pilots and maintenance personnel were still going through training. Those planes were being flown about twice a day on training missions by 185 pilots in training.

440302	P-47	42-75205			
440625	P-47	42-75067			
440424	P-47	42-75620			
440424	P-47	42-75620			
440806	P-47	42-26933			
440918	P-47	42-26386			
450209	P-47	42-26541			
450213	P-47	42-26319			
430730	BT-13A	42-42976	TAC	Coffee, Paul S	Langley Field, VA
430805	P-47D	42-74833	MACOB	Beaudrault, Valmore J	5 Mi NW Langley Field, VA
430803	P-47D	43-74828	LAC	Bell, William M Jr	Langley Field, VA
430816	P-47D	42-74818	LAC	Wark, George T	AAB, Dover, DE
430904	P-47D	42-74793	BOSSP	Artwohl, William	1 Mi NE Richmond, VA
431210	P-40N	42-106369	TAC	Martin, Frank M	Berry Fld, Pt Moresby
440220	P-47D	42-75440	LAC	Wark, George T	Gosfield/Sta 154
440320	P-47D	42-76593	TAC	Moraga, Raymond N	Beaulieu/Sta 408
440320	P-47D	42-76325	TAC	Hutchins, Lloyd A	Beaulieu/Sta 408
440427	P-47D	42-76455	TAC	Brown, John P	Beaulieu/Sta 408
440427	P-47D	42-75418	TAC	Hutchins, Lloyd A	Beaulieu/Sta 408
440513	P-47D	42-75650	GL	Rock, Wallace E	Beaulieu/sta 408
440627	P-47D	42-76326	CBLEF	Horchler, George R	Beaulieu/Sta 408
440718	P-47D	42-75042	CRT	Mills, Floyd R	Azeville/A-7
440724	P-47D	42-26257	TOA	Rogers, James F	Azeville/A-7
440820	P-47D	42-8480	TOA	Moreland, Clarence E	Lignerolles/A-12
441006	P-47D	42-27235	TOAMF	Thoman, Robert C	Chievres/A-84
441117	P-47D	42-28863	CRT	St John, Ernest H	Chievres/A-84
441122	P-47D	44-20101	KCR	Cornell, William E	Neuville
441125	P-47D	44-19936	TAC	Rodgers, William E	Chievres/A-84
450119	P-47D	42-26147	TOA	Rollo, Robert (NMI)	Metz/Y-34
450129	P-47D	44-32968	LAC	Allen, Glenn C	Florennes/A-78
450226	P-47D	42-8481	KCR	Szymanski, Edward S	Le Bourget/ 2mi SE A-54
450326	P-47D	44-32758	LAC	Cannon, Michael D	Aachen/Y-46
450424	P-47D	44-33742	CBLEF	Marmon, Edwin L Jr	Fritzlar/Y-86
450503	P-47D	44-32921	LAC	Broere, Howard W	Fritzlar/Y-86
450508	P-47D	44-19562	CBL	Murphy, James E	Fritzlar/Y-86
450517	P-47D	44-20571	BO	Felker, Clarence E Jr	Freienhagen/ 2mi E
501119	F-84B	46-0602	MACB	McGraw, Harry L.	Sioux City MAP
470526	AT-6D	42-86161	CBL	Nystrom, Arthur W Jr	Sioux City AAB
470822	P-51D	44-73313	LAC	McGraw, Harry L	Sioux City AAF, IA

500201	F-51D 44-73585	BOoGW McGraw, Harry L.	6 1/2 Mi SSW Purcell OK
500222	F-51D 44-73142	LAC Nuree, Richard C.	Sioux City MAP
510326	T-6D 44-81533	LAC Rocky, Burton L.	Des Moines MAP
510508	F-84B 46-0543	FLoGW Green, Thomas E.	13 Mi WSW Wesley
510519	F-84B 46-0601	LACMF Oldis, Don A.	Omaha AFB
501105	F-84B 46-0601	SF Grier, Theodore R.	Sioux City MAP



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