

319th OPERATIONS GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

319th Bombardment Group (Medium) established, 19 Jun 1942
Activated, 26 Jun 1942
Redesignated 319th Bombardment Group, Medium, 20 Aug 1943
Redesignated 319th Bombardment Group, Light, 3 Feb 1945
Inactivated, 18 Dec 1945
Activated in the Reserve, 27 Dec 1946
Inactivated, 2 Sep 1949
Activated in the Reserve, 10 Oct 1949
Ordered to active duty, 10 Mar 1951
Inactivated, 22 Mar 1951
Redesignated 319th Fighter-Bomber Group, 12 Apr 1955
Activated in the Reserve, 18 May 1955
Inactivated, 16 Nov 1957
Redesignated 319th Bombardment Group, Heavy, 31 Jul 1985
Redesignated 319th Operations Group, 29 Aug 1991
Activated, 1 Sep 1991

STATIONS

Barksdale Field, LA, 26 Jun 1942
Harding Field, LA, 8-27 Aug 1942
Shipdham, England, 12 Sep 1942
Horsham St Faith, England, 4 Oct 1942
St-Leu, Algeria, 11 Nov 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 18 Nov 1942

Maison Blanche, Algeria, 24 Nov 1942
Telergma, Algeria, 12 Dec 1942
Oujda, French Morocco, 3 Mar 1943
Rabat/Sale, French Morocco, 25 Apr 1943
Sedrata, Algeria, 1 Jun 1943
Djedeida, Tunisia, 26 Jun 1943
Decimomannu, Sardinia, 1 Nov 1943
Serragia, Corsica, 21 Sep 1944-1 Jan 1945
Bradley Field, CT, 25 Jan 1945
Columbia AAB, SC, 28 Feb-27 Apr 1945
Kadena, Okinawa, 2 Jul 1945
Machinato, Okinawa, 21 Jul-21 Nov 1945
Ft Lewis, WA, 17-18 Dec 1945
Mitchel Field, NY, 27 Dec 1946
Reading Muni Aprt, PA, 27 Jun-2 Sep 1949
Birmingham Muni Aprt, AL, 10 Oct 1949-22 Mar 1951
Memphis Muni Aprt, TN, 18 May 1955-16 Nov 1957
Grand Forks AFB, ND, 1 Sep 1991

ASSIGNMENTS

III Bomber Command, 26 Jun 1942
Eighth Air Force, Sep 1942
XII Bomber Command, Nov 1942
47th Bombardment Wing, 1 Jun 1943
2686th Medium Bombardment Wing (Provisional), 7 Jun 1943
42nd Bombardment Wing, Medium, 24 Aug 1943
57th Bombardment Wing, Medium, 10 Nov 1944
Third Air Force, Jan 1945
First Air Force, 1 Feb 1945
VII Bomber Command, Jul 1945-18 Dec 1945
First Air Force, 27 Dec 1946
4th Bombardment Wing, 17 Oct 1947
319th Bombardment Wing, 27 Jun-2 Sep 1949
319th Bombardment Wing, 10 Oct 1949-22 Mar 1951
319th Fighter-Bomber Wing, 18 May 1955-16 Nov 1957
319th Wing (later, 319th Bomb; 319th Air Refueling) Wing, 1 Sep 10991

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-26, 1942-1944
B-25, 1944
A-26, 1945
B-1B, 1991-1993
C-12 1991-1995
KC-135, 1991-1992, 1993

COMMANDERS

LTC Alvord Rutherford, 26 Jun 1942
Maj David M. Jones, 20 Nov 1942
LTC Sam W. Agee Jr., 27 Nov 1942
Maj Joseph A. Cunningham, 5 Dec 1942
LTC Wilbur W. Aring, 11 Jan 1943
Col Gordon H. Austin, 6 Jul 1943
Col Joseph R. Holzapple, 13 Aug 1943-18 Dec 1945
Unkn, 27 Dec 1946-2 Sep 1949
Unkn, 10 Oct 1949-22 Mar 1951
Unkn, 18 May 1955-16 Nov 1957
Col Donald D. Karle Jr., 1 Sep 1991
Col John R. Landon, 8 Jun 1992
Col Michael C. McMahan, 11 Sep 1992
Col Leroy Barnidge Jr., 7 Jul 1993
Col Stephen D. MacArthur, 1 Oct 1993
Col Louis L. Descoteaux, 9 Jun 1995
Col Dan R. Goodrich, 9 Aug 1995
Col Frederick F. Roggero, 14 Apr 1997
Col Mark D. Shultz, 14 Aug 1998
Col Anthony L. H. Haney, 16 Jun 2000
Col Jeffrey P. Kaloostian, 3 Nov 2001
Col Cathy C. Clothier, 16 Aug 2002
Col Lee E. DeRemer, 10 Jun 2004

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Combat, EAME
Algeria-French Morocco
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Southern France
North Apennines
China Offensive
Ryukyus
Air Offensive, Japan

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Rome, Italy, 3 Mar 1944

Florence, Italy, 11 Mar 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Jul 1995-30 Jun 1997

1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2002

1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2004

French Croix de Guerre with Palm

Apr, May, and Jun 1944

EMBLEM

Azure, a dexter mailed fist bendwise erased Gray, grasping a torch in pale of the like, enflamed Proper, charged with a flight symbol ascending palewise Argent, edged Sable, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "319TH OPERATIONS GROUP" 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 torch represents truth, dedication and leadership in service of the country. The mailed fist symbolizes strength in defense. The delta signifies air flight.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

The US Army Air Forces constituted the 319th Bombardment Group (Medium) on 19 June 1942. One week later, on 26 June, the Army Air Forces activated the group at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. In July, the 319th began training with its newly acquired Martin B-26 Marauders. Shortly afterwards the group moved to Harding Field, Louisiana. In late August, the group began its move overseas.

The Army Air Forces planned for the 319th Bomb Group to deploy to England to acquire some combat experience before moving on to North Africa as part of the Twelfth Air Force. The group's advance and ground echelons setup operations at RAF Shipdham and RAF Horsham St Faith, England, during September and October, but the air echelon had difficulties ferrying the B-26s across the Atlantic in time to meet up with its ground echelon before they deployed to North Africa.

On 8 November 1942, members of the 319th Bomb Group went ashore during the Allied invasion of North Africa. The 319th setup camp at Tafaraoui Airdrome, Algeria, on 18 November. Shortly afterwards, its air echelon arrived in North Africa with a mere 12 B-26s. The group moved to Maison Blanche, Algeria, the following day.

On 28 November, the 319th flew its first combat mission, bombing Sfax harbor in Tunisia. For the next few weeks, the 319th concentrated on striking airdromes, marshaling yards, railroad bridges, shipping, and harbor installations in Tunisia.

The 319th Bomb Group moved to Telergma, Algeria, on 14 December 1942. From there, the unit concentrated on attacking the shipping lanes between Sicily and North Africa to slow down the Axis movement of reinforcements and supplies to North Africa. But, on 27 February 1943, the Twelfth Air Force transferred the 319th's few remaining B-26s to other units, moving the group to Oujda, French Morocco, for reorganization.

Built up to combat strength, the 319th Bomb Group returned to action in June 1943. The group, stationed at Sedrata, Algeria, flew missions against Pantelleria and Sardinia besides striking enemy shipping.

On 26 June, the 319th moved to Djedeida, Tunisia, from where it flew numerous strikes against airdromes, roads, marshaling yards, communications lines, and docks on Sicily and mainland Italy.

The 319th Bomb Group moved from North Africa to Decimomannu, Sardinia, and became part of the Fifteenth Air Force on 1 November 1943. From this location the group flew many bombing missions against targets in central Italy and southern France.

After being reassigned to the Twelfth Air Force in January 1944, the 319th Bomb Group continued striking such targets as marshaling yards and bridges. However, the bomb group began flying more close support missions to assist the Allied advance in Italy. It flew missions against enemy targets near the Allied beachhead at Anzio as well as bombing the monastery of Monte Cassino. Before long, the German-held marshaling yards in Rome had become significantly important for supporting the Anzio and Cassino Fronts.

The 319th earned its first distinguished unit citation for its effective bombing of the Ostienne rail facilities in Rome on 3 March. Eight days later, on 11 March, the group earned a second distinguished unit citation for its excellent bombing accuracy while striking the main marshaling yards of Florence.

On 17 September 1944, the 319th Bomb Group began strategic bombing against targets in the Italian Po Valley. However, the Twelfth Air Force had to move the group closer to the target area because of limited range of the Marauder.

The 319th transferred to Serragia, Corsica, on 21 September. Bombing raids concentrated on railroad bridges in the Po Valley. The group flew its last B-26 Marauder mission on 31 October. It had flown 9,050 sorties on 417 missions, dropping over 12,600 tons of bombs, with the Marauder.

In late 1944, the 319th Bomb Group converted to North American B-25 Mitchell bombers. The group flew its first B-25 mission against railroad bridges in the Po Valley on 4 November. During the next two months the group flew 1,463 sorties on 76 missions, dropping 2,111 tons of munitions on railroad bridges, communications lines, and industrial sites in northern Italy and Yugoslavia.

The 319th received orders to halt combat operations in Europe and prepare for redeployment to the Pacific on 31 December 1944.

On 2 February 1945, the US Army Air Forces redesignated the unit as the 319th Bombardment Group (Light). It was equipped with Douglas A-26 Invaders at Columbia Army Air Base, South Carolina, in March, and shipped out to the Pacific in April 1945. The 319th Bomb Group established camp at Kadena on the Japanese Island of Okinawa in early July 1945.

On 16 July, the group flew its first A-26 mission, bombing Miyazaki Airdrome on the East Coast of Kyushu, the southernmost part of mainland Japan. Four days later, on 20 July, the unit moved to Machinato Airdrome, Okinawa.

During the next few weeks the 319th flew 698 sorties on 22 missions, delivering 742 tons of bombs on Japanese targets at Shanghai, the Ryukyu Islands, Kyushu, Chusan, and Nagasaki. After the Japanese surrendered, the 319th returned to the United States where it inactivated on 18 December 1945.

On 27 December 1946, the US Army Air Forces activated the 319th Bomb Group as a reserve unit at Mitchell Field, New York. The US Air Force transferred the unit to Reading Municipal Airport, Pennsylvania, on 27 June 1949.

The US Air Force established the 319th Bombardment Wing (Light) on 10 May 1949. It activated the 319th Bomb Wing in the reserve at Reading Municipal Airport on 27 June 1949. The 319th Bomb Group became part of the 319th Bomb Wing at that time. The wing was inactivated on 2 September.

Just over a month later, on 10 October 1949, the Air Force activated the 319th Bomb Wing, equipped with A-26 Invaders, as a reserve unit at Birmingham Municipal Airport, Alabama. The USAF ordered the wing to active service during the Korean War, but inactivated it less than three weeks later, having transferred its personnel and aircraft to other units.

On 18 May 1955, the US Air Force activated the newly redesignated 319th Fighter-Bombardment Wing at Memphis Municipal Airport, Tennessee, as part of the reserves. Assigned to the Aerospace Defense Command, the 319th flew Republic F-84 Thunderjets before converting to North American F-8B Sabres in 1957. The Air Force inactivated the wing on 16 November 1957.

The bomb wing became the host unit at Grand Forks, resulting in a significant growth in assigned units and personnel. The wing acquired four new groups, the 319th Operations, Logistics, Support, and Medical Groups, to manage and support B-1B and KC-135R aircraft operations in addition to supporting the 321st Missile Wing.

To reflect the fact that it was a composite unit, the 319th Bomb Wing was redesignated as the 319th Wing on 1 September 1991.

In line with the changing international situation, President George Bush decided to reduce the US nuclear alert force. Thus, on 28 September 1991, the 319th Wing pulled its B-1B bombers and KC-135R tankers from quick reaction alert duty, ending nearly three decades of such activity at Grand Forks AFB.

Shortly afterwards, the 319th Wing acquired the secondary mission of training for conventional bombing operations. With the inactivation of the Strategic Air Command, the 319th was reassigned to the newly established Air Combat Command on 1 June 1992.

In February 1993, the Air Combat Command dropped the 319th Bomb Wing's primary nuclear mission and gave the wing the primary mission of B-1B conventional bombardment operations. The wing began planning and training to support such a mission to counter worldwide regional threats.

Looking to the future, the US Air Force continued its worldwide restructuring process. The Air Force planned to restructure Grand Forks AFB into one of three major KC-135 tanker bases in 1994. Thus, on 1 October 1993, the USAF redesignated the 319th Bomb Wing as the 319th Air Refueling Wing and reassigned it to the Air Mobility Command.

1996 started with the men, women, and tankers of the 319 ARW deploying in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR.

The deployments continued as the 319th Services Squadron deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba where they supported Operation SEA SIGNAL, providing humanitarian assistance for Haitian immigrants fleeing political strife in their country.

The wing didn't stop there. In March 1996, members of the 319 ARW deployed to Istres, France in support of Operation DECISIVE ENDEAVOR in order to monitor flying in the airspace over Bosnia - Herzegovina.

The second half of 1996 was just as busy as the first with deployments to Qatar as part of the Joint Task Force Southwest Asia, Riyadh Air Force Base, Saudi Arabia supporting the enforcement of the Iraqi no-fly zone, and Rwanda for humanitarian efforts.

As if real world deployments weren't enough, the wing participated in several operational readiness exercises in preparation for an AMC operational readiness inspection.

In May 1996, the 319 ARW deployed for both an AMC operational readiness inspection as well as a large joint exercise testing the capabilities of 53,000 American and British service members.

When the AMC Inspector General briefed the wing on the results of their ORI the men and women of the 319th were ecstatic. The wing received an Outstanding rating for their performance during the inspection, becoming the first Super Core Tanker wing to perform such a task.

Numerous deployment taskings continued throughout 1997. The wing deployed to England to support the European Tanker Task Force, Saudi Arabia to support the Southwest Asia Tanker Task Force, Panama to support Operation CONSTANT VIGIL, and Turkey in support of Operation NORTHERN WATCH.

The wing experienced a change within its airframe during 1998. In June the 319 ARW accepted its first Pacer CRAG (Compass, Radar, and Global Positioning System) modified aircraft. Pacer CRAG upgrades were the most significant cockpit upgrades for KC-135s in a decade.

The deployments to the Persian Gulf and Europe in support of Operations DESERT FOX and ALLIED FORCE, respectively, continued for the 319th Air Refueling Wing in 1999.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 1 Dec 2010

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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.