

302 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

302 Fighter Squadron constituted, 4 Jul 1942

Activated, 13 Oct 1942

Redesignated 302 Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 21 Aug 1944

Inactivated, 6 Mar 1945

302 Air Rescue Squadron constituted, 1 Aug 1956

Activated in the Reserve, 8 Oct 1956

Redesignated 302 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 18 Jan 1966

Redesignated 302 Special Operations Squadron, 10 Apr 1974

302 Fighter Squadron, Single Engine and 302 Special Operations Squadron Consolidated, 19 Sep 1985. Consolidated organization designated 302 Special Operations Squadron

Redesignated 302 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1987

Redesignated 302 Fighter Squadron, 1 Feb 1992

STATIONS

Tuskegee AAB, AL, 13 Oct 1942

Selfridge Field, MI, 29 Mar 1943

Oscoda AAFld, MI, 19 Nov 1943

Selfridge Field, MI, 1-22 Dec 1943

Taranto, Italy, 1 Feb 1944

Montecorvino, Italy, 7 Feb 1944

Capodichino, Italy, 6 Mar 1944

Ramitelli Afld, Italy, 28 May 1944-6 Mar 1945
Williams AFB, AZ, 8 Oct 1956
Luke AFB, AZ, 23 Oct 1960
Elmendorf AFB, AK, 1 Oct 2007

ASSIGNMENTS

332 Fighter Group, 13 Oct 1942-6 Mar 1945
2348th Air Reserve Flying Center, 8 Oct 1956
Fourth Air Force, 24 Jun 1960
Sixth Air Force Reserve Region, 1 Sep 1960
Western Air Force Reserve Region, 31 Dec 1969
Tenth Air Force, 8 Oct 1976
Fourth Air Force, 1 Mar 1983
944 Tactical Fighter (later, 944 Fighter) Group, 1 Jul 1987
944 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992
477 Fighter Group, 1 Oct 2007

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-40, 1943
P-39, 1943-1944
P-47, 1944
P-51, 1944-1945
SA(later, HU)-16, 1956-1971
HH-34, 1971-1974
CH-3, 1974-1987
HH-3, 1985-1987
F-16, 1987

COMMANDERS

None (not manned), 13 Oct 1942-Mar 1943
2LT William T. Mattison, 11 Mar 1943
1LT Robert B. Tresville, 29 May 1943
1LT Edward C. Gleed, 6 Jul 1943
Capt Melvin T. Jackson, 22 Apr 1944
Capt Vernon V. Haywood, Jan 1945-unkn
Maj Alvin J. Moser Jr., 8 Oct 1956
Lt Col William D. Hardy, 4 Jan 1960
Maj Cortez C. Brown (additional duty), 18 Mar 1960
Col Alvin J. Moser Jr., 9 May 1960
Col Victor M Coale, Dec 1967
Lt Col Henry E. Sherrill, 19 Mar 1971-unkn
Lt Col Paul B. Heironimus, unkn
Lt Col Amos R. Dreessen, unkn
Lt Col William B. McDaniel, Apr 1973

Lt Col Thomas R. Cooper, 26 Jul 1976
Lt Col Peter T. Pomonis, 10 Sep 1976
Col Thomas R. Cooper, Sep 1978
Lt Col Bruce P. Wood, 26 Aug 1980
Col James W. Matchette, 15 May 1981
Col Daniel L. Blanton, 28 Sep 1983
Maj Paul R. Davis, 27 Aug 1984
Lt Col Jon E. Hannan, 1 Sep 1985
None (not manned), 1-30 Jun 1987
Lt Col Stephen S. Summers, by Jan 1988
Lt Col Robert L. Brown, 1 Mar 1991
Lt Col Floyd C. Williams, 13 Sep 1992
Lt Col Roger A. Binder, 14 Oct 1995
Lt Col Patrick J. Shay, 13 Jul 1997
Lt Col Lance D. Undhjem, 11 Jul 1999
Lt Col Anthony J. Comtois, 15 Jul 2001
Maj Alan J. Shawcross, 5 Apr 2003
Lt Col Leonard S. Dick, 29 Apr 2003
Lt Col Thomas P. Harwood III, 11 Sep 2003
Lt Col Donald R. Lindberg, 1 Mar 2005
Lt Col Hubert C. Hegtvedt, 1 Oct 2007
Lt Col David Piffarerio, 1 Oct 2010
Lt Col Brett Paola, 4 Jan 2013
Lt Col Brian J. Budde, 1 Jun 2018
Lt Col Jeremy F. Weihrich, 3 Oct 2020

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Rome-Arno

Normandy

Northern France

Southern France

Rhineland

North Apennines

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1974-31 Dec 1975

1 Jul 1987-31 Aug 1989

1 Jan 1990-31 Dec 1991

1 Jan 1992-30 Jun 1993

28 Nov 1993-6 Feb 1994

6 Sep 1998-5 Sep 2000

1 Oct 2007-14 Sep 2009

1 Oct 2011-30 Sep 2013

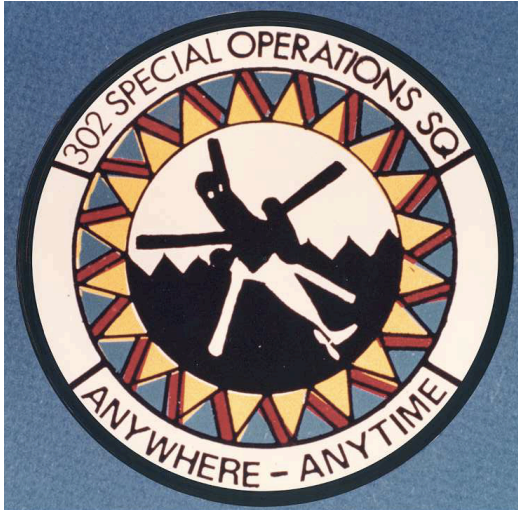
EMBLEM



On & light blue disc, border red, a red devil, proper, winged white, trimmed yellow" running toward dexter over white cloud formation, edged yellow, in base, holding in the left hand a white a yellow pitchfork with skull on tip of handle and holding a white and yellow aerial machine gun under the right arm, as per record drawing. Representing an all-out effort in advance with speed, purpose, and daring, the devil symbolize the unified go get 'em spirit of the squadron.



302 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron @1966



The black and white center depicting a helicopter against a symbolic Arizona mountain range defines the day/night operational capabilities of the unit. The red, blue, and yellow ring surrounding the center represents both the desert sun as well as the stand traditional of the colors. The black and white outer ring contains the unit name which also provides the mission description, and the motto of the Air Commando.



A disc between two scrolls, all edged with the upper scroll inscribed with the unit motto in gold letters; the itself blazoned as follows: Lozengy or and azure, on a pale gules a pile reversed of the first; on a chief nebuly quartered argent and sable, an annulet counterchanged. **SIGNIFICANCE.** The primary mission of the organization is to conduct day/night infiltration, exfiltration, reinforcement and resupply into hostile controlled territory, and limited photo reconnaissance operations is alluded to by the white and black quartered chief, an annulet simulating camera lens and a broad vertical band for danger. The reversed pile on the rend alludes to aerial spray operations, and the lozengy background represents the aerial dispensing of leaflets, a reference to psychological operations. Blue and golden yellow are the Air Force

colors. (Approved, 6 Jun 1975)



302 Special Operations Squadron emblem: A disc between two scrolls, all edged with gold, the upper scroll inscribed with the unit motto in gold letters; the disc itself blazoned as follows: Lozengy or and azure, on a pale gules a pile reversed of the first; on a chief nebuly quartered argent and sable, an annulet counterchanged. Motto: ANYWHERE ANYTIME. **SIGNIFICANCE.** The primary mission of the organization is to conduct day/night infiltration, exfiltration, reinforcement and resupply into hostile controlled territory, and limited photo reconnaissance operations is alluded to by the white and black quartered chief, an annulet simulating camera lens, and a broad vertical band for danger. The reversed pile on the band alludes to aerial spray operations, and the lozengy background represents the aerial dispensing of leaflets, a reference to psychological operations. Blue and golden yellow are the Air Force colors.





302 Fighter Squadron emblem: On a disc Celeste border Gules, a devil of the second Proper, winged Argent, trimmed Or, running toward dexter over cloud formation of the third, edged of the fourth, in base, holding in the left hand a pitch fork with skull on tip of handle White, trimmed Yellow, and holding an aerial machine gun under the right arm White, trimmed Yellow, all within a narrow border Blue. Attached below the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "302D FIGHTER SQ" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The emblem represents an all out effort in advance with speed, purpose and daring. The devil, holding a machine gun and pitchfork, represents the Squadron's spirit. (Approved, 2 Nov 1944; slightly altered, 25 May 2007)

MOTTO

Sun Devils
Hellions

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO and MTO, 17 Feb 1944-20 Feb 1945.

Activated 13 Oct 1942 at Tuskegee Army Air Base, Ala, as one of four squadrons of the 332d Fighter Group. Few personnel were assigned, and a shortage of aircraft delayed training until the squadron reached Selfridge Field in late March 1943. After that date adequate people and aircraft permitted operational training to commence. The squadron used P-40s for initial training and added P-39s about August 1943. The First Air Force inaugurated a strenuous training program in August, including simulated combat missions, and in December the 302d moved to Camp Patrick Henry, Va, for oversea movement.

Moved to the Mediterranean aboard the SS William Few, departing Hampton Roads port of embarkation on 3 Jan 1944 and arriving at Taranto, Italy, on 1 February. The 302d Fighter Squadron took up station at Montecorvino, Italy, on 7 February and flew its first mission, in P-39s, on 17 February. During the remainder of February and until 22 May, at which time it passed

from control of Twelfth Air Force to Fifteenth Air Force, the squadron was involved in harbor protection, point to point patrols, convoy escort, and armed reconnaissance, with a few strafing and some air rescue missions. After joining Fifteenth Air Force the unit's primary duty was to provide escort for heavy bombers striking enemy oil and industrial targets in central Europe and the Balkans in support of the Normandy invasion. The 302d often strafed targets of opportunity such as parked aircraft and vehicles.

In August the squadron helped prepare the way for the invasion of southern France by attacking enemy positions on the French coast and by escorting bombers in attacks on the assault beaches. During September the squadron hit targets in Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, and in October airdromes in Greece were added to these targets. During the winter of 1944-1945 the 302d was employed primarily to escort heavy bombers attacking oil installations, ordnance plants, and marshalling yards in Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. By February 1945, however, a shortage of trained personnel throughout the 332d Fighter Group became acute. A decision was made to reduce the 302d Fighter Squadron by assigning its planes and people to the group's other squadrons, bringing them up to strength. By 1 March the 302d had virtually no personnel or planes, and on 6 March it inactivated.

The 302d Air Rescue Squadron activated in the Reserve at Williams AFB, Ariz, on 8 Oct 1956. The unit trained with SA-16 (later, HU-16) aircraft, 1956-1971, under supervision, in turn, of the 2348th Air Reserve Flying Center, Fourth Air Force; Sixth Air Force Reserve Region; and Western Air Force Reserve Region, undergoing a move without personnel to Luke AFB, Ariz, on 23 Oct 1960. During 1971 the unit converted to HH-34 helicopters, which were used in rescue operations and training until April 1974, under supervision of Western Air Force Reserve Region. Effective 10 Apr 1974 the squadron was redesignated as the 302d Special Operations Squadron. It converted to CH-3E helicopters in 1974, since the CH-3 was more in line with special operations training missions than the HH-34. In October 1976 the squadron transferred to the direct control of Tenth Air Force (Reserve), and in March 1983, to Fourth Air Force (Reserve) (later, Fourth Air Force).

Trained in the Reserve for and performed search and rescue, in addition to some medical air evacuation missions, mainly in the southwestern United States, 1956-1974. In 1974, mission changed to training for a combat SAR role, while continuing to perform some search and rescue. Changed, in mid-1987, to a fighter role and trained for counterair, interdiction, and close air support missions. Deployed several times since late 1992 to Turkey to help enforce the no-fly zone over Iraq and to Italy to support UN air operations in the Balkans.

Discounting the A-37 units' earlier interlude, the Air Force Reserve became engaged in special operations in April 1974 when the 302d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron converted from HH-34 rescue operations to CH-3Es at Luke AFB, Arizona. The squadron's new special operations mission required it to become proficient in helicopter day/night infiltration, exfiltration, reinforcement, and resupply operations. A second special operations unit was created when the 919th Tactical Airlift Group and its 711th Squadron converted from C-130Bs to AC-130As at Duke Field, Eglin AFB, on July 1, 1975. The AC-130A was a close support version

of the C-130A and had more powerful engines. It was armed with 7.62-mm miniguns and 20-, 40-, and 105-mm cannon and equipped with searchlight and sensors, including infrared target acquisition and direct-view intensification sights.

The other spectacular operation in 1980 occurred in the early morning hours of November 21, 1980, when fire engulfed the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Unable to rescue numerous persons trapped on the upper floors, civil authorities requested assistance from the consolidated command post at nearby Nellis AFB in Nevada. Deployed to Nellis for a Red Flag exercise, crews from the Air Force Reserve 302d Special Operations Squadron quickly responded. Using the hoist system integral to their CH-3E helicopters, the reservists saved fifteen hotel guests who had been trapped on isolated balconies, beyond the reach of any other means of rescue, and two other guests from the hotel roof.

AFRES Special Operations Unit Activities

21713

302d Special Operations Squadron (CH-3E)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
9 Jul 75	F-104 crash support.
14 Oct 75	Picked up downed F-15 pilot 80 miles Northeast of Luke AFB AZ.
23 Dec 75	Medevaced Air Force Academy Cadet involved in automobile accident near Grand Canyon.
30 Jan 76	Rescued a German student pilot who had ejected from his disabled F-104 near Ashford, AZ.
10 Mar 76	Transported F-104 pilot who ejected over the Gila Bend Gunnery Range to Luke AFB.
27 Jul 76	Searched and rescued a 14-year old girl lost near Payson AZ.
17 Aug 76	Picked up F-4 crew after they ejected near Castle Springs AZ.
30 Oct 76	Assisted Arizona Civil Air Patrol personnel locate downed civilian aircraft near Bagdad AZ.
19 Jan 77	Transported 20 visiting Argentine Air Force Cadets to Gila Bend Range AZ for F-4 live fire demonstration.
6 Feb 77	Transported burn victim from farm to county hospital.
5 Mar 77	Transported Senator Barry Goldwater (R. AZ) to Gila Bend Gunnery Range for inspection and live fire demonstration.
18 May 77	Transported Luke AFB personnel to Navy F-8 crash site and returned Navy pilot to hospital for examination.
2 Aug 77	Picked up A-7D pilot who ejected over Gila Bend Gunnery Range.
10 Apr 78	Recovered injured horseback rider from the Mazatzal Wilderness area and transported him to the Payson Airport for transfer to an ambulance.
20-24 Dec 78	During severe flooding the 302d flew 22 sorties in 35 hours recording 27 saves.
Oct 78-Sep 79	The 302d recorded 24 saves flying 36 sorties in 55.9 hours. Of this 22 saves came during flood rescue operations throughout Arizona.

30 Oct 83 CH-3 aircrews from the 302d Special Operations Squadron, Air Force Reserve (AFRES), saved 47 persons from flooded areas along the Gila River near Maricopa, Arizona.

Air Force Reserve Command officially activated its first F-22 Raptor unit, the 302 Fighter Squadron, in ceremonies at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, on 3 October. The 302 will serve as a Reserve Associate unit of the reactivated 477th Fighter Group. The second active duty F-22 squadron, the 525th Fighter Squadron, was activated at Elmendorf on 29 October. The 525th which formed in 1942, moved around Europe in its early days but settled at Bitburg AB, Germany, where it stayed for thirty-five years before being inactivated several years ago. Elmendorf will eventually receive forty F-22s to be split between the two active duty squadrons.

Six Air Force reserve F-16s from the 302 FS deployed to Turkey in December 1993 for operation provide comfort. The deployed aircraft flew 270 missions in six weeks with a utilization rate of 98 hours per aircraft per month.

First 1,000-Hour Raptor Rider: Air Force Reservist Lt. Col. David Piffarerio became the first pilot to exceed 1,000 flight hours in the F-22 Raptor on a recent check ride from JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. "This is a great milestone for the pilots, maintainers and contractors working on the jet and the F-22 program as a whole," said Piffarerio, commander of AFRC's 302 Fighter Squadron, an associate unit of the active duty 3rd Fighter Wing at JB Elmendorf-Richardson. "More important to me than this milestone is that the F-22 fleet is safely in the air and accomplishing the mission," he added after the record sortie, Nov. 4. Piffarerio began flying the Raptor at Nellis AFB, Nev., in 2002 as part of USAF's operational evaluation team. Piffarerio, who previously flew F-15Es, has served in a variety of roles flying the F-22. 2011

An expeditionary squadron of F-22s began returning to JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, last week after nearly three months of operating out of Andersen AFB, Guam, as part of a rotational theater security package in the Pacific. The F-22 deployment "was a typical movement testing the squadron's capability to rapidly respond and deploy to any environment with minimal notice and full combat capability," Elmendorf spokeswoman Capt. Ashley Connor told the Daily Report. While in the Pacific, the Elmendorf F-22 pilots-from the Active Duty 90th Fighter Squadron and Air Force Reserve Command's 302 FS-flew just shy of 500 sorties totaling some 800 flight hours, said Conner. The Elmendorf F-22s took advantage of the rotation to exercise with the USS George Washington carrier strike group during Valiant Shield, a joint air and sea exercise. More than 250 personnel and 12 jets deployed from Elmendorf in September. As these airmen and their F-22s began arriving back home, members of Elmendorf's 525th FS left with their F-22s for weapons training at Tyndall AFB, Fla., noted Connor. 2012

On 26 May 2006, at 3:56 p.m. EDT, Mishap Aircraft (MA) an F-16D, S/N 84-1326, assigned to the 302 Fighter Squadron, 944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base AZ, departed Key West Naval Air Station (NAS), FL, on an incentive sortie. At 4:08 p.m. the Mishap Pilot (MP) declared an emergency for a physiological event experienced by the Mishap Incentive Flyer (MIF). The flight terminated at Key West NAS at 4:10 p.m. The MP extricated the unconscious MIF with the assistance of NAS Crash Fire Rescue (CFR). NAS medical technicians performed prolonged resuscitation efforts. The MIF was transported by ambulance to a local civilian hospital for treatment. Subsequently, medical air transport conveyed the MIF to Miami's Mt Sinai Hospital. The MIF was pronounced dead on 28 May 2006 at 12:30 a.m. The 302 Fighter Squadron was

deployed to NAS Key West as part of a two week PATRIOT TUNA exercise. The incident took place during a scheduled incentive flight for the MIF who occupied the F-16D's Rear Cockpit (RC). The MA had flown previously that day without incident. Approximately one minute into the flight, the MIF began hyperventilating. The MP advised the MIF to "Go Oxygen 100%". There were no intelligible responses from the MIF after the first three minutes of flight. The MP made multiple attempts to regain contact with the MIF and continued to provide instructions to "Gang load your oxygen regulator" and "Drop your mask". Post flight analysis and laboratory test confirmed the MA, life support and personal equipment functioned properly. The Accident Investigation Board determined, by clear and convincing evidence that the mishap was caused by a lack of oxygen to the MIF during the climb-out when the MIF inadvertently stopped his oxygen flow to his mask regulator. Almost immediately after takeoff the MIF began to breathe rapidly causing the onset of hypoxia. Information in the MA Head UP Display (HUD) transcript reveals the MIF is uncomfortable with the amount of air he was getting. At some point the MIF attempts to "gang load" his oxygen regulator as he was taught in Life Support training. By gang loading his regulator he would have to move the emergency lever to the "EMER" position causing pressurized air to enter his mask, and he also move the diluter switch to "100%" which changes the oxygen flow to 100% oxygen vice a mixture of ambient air and oxygen. With a sense of urgency the MIF reached down and did the opposite of gang load to relieve the situation by turning the EMER switch to NORM and the diluter switch from 100% to NORM. In addition, the MIF inadvertently turned his regulator ON/OFF switch to the "OFF" position at the same time, preventing any oxygen or air mixture to move through the mask. Hypoxic, the MIF is unable to turn the regulator back on or drop his mask. The MP noted the three regulator switches immediately after landing in the NORM, NORM and OFF positions. There were three factors that significantly contributed to the mishap: 1) Communication difficulties between front and rear cockpits, 2) Hyperventilation leading to hypoxia, and 3) Regulator design and rear cockpit placement



Lt Col David A. Piffarerio, 302d Fighter Squadron Commander, receives the first ever 1,000 flying hour patch for the F-22 in a 4 November 2011 ceremony.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.
Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.