23rd FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON

LINEAGE
76th Bombardment Squadron (Medium) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 23rd Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy), 3 Mar 1943
Disbanded, 6 Feb 1944
Redesignated 23rd Troop Carrier Squadron, 11 Nov 1944
Activated, 21 Nov 1944
Inactivated, 7 Sep 1946
Redesignated 23rd Helicopter Squadron, 24 Feb 1956
Activated, 9 Jul 1956
Inactivated, 8 Jan 1958
Redesignated 23 Tactical Air Support Squadron, 8 Apr 1966
Inactivated, 22 Sep 1975
Activated, 30 Nov 1975
Inactivated, 1 Nov 1991
Redesignated 23rd Flying Training Squadron, 15 Jan 1994

STATIONS
Salt Lake City, UT, 15 Jan 1941
Gowen Field, ID, 4 Jun 1941
McChord Field, WA, 20 Jan 1942 (operated from Jacksonville Mun Aprt, FL, c. 21 May-24 Jul 1942; Opalocka NAS, FL, 24 Jul-6 Aug 1942; Drew Field, Fla, 6 Aug 1942-24 Feb 1943 Batista Field, Cuba, 28 Feb-24 Apr 1943)
Drew Field, Fla, 8 Mar 1943 (operated from Langley Field, Va, 9-23 Ju1 1943)
Edinburgh Field, Trinidad, 5 Aug 1943 (ground echelon remained at Drew Field until 15 Oct 1943 then moved to Smoky Hill AAFld, Kan, where it was disbanded on 6 Nov 1943; detachment of air echelon operated from Zandery Field, Surinam, 15 Aug- Dec 1943)
Drew Field, 24 Dec 1943
Clovis AAFld, NM, 6 Feb 1944

Barkstone Heath, England 3 Apr 1945
Roye Army Airfield, France, 18 Apr-13 Jul 1945
Bergstrom Field, TX 19 Sep 1945-7 Sep 1946
Sewart AFB, TN, 9 Jul- 12 Oct 1956
Plahlsbourg AB, France, 1 Nov 1956-8 Jan 1958
Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 15 Apr 1966
Hakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand, 15 Jul 1966-22 Sep 1975
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 30 Nov 1975-1 Jul 1980
Davis Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Jul 1980 to 1 Nov 1991
Fort Rucker, AL, 15 Jan 1994

ASSIGNMENTS
42nd Bombardment Group, 15 Jan 1941 (air echelon attached to 45th Bombardment Group c. 21 May 1942, to AAF Antisubmarine Command, 13Oct 1942, and to 26th Antisubmarine Wing, 20 Nov 1942-9 Mar 1943)
41st Bombardment Group, 12 Feb 1943
AAF Antisubmarine Command, 3 Mar 1943
26th Antisubmarine Wing, g Mar 1943
I Bomber Command, 15 Oct 1943
XX Bomber Command, 6 Feb 1944
349th Troop Carrier Group, 1 Dec 1944 to 7 Sep 1946
505th Tactical Control Group, 15 Apr 1966 to 7 Dec 196
504th Tactical Air Support Group, 8 Dec 1966
Thirteenth Air Force, 30 Jun to 22 Sep 1975
602nd Tactical Air Control Group, 30 Nov 1975 -1 Nov 1991
58th Operations Group

ATTACHMENTS
Trinidad Detachment, Antilles Air Command, 5 Aug-Dec 1943

WEAPON SYSTEMS
B-18, 1941
B-26, 1941-1942
A-29, 1942-1943
B-25, 1943
C-47 1944-1945
C-46 1944-1946
H-21 1956-1957
O-1 1966-1968
O-2 1967-1971
OV-10 1975-1980
OA-37 1981-1991
UH-1H 1994

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS
TH-1H: 73-22133

23d Helicopter Squadron, H-21Bs, November 1956 - January 1958
Eighteen aircraft assigned to squadron. These helicopters were shipped from Brookley AFB, AL to Bremerhaven, West Germany, then assembled and flown to Phalsbourg AB, France, by 23d pilots. Dets #1 and #4 based at Phalsbourg with 10 H-21 Bs. Det #2 based at RAF Wethersfield, UK. Detachment #3 based at Wheelus AB, Libya. Ten helicopters shipped back to Brookly AFB in February 1958.

H-21B-PH
51-15857
51-15858
51-15859
51-15869
51-15871
51-15872
51-15874
51-15878
51-15880
52-8665
52-8666
52-8667
52-8669
52-8671
52-8673
52-8694
52-8702
52-8704

H-21 Bs assigned to Detachment #2 RAF Wethersfield, U.K. A H-21 Bs assigned to Detachment #3 at Wheelus AB, Libya

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS
1Lt William L. McDowell, 15 Jan 1941
Maj Robert O. Cork, 1 May 1941
Lt W. R. Stark, Aug 1941
Capt William L. McDowell, Aug 1942
Cpt John F. Moran, Aug 1943-unkn
Maj Tom H. Wheat, 21 Nov 1944-unkn
Maj James L. Blackburn, 9 Jul 1956-8 Jan 1958
LTC Robert L. Johnston, 15 Apr 1966
Maj James D. Metcalf, 5 Oct 1966

LTC Elwyn L. Crawford Jr., Nov 1966
LTC David S. Pallister, 19 May 1967
LTC Benjamin F. Starr Jr., 10 Apr 1968
LTC Thomas D. Alexander, 8 Sep 1968
LTC Dryden E. Morris, 1 Apr 1969
LTC George S. Thomas, 30 Nov 1969
LTC Budd F. Knapp, 24 Jan 1970
LTC Wayne A. Melandrez, 5 Jun 1970
LTC Kenneth C. Culp, 1 Mar 1971
LTC Lachlan Macleay, 17 Oct 1971
Maj Max C. Brestel, 31 May 1972
LTC John T. Williams, 9 Aug 1972
LTC Howard J. Pierson, 11 May 1973
LTC Donald W. Polglase, 13 Oct 1973
LTC Howard J. Pierson, c. 13 Nov 1973
LTC Donald W. Polglase, 16 Mar 1974
LTC Louis R. Batson Jr., 11 Jun 1974
LTC Edwin R. Maxon, 28 Feb 1975
LTC P. D. Kiernan, 27 Aug 1975
LTC C. A. Birchman, 1 Feb 1977
LTC P. H. Hafner, 21 Jun 1977
LTC Henry J. Cochran, 15 May 1978
LTC Ramon E. DeArrigunaga, 10 Sep 1979
LTC George R. Davis, 5 Oct 1981
LTC David C. Grumet, 21 Oct 1983
LTC George W. Williams, 9 Jul 1985
LTC Charles H. Jackson, 6 Mar 1987
LTC George DeFilippi, 3 Mar 1989-unkn
Unkn, 15 Jan-14 Feb 1994
LTC Daniel J. Beatty Jr., 15 Feb 1994
LTC Henry B. Gaither Jr., 21 Mar 1996
LTC Richard A. Kianka, 15 Jan 1998
LTC William L. Bassett, 26 Jul 2000
LTC Kenneth R. Arteaga, 6 Jun 2002
LTC Robert K. Abernathy, 23 Jun 2004
LTC Kyle F. Taylor, 23 Jun 2006
LTC Brett Hauenstein, 23 Jun 2008

HONORS

Service Streamers

Vietnam
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV

Tet 1969 Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Command Hunt VI
Commando Hunt VII
Vietnam Ceasefire

Campaign Streamers
Antisubmarine, American Theater
Vietnam:
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
TET 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Commando Hunt VI
Commando Hunt VII
Vietnam Ceasefire
Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Decorations
Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
15 to 30 Apr 1966
1 Aug 1968 to 31 Aug 1969
1 Nov 1968 to 1 May 1969
1 Jan to 31 Dec 1970
30 Jan to 31 Dec 1971
1 Apr 1972 to 22 Feb 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V"
1 Nov 1969-31 May 1970
23 Feb 1973-28 Feb 1974
24 Jan-2 May 1975

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
1 Jul 1978 to 30 Jun 1979
1 May 1984 to 30 Apr 1986

15 Jan 1994 to 30 Jun 1994
1 Jul 1994 to 31 Dec 1995
1 Jul 1996 to 30 Jun 1998
1 Jul 1998 to 30 Jun 2000
1 Jul 2001 to 30 Jun 2002
1 Jul 2002 to 30 Jun 2003
1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2004
1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005
1 Jul 2006-30 Jun 2007
1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2008

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Crosses with Palm
15 Apr 1966 to 28 Jan 1973
8 Feb to 31 Mar 1971
1 Apr 1971 to 9 Mar 1972

EMBLEM
On and over a light blue disc flecked with white clouds, bordure yellow, a caricatured figure wearing a brown flight suit, white helmet and goggles, and sitting on the fin of a large red aerial bomb, ringed white, and cutting a large yellow sky rope, by which the bomb is suspended, with a white knife held in right hand. (Approved, 24 Feb 1943)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS
Antisubmarine patrols, Dec 1941-Dec 1943.

Flew B-25, a B-23, a B-18, one P-38 and 10 Lockheed A-29's. The unit Commander was MAJ Virgil W. Dunlop who took the unit to Florida where coastal patrols, up to 75 miles offshore. One aircraft was lost during the move to Florida when it lost an engine on takeoff.

Command of the Squadron then shifted to a MAJ McDowell who was on hand for the units move to Opa Locka, Florida, then on to Tampa, from where the Squadron patrolled the Gulf of Mexico.
was deployed to Batista Field, Cuba on 28 February 1943 in this role, with its main equipment, the Lockheed A-29, although it shortly re-equipped with 16 B-25Gs. Throughout this period, the ground echelon of the Squadron remained at Drew Field, Florida.

The unit moved to Edinburgh Field, Trinidad on 5 August 1943 and, from there, to Zandery Field, Surinam between 15 August 1943 and December. During September the Squadron flew 56 convoy coverage missions (for a total of 298 flight hours), 48 anti-submarine sweeps (for 237 hours) and six "bauxite patrols" (totaling 16 hours). The unit also had elements at Guantanamo

Bay, Cuba, and rotated its crews from the "home" field in Florida to its far-flung operating elements about every 10 weeks. One flight was temporarily stationed at Caracas, Venezuela.

The Squadron was attached, at several points, to both the Trinidad Detachment, Antilles Air Command and to the Commander, All Forces, Aruba and Curacao (CAFAC), latterly with three B-25s detached from the main body to Antigua on 15 December 1943, just prior to the Squadron's final return to the U.S., by way of Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico. The only known action experienced by the squadron, despite its many hours on patrol, was when one of the B-25Gs was dispatched to watch over a German sub that had previously been damaged (and rendered unsubmersible) by a B-18C of the 10th Bomb Squadron. The sub was reportedly subsequently towed, under 23rd ASRON escort, into Trinidad and captured.

On 20 November 1940, the Army Air Corps established the 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium). The group was activated on 15 January 1941 at Fort Douglas, Utah, and placed under the command of Col John V. Hart. Originally, the group consisted of three bombardment squadrons: the 75th, 76th, and 77th.

In June 1941, the group transferred to Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho. During August and September, the 42nd received six twin-engine Douglas B-18 Bolo bombers and began a strict flying training regimen. This aircraft employed a crew of six, which included a pilot, a navigator, a bombardier, and three gunners to handle three .30-caliber machine guns that fired from the nose turret, tail turret, and through a tunnel in the floor of the fuselage. However, the B-18 aircraft were quickly replaced in October by the faster twin-engine B-26 Marauder bomber. The B-26s came to Gowen Field directly from the Glenn L. Martin Company's aircraft plant in Baltimore, Maryland, and were the group's primary aircraft for the next 17 months.

In the 7 December 1941 surprise attack by the Japanese at Pearl Harbor, 2,300 Americans died. The attack prompted Congress to declare war on Japan the following day and three days later on Germany and Italy. As the nation mobilized for war, in February 1942 the War Department transferred the 77th Bombardment Squadron to the 28th Composite Group in Alaska to fly coastal patrol missions.

In January 1942, the 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium) moved its headquarters to McChord Field near Tacoma, Washington. Its 75th Bombardment Squadron flew antisubmarine patrols from Portland, Oregon, while the 76th flew similar missions from Jacksonville, Florida. The 76th, which became the 23d Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy) on 3 March 1943, left the 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium) the previous month. The 16th Reconnaissance (later 406th Bombardment) Squadron was assigned to the group on 3 March 1942, while the 390th Bombardment Squadron activated at McChord Field on 20 March 1942.

In preparation for its transfer to the South Pacific, the group picked up two new bombardment squadrons--the 69th and 70th--on 26 February 1943. Both units were already in the Pacific Theater equipped with the B-25 Mitchell. Then in March 1943, the 42nd moved from McChord Field to Camp Stoneman, California, for some additional training before heading to New Caledonia. The group gained another unit in February 1944--the 100th Bombardment Squadron. Five tactical squadrons were now assigned.

The 42nd entered combat in June 1943, while operating from Guadalcanal and, later, other bases in the Solomon Islands. Aircrews from the 42nd attacked Japanese airfields, personnel areas, gun positions, and shipping in the central Solomons. For the first six months of 1944, the group was primarily engaged in the neutralization of enemy airfields and harbor facilities on New Britain. However, the group also acted in support of ground forces on Bougainville Island and attacked shipping in the northern Solomons and the Bismarcks. In August the 42nd began to bomb airfields and installations on New Guinea, Celebes, and Halmahera in the Malay Archipelago, and flew reconnaissance missions. These operations continued through January 1945 while the group operated from bases in New Guinea and the Philippines.

In March 1945, the 42nd moved to the Philippine Islands. This combat- hardened unit attacked shipping along the China coast, struck targets in French Indochina, bombed Japanese airfields and installations in the Philippine Islands, and supported Allied ground forces on Mindanao. In addition, the 42nd also supported Australian forces on Borneo in May and June 1945. It was during this operation that the group earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for its pre-invasion bombing of the Japanese oil refinery located at Balikpapan, Borneo, from 23 to 30 June 1945. The 42nd brought its World War II combat service to an end during July and August of 1945 while attacking isolated Japanese units on Luzon.

After the war, the 42nd ferried troops and equipment to Manila. In January 1946, the group moved to Japan where it served as part of the occupation forces. On 10 May 1946, the War Department inactivated the group and its 69th, 70th, and 75th Bombardment Squadrons.

Not quite seven years later, HQ USAF ordered the establishment of a totally new organization, the 42nd Bombardment Wing (Heavy). It activated on 25 February 1953, assigned to Strategic Air Command (SAC) at Limestone (later Loring) AFB, Maine. Assigned to the wing were the same three squadrons that had belonged to the old World War II group: the 69th, 70th, and 75th Bombardment Squadrons. The new SAC wing came under the direction of Eighth Air Force.

At first the wing had no aircraft to fly. As a result, B-36 aircraft were rotated in and out of the base so pilots could keep their flying skills sharp. However, by August all operational squadrons were flying.

The 42nd continued to expand over the next few years. On 18 January 1955, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron joined the wing. It flew propeller- driven KC-97G tankers. Further, the first Boeing B-52C Stratofortress assigned to the wing arrived at Loring on 16 June 1956. By the end of the year, the wing had completely replaced the older B-36 fleet. The wing was the first B-36 unit in SAC to convert to B-52s. When KC-135A tankers were assigned to the 42 Air Refueling Squadron in 1957, the wing became an all-jet force.

In the late 1950s, Strategic Air Command began a series of aircraft moves designed to disperse the fleet to enhance survivability in case of an attack. One result of this was the reassignment of the 75th Bombardment Squadron to the 4039th Strategic Wing at Griffiss AFB, New York, on 25 June 1956. In July 1958, wing aircrews were placed on alert because of tensions in Lebanon. Although tensions subsided, the wing continued to upgrade its capabilities. For example, the

more versatile B-52Gs replaced the B-52Ds and increased the range and payload capabilities of the wing in May 1959.

In January 1962, the wing began to participate in the airborne alert operation nicknamed Chrome Dome. This realistic training mission was designed to deter enemy forces from a surprise attack on the United States because it demonstrated Strategic Air Command's nearly immediate retaliatory capability. The 42nd flew fully combat-configured bombers along a route that covered parts of Western Europe and North Africa. Under the name Hard Head VI, the wing flew similar airborne alert operations which were designed to monitor the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System located at Thule, Greenland. The wing launched two combat-ready B-52s every 20-23 hours for the duration of the 30-60 day operation. To keep the B-52s airborne for long periods, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron also performed a number of air refueling missions. In support of these annual operations, which lasted for five years, the wing amassed thousands of hours in the air and covered several million miles.

While the wing was busy supporting airborne alert missions, Cold War tensions between the United States and Russia came to a head. In October 1962, President John F. Kennedy informed the American public of offensive nuclear-capable missile sites in Cuba. As a result, Strategic Air Command canceled normal flying activity and increased the size of its airborne alert forces. The 42nd Bombardment Wing launched four B-52s on Chrome Dome and Hard Head VI missions, established the Loring Tanker Task Force, and placed all aircraft on full combat-alert status. To support this effort, the wing ended all military education courses, canceled leave for those not already off the base, delayed temporary duty assignments to other bases, and placed many on 12-hour shifts, seven days a week. Both the command and the wing maintained this posture until late November when tensions began to ease. During the 40-day crisis, wing bomber crews flew 132 airborne alert missions. Tanker crews from the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron flew 214 air refueling missions, transferring almost 24 million pounds of fuel to the B-52s.

In February 1965, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron began support for Young Tiger operations in Southeast Asia. From then on, aircrews deployed for Young Tiger missions regularly.

The wing lost a second bombardment squadron in 1966 when the 70th was inactivated, and its aircraft were dispersed throughout the command. However, in July 1968, the wing was back up to three tactical squadrons when the 407th Air Refueling Squadron transferred to Loring from Homestead AFB, Florida. The 407th also supported Young Tiger missions. In the same year, the wing deployed periodically in support of Arc Light operations.

In 1972 the demand for the wing's aircraft, crews, and support personnel increased significantly for Bullet Shot, Young Tiger, and Linebacker II operations. In December enemy fire brought down a B-52 and its crew. The aircraft was hit by a surface-to-air missile while over North Vietnam. Crew members managed to maneuver the crippled aircraft over Thailand before bailing out. All of the crew members were successfully recovered within a short period. This was the only time the wing suffered such a loss during the war. Wing personnel and equipment remained active in Southeast Asia operations until late 1973.

Following the Vietnam War, the wing participated in a number of strategic and tactical exercises

worldwide. In addition, the 42nd continued to provide tankers to support USAF air refueling needs. The 42nd also continued its 24-hour nuclear alert status until October 1988 when, after 30 years, the requirement ended.

Effective 31 January 1984, the history of the 42nd Bombardment Wing underwent a significant change. On this date, the Air Force combined the history and honors of the old 42nd Bombardment Group (World War II-era) with that of the 42nd Bombardment Wing. The newly consolidated organization retained the 42nd Bombardment Wing designation, but the wing's history now went back to the early 1940s, when the War Department first established the 42nd Bombardment Group.

Adding to its illustrious history, on 7 August 1990, the wing began to deploy aircraft, personnel, and equipment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Desert Shield. During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the wing sent bombers to Diego Garcia. The B-52 aircrews flew 960 missions (485 combat) in 44 days and dropped 12,588,766 pounds of bombs on enemy targets. In addition, tankers from the 42nd and from other units deployed to Diego Garcia and off-loaded 31,802,500 pounds of fuel to 648 receivers. Seven months after the start of the deployment, the 42nd began returning its people and equipment to Loring AFB. The allies had forced Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

Several organizational changes affected the wing during the early to mid-1990s. For example, on 1 October 1990, the 407th Air Refueling Squadron was inactivated, and two days later, President George Bush ordered alert crews to stand down for the first time in Loring's history. That December, Strategic Air Command stood down all of its alert forces. At the same time, the wing's home station, Loring AFB, prepared for closure.

On 1 September 1991, the 42nd Bombardment Wing (Heavy) was redesignated as the 42nd Wing. Two of its squadrons, the 69th Bombardment and 42nd Air Refueling Squadrons, inactivated at the same time. Then, on 1 June 1992, HQ USAF inactivated Strategic Air Command and reassigned resources such as the 42nd Wing to the newly activated Air Combat Command (ACC). On the same day, ACC redesignated the 42nd Wing as the 42nd Bomb Wing. The following year, the wing began to prepare for the closure of Loring AFB. The last B-52G assigned to the 42nd departed the base on 16 November 1993. Likewise, the final KC-135R left on 2 March 1994. Loring closed on 30 September 1994, and the 42nd Wing was inactivated the same day.

However, that inactivation was short-lived. A day later, on 1 October 1994, HQ AETC inactivated its 502d Air Base Wing at Maxwell and replaced it with the newly redesignated 42nd Air Base Wing. AETC further assigned the wing to Air University. The 42nd now serves as the host unit for Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex. The wing's primary mission is to provide support for Air Force mission requirements, Air University, and the Maxwell-Gunter community.

Reactivated in 1953 at Loring AFB (formerly Limestone AFB), Limestone, Maine, the group was raised in strength and status to that of a Strategic Air Command bombardment wing. The Pacific "Crusaders" of World War II cut their Cold War teeth on a latter-day peacemaker, the new giant B-36. In 1955, the 42d added KC-97 tankers to their growing force for peace. The next

year, June 1956, saw the wing's first post war change of aircraft, as the B-36 was replaced by the newer, modern all-jet B-52.

In late November, 1956, four B-52s of the wing performed the record non-stop flight over the North Pole and then around the perimeter of the Northern American continent.

October, 1957, brought another major change for the wing when the propeller-driven KC-97s gave way to the new KC-135 Thus, the 42d Bombardment Wing (H) (SAC) became the first operational all-jet bombardment wing in the United States Air Force.

The wing's reputation for reliability and know-how brought it an unparalleled challenge in September of 1958; the pioneer testing of the SAC airborne alert concept. Involving both bombers and tankers of the 42d, Operation "Headstart I" taxed to the utmost the capabilities of aircrews, aircraft, maintenance and support personnel. Among the critical problems encountered was the time compression of the maintenance cycle. Rigorous scheduling and close supervision paid off in a string, at one point, of 115 consecutive sorties launched without an abort.

By October 1958, B-52 bombers of the 42d accomplished long-range flights over Buenos Aires, Argentina and the North Pole. Operation "Long-Legs" took 42d bombers 10,000 miles to Argentina and back on a significant non-stop operational mission around the North American and across the North Pole. These notable flights aided materially in the collection of vital Air Force data regarding jet polar navigation and long-range cruise control.

Over 38,000 flying hours were registered in B-52s and KC-135s during the 24-month period. The B-52s logged over 24,800 accident-free hours. In November, 1958, one accident marred the KC-135 mark of 13,600 hours; however, 24-months of accident-free flying followed for the jet tankers.

May, 1959, brought the first B-52 "G" model to Loring. During early July, the B-52D crews and aircraft transferred out of the 42d to other SAC units and bases.

In the midst of growing pains with the "G" model and the new crews, the 42d climaxed 1959 by winning the monthly SAC Totem Pole safety award for the month of December. The years passed without an accident, in spite of tremendous operational demands in "Headstart II," the prolonged TOY to Goose AB and Ramey AFB, and the exceptional demands in training new crews into a new model of the B-52 bomber.

From 4 to 25 August a team from the 3908th Strategic Standardization Group, SAC's special aircraft evaluation unit, accomplished a thorough check of the 42d's aircrew proficiency. Both flight checks and written examinations were given to bomber and tanker aircrews, with near perfect results. This outstanding performance was indicative of the mission capability of the 42d. A later evaluation by the standardization group in May, 1961, produced similar results.

Finally, on 8 August 1960, the long-awaited and exacting Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) by the Eighth Air Force Inspector General began. B-52 s roared off Loring's runway to strike simulated targets their crews hardened by months of practice and tests the aircraft brought

up to a high plateau of maintenance efficiency. As the results began to pile in, it was apparent that the 42d had done it once again and had not rested on its laurels. Further ORI's in October 1960 and May 1961, produced the same "Outstanding' results.

For the most part, 1961 was a year of progress for the 42d. B-52s and KC-135s flew final missions for phase one of Operation "Hot Rocket" during February, placing within the top six in the Eighth Air Force Competition, thus allowing the wing to continue on to the second phase of the operation. B-52s of the 42d placed first, third, and fourth, while the tankers placed first, second, and 13th during March in the second phase of "Hot Rocket."

The month of March also saw several firsts for the 42d; first GAM-77 B-52G operational mission flown and first GAM-72A "Quail" missile arrived.

Beginning in January, 1969, the 42d put together three straight victories in the Eighth Air Force "Heads Up" bomber competition. Once again, 42d crews showed their superior proficiency, in a test of all scoreable bomber activities throughout the command.

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At first the wing had no aircraft to fly. As a result, B-36 aircraft were rotated in and out of the base so pilots could keep their flying skills sharp. However, by August all operational squadrons were flying.

The 42nd continued to expand over the next few years. On 18 January 1955, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron joined the wing. It flew propeller- driven KC-97G tankers. Further, the first Boeing B-52C Stratofortress assigned to the wing arrived at Loring on 16 June 1956. By the end of the year, the wing had completely replaced the older B-36 fleet. The wing was the first B-36 unit in SAC to convert to B-52s. When KC-135A tankers were assigned to the 42 Air Refueling Squadron in 1957, the wing became an all-jet force.

In the late 1950s, Strategic Air Command began a series of aircraft moves designed to disperse the fleet to enhance survivability in case of an attack. One result of this was the reassignment of the 75th Bombardment Squadron to the 4039th Strategic Wing at Griffiss AFB, New York, on 25 June 1956. In July 1958, wing aircrews were placed on alert because of tensions in Lebanon. Although tensions subsided, the wing continued to upgrade its capabilities. For example, the more versatile B-52Gs replaced the B-52Ds and increased the range and payload capabilities of the wing in May 1959.

In January 1962, the wing began to participate in the airborne alert operation nicknamed Chrome Dome. This realistic training mission was designed to deter enemy forces from a surprise attack on the United States because it demonstrated Strategic Air Command's nearly immediate retaliatory capability. The 42nd flew fully combat-configured bombers along a route that covered parts of Western Europe and North Africa. Under the name Hard Head VI, the wing flew similar airborne alert operations which were designed to monitor the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System located at Thule, Greenland. The wing launched two combat-ready B-52s every 20-23 hours for the duration of the 30-60 day operation. To keep the B-52s airborne for long periods, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron also performed a number of air refueling missions. In support of these annual operations, which lasted for five years, the wing amassed thousands of hours in the air and covered several million miles.

While the wing was busy supporting airborne alert missions, Cold War tensions between the United States and Russia came to a head. In October 1962, President John F. Kennedy informed the American public of offensive nuclear-capable missile sites in Cuba. As a result, Strategic Air Command canceled normal flying activity and increased the size of its airborne alert forces. The 42nd Bombardment Wing launched four B-52s on Chrome Dome and Hard Head VI missions, established the Loring Tanker Task Force, and placed all aircraft on full combat-alert status. To support this effort, the wing ended all military education courses, canceled leave for those not already off the base, delayed temporary duty assignments to other bases, and placed many on 12-hour shifts, seven days a week. Both the command and the wing maintained this posture until late November when tensions began to ease. During the 40-day crisis, wing bomber crews flew 132 airborne alert missions. Tanker crews from the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron flew 214 air refueling missions, transferring almost 24 million pounds of fuel to the B-52s.

In February 1965, the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron began support for Young Tiger operations in Southeast Asia. From then on, aircrews deployed for Young Tiger missions regularly.

The wing lost a second bombardment squadron in 1966 when the 70th was inactivated, and its aircraft were dispersed throughout the command. However, in July 1968, the wing was back up to three tactical squadrons when the 407th Air Refueling Squadron transferred to Loring from Homestead AFB, Florida. The 407th also supported Young Tiger missions. In the same year, the wing deployed periodically in support of Arc Light operations.

In 1972 the demand for the wing's aircraft, crews, and support personnel increased significantly for Bullet Shot, Young Tiger, and Linebacker II operations. In December enemy fire brought down a B-52 and its crew. The aircraft was hit by a surface-to-air missile while over North Vietnam. Crew members managed to maneuver the crippled aircraft over Thailand before bailing

out. All of the crew members were successfully recovered within a short period. This was the only time the wing suffered such a loss during the war. Wing personnel and equipment remained active in Southeast Asia operations until late 1973.

Following the Vietnam War, the wing participated in a number of strategic and tactical exercises worldwide. In addition, the 42nd continued to provide tankers to support USAF air refueling needs. The 42nd also continued its 24-hour nuclear alert status until October 1988 when, after 30 years, the requirement ended.

Effective 31 January 1984, the history of the 42nd Bombardment Wing underwent a significant change. On this date, the Air Force combined the history and honors of the old 42nd Bombardment Group (World War II-era) with that of the 42nd Bombardment Wing. The newly consolidated organization retained the 42nd Bombardment Wing designation, but the wing's history now went back to the early 1940s, when the War Department first established the 42nd Bombardment Group.

Adding to its illustrious history, on 7 August 1990, the wing began to deploy aircraft, personnel, and equipment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Desert Shield. During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the wing sent bombers to Diego Garcia. The B-52 aircrews flew 960 missions (485 combat) in 44 days and dropped 12,588,766 pounds of bombs on enemy targets. In addition, tankers from the 42nd and from other units deployed to Diego Garcia and off-loaded 31,802,500 pounds of fuel to 648 receivers. Seven months after the start of the deployment, the 42nd began returning its people and equipment to Loring AFB. The allies had forced Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

Several organizational changes affected the wing during the early to mid-1990s. For example, on 1 October 1990, the 407th Air Refueling Squadron was inactivated, and two days later, President George Bush ordered alert crews to stand down for the first time in Loring's history. That December, Strategic Air Command stood down all of its alert forces. At the same time, the wing's home station, Loring AFB, prepared for closure.

On 1 September 1991, the 42nd Bombardment Wing (Heavy) was redesignated as the 42nd Wing. Two of its squadrons, the 69th Bombardment and 42nd Air Refueling Squadrons, inactivated at the same time. Then, on 1 June 1992, HQ USAF inactivated Strategic Air Command and reassigned resources such as the 42nd Wing to the newly activated Air Combat Command (ACC). On the same day, ACC redesignated the 42nd Wing as the 42nd Bomb Wing. The following year, the wing began to prepare for the closure of Loring AFB. The last B-52G assigned to the 42nd departed the base on 16 November 1993. Likewise, the final KC-135R left on 2 March 1994. Loring closed on 30 September 1994, and the 42nd Wing was inactivated the same day.

However, that inactivation was short-lived. A day later, on 1 October 1994, HQ AETC inactivated its 502d Air Base Wing at Maxwell and replaced it with the newly redesignated 42nd Air Base Wing. AETC further assigned the wing to Air University. The 42nd now serves as the host unit for Maxwell AFB and Gunter Annex. The wing's primary mission is to provide support for Air Force mission requirements, Air University, and the Maxwell-Gunter community.

1961
7 AUG 90, 42 BOMBARDMENT WING DEPLOYED AIRCRAFT, PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT TO SOUTHWEST ASIA IN SUPPORT OF OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM.
1 OCT 94, HQ AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND (AETC) INACTIVATED 502 AIR BASE WING AT MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE AL AND REPLACED IT WITH 42 AIR BASE WING.

1956
KC-97 AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED TO 42 BOMBARDMENT WING (42 BMW), HEAVY OF 45 AD SUPPORTED 341 BMW, MEDIUM IN HELL FIRE MISSION BETWEEN 23 AND 25 OCT. 1956
42 BMW, HEAVY B-52 AIRCRAFT EXERCISED USE OF REFUELER AIRCRAFT IN OPERATION BOLD BOY AT THULE AIR BASE (AB), GREENLAND. 1956
42 BMW, HEAVY FURNISHED B-52 AIRCRAFT FOR RED SCRAMBLE OPERATION AT WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH ON 12 DEC. 1956
BASE OPERATIONS AT LORING AFB LOST C-45 AIRCRAFT IN CRASH NEAR MILLINOCKET ME IN DEC 1956.

1 OCT 94, HQ AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND (AETC) INACTIVATED 502 AIR BASE WING AT MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE AL AND REPLACED IT WITH 42 AIR BASE WING

42nd had been inactivated in May 1946 after serving in the Pacific Theater of Operations, and later as part of the American occupation force in Japan after the war. With these assignments, on 25 February 1953, Loring AFB became operational. During its early months, the Wing flew training missions and handled deployments of other units. In March and April 1953, aircraft maintenance crews began setting up full-scale B-36 operations. Ten B-36 bombers arrived in April 1953, giving the 69th Bombardment Squadron a full complement of aircraft.

On 7 January 1954, the 42nd BW was declared operationally capable of implementing its Emergency War Plan. On 1 October 1954, the base was renamed Loring AFB for Major Charles Joseph Loring, Jr., a native of Portland, Maine, who in 1952 dove his damaged fighter into enemy emplacements in Korea. On 8 October 1954, the 45th Air Division was activated as the primary base unit.

By 1956, 18 additional "nose-dock" hangars had been constructed northwest of the runway at Loring AFB. Each could accommodate the nose and wings of a bomber, and provided general aircraft maintenance space. Additional taxiways and parking aprons to accommodate aircraft movement to and from the new hangars were also constructed at this time. The steady progression of the Cold War necessitated continual updating of techniques and aircraft. The first KC-97 Stratofreighter tankers arrived at Loring AFB with the activation of the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron (AREFS) at Loring AFB on 18 January 1955. Because Loring AFB's B-36

aircraft were not equipped for air refueling, the tankers assigned to the base initially supported other units. The squadron's first in-flight refueling mission was completed on 8 March 1955. Eventually, 21 tankers and 30 air crews were added to the Loring AFB inventory to accommodate the refueling mission.

The first KC-135 Stratotanker, christened the "Aroostook Queen," arrived at Loring AFB on 16 October 1957. Its missions included electronic reconnaissance, airborne command and control, electronic warfare, military airlift, and aerial refueling of bombers under all conditions. By 6 December 1957, all KC-97 had left Loring AFB; 20 KC-135 tankers arrived by April 1958; and the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron attained combat-ready status 1 month later. On 10 November 1956, the Soviet Union threatened to send volunteers to oust British and French troops from the Middle East. President Dwight D. Eisenhower urged the United Nations to counter any action by the Soviet Union; SAC was alerted on 15 November to support whatever action the United States committed to follow. At that time, P.D. Eldred, a reporter with Associated Press (AP), went to Castle AFB, California, to get details about the B-52. Failing to get answers to technical questions then considered to be classified information, Eldred appeared to have manufactured his own answers. His article painted a dismal picture of maintenance requirements for the new bomber.
In response, SAC planned Operation Quick Kick, a flight around the perimeter of North America to coincide with the release of the Eldred story. The operation, executed by four 93d B W B-52s from Castle AFB and four B-52s of the 42nd B W, Loring AFB, took place on 24-25 November. The longest individual flight was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Marcus Hill of the 93d B W, whose flight lasted 31 hours 30 minutes and covered approximately 13,500 nautical miles (Hopkins and Goldberg 1986:59). Following the successful conclusion of the operation, several of the bombers landed at Baltimore International Airport and were met by television, newspaper, and newsreel reporters. The operation was given such great publicity that Eldred's story on the B-52 was buried by the headlines announcing Operation Quick Kick. The flights were hailed by the press as a warning to potential enemies and may have contributed to the Soviets quietly dropping the issue of sending volunteers to the Middle East.

Loring Air Force Base was home of the 42nd Bombardment Wing and its associated squadrons. The 42nd had its own unique history and contributed significantly to the defense of the United States during the Cold War. The 42nd Bombardment Wing began its history as the 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium) at Fort Douglas, Utah on January 15, 1941. The group was transferred to Gowen Field, Idaho in June of that same year with B-18 and B-26 bombers assigned. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, one tactical squadron moved to Alaska for coastal patrol while the rest of the group moved to McChord Field, Washington, in preparation for overseas duty. In February 1943, the group moved to the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific.

In June 1943, with the newly added 69th and 70th Bombardment Squadrons strengthening the group, the 42nd attacked Japanese targets in the central Solomon Islands. From January through July of 1944, 42nd aircraft bombed enemy harbors and airfields on New Britain and attacked shipping around the Northern Solomon and Bismarck Islands. In March 1945, the group moved to the Philippines. They attacked shipping along the China coast, bombed targets in French

Indochina, destroyed enemy installations in the Philippines and supported ground operations on Mindanao. The 42nd earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for support of an Australian invasion of a Japanese oil refinery at Balikpapen, Borneo, June 23-30, 1945. Following a transfer to Japan as part of U.S. occupation forces in January 1946, the 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium) was inactivated on May 10 of the same year.

On February 25, 1953, SAC Headquarters reactivated the 42nd Bombardment Wing (Heavy) at Limestone (later Loring) Air Force Base, Maine and assigned the wing to 8th Air Force Headquarters. The first B-36 Peacemaker bomber assigned to the 42nd arrived on April 1,1953. This was quickly followed by nine more during the next 11 days. This gave the 69th Bomb Squadron its full complement of 10 aircraft. By June 11, the 70th Bomb Squadron had its full complement of 10 B-36s. In August, the 75th Bomb Squadron began receiving aircraft. By August 31, the number of B-36s assigned to the wing had grown to 27: eighteen B-36D's and nine B-36H's.

On January 18, 1955, SAC increased the wing's mission through the activation of the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron. This added 21 KC-97s to the wing aircraft inventory and 30 additional aircrews to the manning roster. The 42nd Air Refueling Squadron was constituted the 42nd Air Refueling Squadron (Heavy) on November 29,1954. It was activated on January 18,1955 at Limestone Air Force Base, Maine and was assigned to the 42nd Bombardment Wing. The mission of the 42nd ARS was to provide aerial refueling to the 42nd Bomb Wing B-36s; however, the B-36 did not possess air refueling systems at that time. Because of this, SAC and 8th Air Force directed tanker missions to support other units. The first KC-97G arrived on February 15,1955, and was followed by six more in the next four days. The 42nd ARS received another 14 in March, bringing the total to 21 aircraft. One of two air refueling squadrons assigned to the 42nd Bombardment Wing, the 42nd deployed as a unit four times with their KC-97 tankers, twice to Thule AB, Greenland, once to North Africa, and once to Labrador.

The unit ceased KC-97 refueling operations in August 1957 and transferred its KC-97 the following month. The 42nd was without aircraft for a couple of months until it began receiving KC-135s in December 1957. The 42nd Air Refueling Squadron supported USAF and friendly foreign nations on a global scale, most often in the North Atlantic-European region. The unit has supported operations in Southeast Asia and numerous tanker task forces over the years. The 42nd Air Refueling Squadron departed Loring Air Force Base in March of 1994. Assigned aircraft included the KC-97 (1955 -1957), and the KC-135 (1957 -1994).

The 42nd Bombardment Wing lost its first B-36 on March 6,1955, when aircraft number 2030 of the 69th Bomb Squadron struck its right jet pod against a snow bank while landing at Loring. The plane, out of control, crashed and burst into flames. All eleven crewmembers on board at the time escaped safely with five requiring hospitalizations. However, the flames completely consumed the aircraft leaving only the tail section intact. On January 9, 1956, the first B-52 to ever fly over the New England area touched down at Loring, heralding the planned conversion of the 42nd Bomb Wing from B-36s to the new, all-jet bomber aircraft.

This B-52 remained only a short time, before returning to Eglin AFB, Florida. The bomber had been flown to Loring to undergo cold weather testing. Preparations began in September of 1956

when the 42nd Bomb Wing came under the control of the B-52 Equipping Team at Castle AFB, California, the only unit to receive the modern bomber at that time. In late October, Loring personnel met with their counterparts from Headquarters 8th Air Force in a planning conference. Here they learned that the wing would have to maintain a B-36 force capable of carrying out the wing's emergency war plan for as long as possible. This increased the difficulty of the conversion tremendously. To keep things as uncomplicated as possible, the Commanding General of 45th Air Division decided to convert the 69th and 75th Bomb Squadrons to the B-52s and leave the 70th Bomb Squadron fully capable with the B-36s until well into the conversion.

In January 1956, the wing began operating under a B-52 manpower document while still flying and maintaining the B-36s. Phase-out of the piston-driven bombers started in late February when 12 departed from Loring: eight to Tucson, Arizona, for storage; two to the 95th Bomb Wing at Biggs AFB, Texas; and two to a special SAC project. The departure of these aircraft allowed more aircrews to attend conversion training at Castle AFB. On February 13, the B-52 Mobile Training Detachment initiated operations at Loring and immediately began teaching B-36 maintenance personnel the basic principles needed to work on the B-52. Boeing Aircraft Company, manufacturer of the B-52 encountered several production delays, pushing arrival of the wing's first aircraft into June 1956. Naturally, this created new problems for the 42nd in maintaining a B-36 force longer than anticipated.

Finally, on June 16, 1956, the first B-52C (#3400) assigned to the 42nd arrived at Loring. The aircraft was christened The State of Maine. The bottle used to christen the aircraft contained the waters of both the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, signifying the inter-continental operating capability of the new bomber. In September 1956, the full-throated roars of the six B-36 piston engines were completely replaced by the screaming wail of eight J-57 jet engines. By now some 20 B-52s had been assigned to Loring. On September 6,1956, the last B-36 cranked engines and left Loring behind as it headed for a new home with the 95th BMW at Biggs AFB, Texas. Interestingly, three members of the original crew who had flown B-36 number 1097 to Loring in 1953 were also part of the crew on this farewell flight. With all the B-36s gone, the wing concentrated all its resources in attaining combat-ready status. By the end of December, production at Boeing had increased sufficiently to provide the wing with 44 of its 45 required B-52s. At last the conversion was officially complete.

Wing personnel had accomplished many actions and dealt with a multitude of problems to reach this point. The conversions had required modifications of hangar doors, realignment of taxiway lights, and assembly of numerous maintenance stands and equipment designed specifically for the B-52. On November 24, 1956, four Loring B-52Cs made a record non-stop flight over the North Pole and around the perimeter of the North American continent. As 1957 began, the wing saw the "C" model B-52 bomber exchanged for the more advanced "D" model as it rolled off the assembly line. Loring's "C" models went to the 3rd Bomb Wing.

The year 1957 saw the 42nd Bomb Wing participate in one successful mission after another. But not every mission turned out right. During 1957 and 1958, Loring crews experienced accidents which were both close calls and extremely grave. On March 11, 1958, a B-52 crew participated in an unscheduled special event that chocked up a first in the record books. A crew departed Loring to fly a routine bomber-training mission. But almost four hours into the flight the word

routine ceased to apply when due to the failure of some electrical systems and bad weather, the crew attempted the first-ever wheels-up landing. The aircrew abandoned the aircraft without injury, and the aircraft only sustained minor damage. The well-planned and skillfully executed emergency maneuver saved seven lives and a multi-million dollar aircraft. Such fortunate circumstances did not surround accidents involving four other B-52D aircraft. In a 21-month period, a total of 23 crewmembers lost their lives and four B-52Ds were completely destroyed.

On January 10, 1957, a B-52D was flying a training mission when a part of the airframe failed. The resulting explosion scattered debris over a four-mile area. The explosion blew the only survivor, a copilot, completely out of the aircraft, enabling him to parachute safely to the ground. On June 26, 1958, Loring lost another B-52 while ground crews were performing routine maintenance. Accumulated fuel from an undiscovered leak in a wing tank was ignited by an undetermined cause. No one was injured but the flames consumed the aircraft in less than an hour. One month later, on the 29th of July, a B-52D exploded in a grain field four and one-half miles south of the base. The cause was undetermined. The only one survivor was a standardization instructor pilot who was able to eject just prior to impact. Then on September 16, 1958, another B-52D went out of control after completing a practice-bombing maneuver over the state of Minnesota. The aircraft slammed into the ground with a tremendous impact. Four crewmembers escaped from the bomber but only the copilot survived. The others received fatal wounds from striking the aircraft as they escaped.

1959 was the year of yet another aircraft change for the 42nd Bomb Wing. In January, B-52Ds began leaving Loring in the first step of a SAC plan to convert the 42nd Bomb Wing to the new B-52G model and reduce the number of bomber squadrons stationed at Loring. Known as the B-52 dispersal program, it was one of several actions taken by SAC officials to improve the survivability and responsiveness of their bomber resources against the growing Russian-missile threat.

The tremendous expansion of SAC during the 1950s had placed large numbers of aircraft on a single installation making these locations attractive targets. Too many planes operating from a limited number of runways also increased the time necessary to get the SAC force in the air. For these reasons, the dispersal program planned to break the large B-52 units into smaller wings of 15 bombers each, relocating the new wings to bases of other commands in most instances. The dispersal program at Loring called for conversion of the 69th Bomb Squadron to the new "G" models and to send the "D" models to Bergstrom AFB, Texas, Turner AFB, Georgia, and Westover AFB, Massachusetts.

On May 21, 1959, the first B-52G, number 76500, arrived at Loring. By July 10, the 69th had received 10 additional "G" models. With this contingent of aircraft, it deployed to Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, for 90 days while construction crews revamped Loring's runway. At Ramey, the 69th received four more "G" models, completing its aircraft requirements. In the first week of July, the remaining 26 "D' models left Loring for the last time. The conversion was completed by December 1959, after the 70th Bomb Squadron received a full compliment of B-52Gs. For unknown reasons the 70th Bomb Squadron was not transferred but remained as part of the 42nd. The transfer of the 75th Bomb Squadron to the 4039th Strategic Wing at Griffiss AFB, New York, became official on October 15, 1959.

The 42nd Air Refueling Squadron joined the jet age between B-52 model conversions, exchanging the slow piston-engine KC-97 for the brand new KC-135 Stratotanker. Conversion planning began in January 1957 when SAC informed wing officials of the impending July transfer of their KC-97s to the 831st Air Refueling Squadron at Malstrom AFB, Montana. The new KC-135S were supposed to arrive in August with a full complement of 20 tankers promised by the year's end. The KC-97s began leaving in July according to plan; however, the wing did not receive its first KC-135 until October 16. By December 31, only two had arrived. The first KC-135 was number 140 and was christened Aroostook Queen. Two months later, the last KC-97, number 3192, departed Loring.

This event made the 42nd Bomb Wing the first all jet, bomber-tanker combat unit in SAC. The conversion went smoothly, with a few exceptions, especially in comparison to the recently completed B-52 conversion. The 42nd Air Refueling Squadron also had several unfortunate accidents with its new aircraft although not to the extent that the bomb squadrons had experienced. On November 25, 1958, a KC-135 had returned from a refueling mission and was making a touch-and-go landing. The aircraft lost power upon taking off again due to fuel control icing problems, and crashed approximately 3,000 feet from lift-off. Seven crewmembers were aboard; only two survived the crash. Two years later, another KC-135 crashed while landing at Loring. In this case a very hard touch down caused the nose gear to fail and fold up. A ruptured fuel tank set fire to the aircraft. Seventeen personnel were aboard the flight and all but one escaped the burning plane.

By 1957, the Russian's significant strides in developing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) had lessened the survivability rate for SAC forces in the event of an attack. The B-52 dispersal program addressed this threat by creating more targets and decreasing the amount of time necessary to launch the force. But the situation demanded more. The 8th Air Force Commander in May 1957 summarized the effects of Russian advances in technology to a group of newsmen as follows: "Back in 1948, when we wrote the first war plans, we thought in terms of retaliation within six days of an enemy attack. Then we cut it down to hours. Now we must be off in 15 minutes...."

In order to meet such response timing, SAC officials devised the one-third ground alert concept to ensure the survivability of a sizable force capable of an effective and immediate retaliatory strike against aggressors. In effect, the concept placed one-third of all SAC aircraft on continuous ground alert with weapons loaded and aircrews prepared for immediate launch. SAC established the Loring Alert Force in October 1957. Various B-47 wings supplied aircraft for the Loring Alert Force, maintaining an average of four to six B-47s on ground alert at all times. The 42nd Bomb Wing continued to support the force with an average of five to six B-52s and starting in June 1958, three KC-135s.

In July 1958, the Alert Force took over four wings of building 6000, turning it into a living area for its growing numbers. Using the large parking apron to the south of base operations as the alert aircraft area, aircrews billeted in 6000 were less than a mile from their aircraft. On July 15,1958, the Alert Force suddenly expanded to include the entire bomb wing. Russian actions near Lebanon were thought to be a possible imminent Russian invasion. The wing remained

poised on full alert for an entire week before international tensions eased.

On January 18, 1958, SAC had inactivated the 45th Air Division and had returned control of the base to the 42nd Bomb Wing. This ended three years and three months of air division control and reassigned the 42nd BMW directly to the 8th Air Force. The inactivation of the 45th resulted from SAC's efforts to streamline operations at Loring. The division had remained active until then to help coordinate Loring's complex three-fold mission: 1) maintain the capability to launch a bomber strike force; 2) maintain aerial refueling capability; 3) serve as a staging base for overseas movements. It had also aided in the conversion of bomber and tanker aircraft. But, the absence of the 45th was short-lived, as SAC activated it again at Loring AFB only 10 months later.

On December 1, 1958 the 42nd Bomb Wing was once again reassigned from 8th Air Force to the 45th Air Division, but this was the only command realignment of Loring's SAC units. The wing maintained control of its elements and remained the host unit of the base; the air division assumed the status of a tenant organization. The SAC dispersal program had increased the number of SAC bases and required an expansion of the air division's supervisory role. Prior to this, the elements commanded by an air division were co-located on the same base as the air division. Now, SAC extended the division's responsibility to organizations located on several bases.

The decision to close Caribou Air Force Station led to the 42nd Bomb Wing receiving its first GAM-77 (later AGM-28A) Hound Dog missile in December 1960. The wing formed a new squadron to maintain the inventory of air-to-ground Hound Dog and Quail missiles transferred from the 3080th Aviation Depot Group. Both the Hound Dog and the Quail had entered the base armament collection between December 1960 and June 1961. By December 1961, aircrews had completed the operational training on the new weapon systems and both missiles had been integrated into the wing alert force mission. The Hound Dog (GAM 77 or later AGM-28) was a tactical missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and was designed to increase the operational effectiveness of the B-52G bomber force. Each B-52 could carry two of the large missiles attached to pylons beneath the wings. The Quail (GAM 72 or later AGM-20) was designed to enhance survivability of the bomber force in reaching their designated targets. It was a decoy missile, carried in the bomb bay, confusing enemy radar by producing a radar reflection and infrared pattern resembling a B-52.

The wing was on alert in August and December of 1961 and supported Hardhead VI airborne alert operations in the spring of 1964. Also in 1964, the 42nd ARS received the General Saunders Trophy as the best tanker squadron in SAC. In 1965, the 42nd ARS began support for Young Tiger operations in Southeast Asia. In the mid 1960s the wing underwent a change in tactical squadrons, effectively trading 15 B-52s for 15 KC-135s. Between June 20-24, 1966, the aircrews of the 70th Bomb Squadron loaded their B-52Gs with weapons, missiles and other assorted equipment and departed Loring for a new assignment at Plattsburgh AFB, New York.

There they became part of the 528th Bomb Squadron, which had become a paper organization without aircraft or personnel due to the B-47 phase-out. The 70th Bomb Squadron was inactivated on June 25,1966. Several factors entered into the decision to move the bombers. First,

SAC wanted to reduce the number of B-52s at Loring for several years in line with its dispersal program initiated in 1959. But there simply was no location capable of accepting the squadron until the B-47 phase-out was complete. Secondly, Plattsburgh had lost its Atlas missile mission and without a tactical mission, the base faced closure; a possibility that SAC did not want to see. Thus, the bomber squadron move kept Plattsburgh alive and increased the survivability of another portion of the SAC bomber force.

Two years later, the wing gained as many KC-135S as it had lost B-52s in 1966 when SAC relocated the 407th Air Refueling Squadron from Homestead AFB, Florida, to Loring. The move, made official on July 2, began in mid June and involved the transfer of 15 KC-135s, 70 officers and 25 airmen. The 407th had been assigned to Homestead since April 1,1962. The move reflected the growing demand for air refueling support in transatlantic aircraft movements. The 407th Air Refueling Squadron was constituted the 407th Air Refueling Squadron, Strategic Fighter, on November 13,1953. It was activated on December 18, 1953 at Great Falls (later, Malmstrom) Air Force Base, Montana and was assigned first to the 407th Strategic Fighter Wing. The unit was redesignated 407th Air Refueling Squadron (Heavy) on March 1, 1957, The unit was reassigned to the 4061st Air Refueling Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base on July 1,1957. The 407th was redesignated 407th Air Refueling Squadron (Medium) on September 15,1958. The unit was discontinued and inactivated on July 15, 1961. On January 26, 1962, the unit was redesignated 407th Air Refueling Squadron (Heavy), and activated. The 407th was organized on April 1, 1962 at Homestead Air Force Base, Florida and was assigned to the 19th Bombardment Wing.

The 407th Air Refueling Squadron was transferred to the 42nd Bombardment Wing, Loring Air Force Base, Maine on July 2, 1968. From activation in 1953 until the summer of 1957, the 407th Air Refueling Squadron deployed KB-29 aircraft and crews on air refueling missions to many parts of the world, participating in a continuous series of strategic exercises as required by the Strategic Air Command (SAC). The unit conducted similar operations with KC-97 aircraft between July 1957 and July 1961 and with KC-135 aircraft after July 1962. The 407th Air Refueling Squadron was discontinued and inactivated on October 1, 1991. Assigned aircraft included the KB-29 (1953-1957), KC-97 (1957-1961), and the KC-135 (1962-1991).

The 45th Air Division, a long time resident at Loring AFB, was transferred administratively to Pease AFB, New Hampshire, effective July 1, 1971. The composition of the new 45th included the 42nd BMW, 380th BMW at Plattsburgh, 509th BMW at Pease, 99th BMW at Westover and the 95th Strategic Wing at Goose Bay Air Base, Labrador, Canada. On August 4, 1972, Loring became the first SRAM equipped operational B-52 unit in SAC. Many Loring crews participated in the December 1972 Linebacker II bombing campaign in Southeast Asia. A Surface-to-Air (SAM) missile hit one of Loring's aircraft over North Vietnam. All crewmembers were safely recovered following their bailout over Thailand. On March 2,1978, the wing learned it had won the coveted SAC "Omaha" Trophy for 1977.

On November 1, 1979, the Department of Defense reversed a decision to reduce Loring AFB to a forward operating base. The reversal came after three years and seven months of political and legal battling with communities in the surrounding area. Headquarters SAC had announced its intention to inactivate the 42nd Bomb Wing on March 11, 1976. In February 1978, it appeared

that the final announcement was near; then President Carter requested the Secretary of Defense to reassess the decision.

The review and evaluation by the DOD supported the original proposal of reducing Loring to a Forward Operating Base as the best method for resource savings and continued operational utility. These arguments still ring true today although they obviously were not considered in 1991, for purely economical and political reasons. As Loring personnel gave a collective sigh of relief that a final decision had been reached, the Maine Congressional Delegation and the Save Loring Committee (a group of local citizens committed to reversing the DOD's decision to close Loring) reacted bitterly to the decision.

They vowed to use their positions to delay or cancel the Loring reduction. Their position and primary concern about the decision centered more on the strategic value of Loring AFB (the Cold War not yet over), rather than the considerable economic impact upon the voting constituency. The efforts of Maine's Senators resulted in an amendment to the Military Construction Bill during its review by the Senate Armed Services Committee. The amendment would have prohibited any realignment of the assigned forces at Loring AFB. It was late July 1979 before the Senate passed its version of the Military Construction Bill with the Loring amendment intact. However, the House refused to endorse this action and passed its version of the Bill without any amendment blocking a Loring reduction.

It appeared as though an historic show down was about to occur. Suddenly, the DOD reversed its decision to reduce Loring citing strategic posture and a reassessment of needed forces in the 1980s. In light of the new DOD stand, the Maine Senators sponsoring the amendment allowed it to be dropped from the Bill. This action prevented a possible precedent-setting law that could have, and in later years actually did, affect the relationship between Congress and the DOD on future Base realignment and closure.

With three and one-half years of frustration and confusion behind them, personnel at Loring faced a new decade secure in the belief that the 42nd Bomb Wing would continue as an integral part of the national defense system. They could look forward to new construction and improvements in living and working conditions. SAC also recognized the importance of accomplishing projects to improve the quality of life at Loring (an issue that became an important part of the 1991 BRAC hearings). SAC requested the support of Maine's Senators in a five-year plan costing $147.3 million plus an immediate supplemental budget request of $16.7 million to breathe new life into the base.

As 1980 began the Reagan Build-up, it appeared that the 33-year old base could look to the future with a new lease on life. Loring's mission changed significantly in the early 1980s. The wing received its first HARPOON modified aircraft on September 15, 1983. In 1984, the wing became the Air Force's only primary conventional bomber force. In October 1988, after 30 years, the wing ended its B-52, 24-hour nuclear alert. The first "R" model KC-135 arrived in May of 1989.

On August 7, 1990, the wing began deploying aircraft, personnel, and equipment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD. During DESERT SHIELD/STORM wing

bombers deployed to Diego Garcia flew 960 missions (485 combat) in 44 days, dropping 12,588,766 pounds of bombs. Loring and other tankers deployed to the same location off-loaded 31,802,500 pounds of fuel to 648 receivers. In March 1991, resources deployed to the Gulf began their return to Loring. The Air Force and SAC reorganized after the Gulf War ended, and with this reorganization plan came numerous organizational changes. The wing designation changed to the 42nd Wing under the new SAC plan. Later in 1991, Loring was designated for closure. On October 1,1991, the 407th ARS was inactivated. On October 3,1991 President Bush ordered B-52 nuclear alert crews to stand down completely for the first time in Loring's history. December 1991 saw SAC and Loring stand down all Alert forces and Loring's KC-135S ended their 24-hour alert.

One year later, the Air Force redesignated the wing as the 42nd Bombardment Wing in preparation for it's historic place in history. In 1993, the wing began to draw down the base in anticipation of its scheduled closure in September 1994. On November 16,1993, the final B-52G assigned to Loring made its final flight from the base, ending a 40-year bombing mission for the Northern Maine base. On March 2, 1994, the final KC-135R departed Loring. At 12:01 a.m. on October 1, 1994, the United States Air Force surrendered the former Strategic Air Command base to the Loring Development Authority.

42ND Bombardment Wing Emblem
The motto "AETHERA NOBIS" means "The Skies for Us."
The four annulets and two aerial bombs are the graphic symbols that represented the numerical designation of the organization. The bombs and annulets were characteristic for bombardment organizations, the annulets representing the bombing circle and the aerial representing the mission.

Garbinski, John C. The United States Air Force in Maine, Progeny of the Cold War. The Maine Aviation Historical Society. Bangor Maine. 2000.

411013	PT-17	41-8049	76BS	42BG	Gowen Field, ID	LAC	Smith, Richard M			Gowin Field, ID
411215	B-26	40-1470	76BS	42BG	Gowan Field, ID	LAC	Regan, J. L.			Gowen Field, ID
420106	RB-26	40-1484	76BS	42BG	Gowen AAF, ID	TACMF	Osborn, John W			Paine Field, WA
420119	B-26	40-1513	76BS	42BG	McCord Field, WA	KTOAEF	Ottosen, Jesse P			Mcchord Field, WA
420220	RA-29	41-23441	76BS	42BG	McChord Field, Tacoma, WA	KSSPCR	Solberg, Charles R			Fort Lewis, WA

420414	A-29	41-23434	76BS	42BG	McChord Field, Tacoma, WA	TOAGL	Hanson, Melvin R			McChord Field, WA
420422	A-29	41-23323	76BS	42BG	McChord Field, Tacoma, WA	LACNU	Smith, Richard M			McChord Field, WA
420503	A-29	41-23401	76BS	42BG	McChord Field, Tacoma, WA	KTOA	Comber, William E			McChord Field, WA
420527	A-29	41-23393	76BS	42BG	Jacksonville, FL	TOAGL	Moll, Harry H			Jacksonville Muni Airport, FL
420810	A-29	41-23467	76BS	42BG	Drew Field, Tampa, FL	LACGL	Rankin, John G			Drew Field, FL
420818	A-29	41-23440	76BS	42BG	Drew Field, Tampa, FL	LAC	Smith, Richard M			1.5 mi NE of Clearwater, FL
420912	A-29	41-23467	76BS	42BG	Drew Field, Tampa, FL	LACGL	Wright, Frank E			Drew Field, FL
420114	RB-26	40-1520	76BS		Gowin Field, Boise, ID	KCRGC	Munn, Elmer M Jr			9 mi SE of Boise, ID

430909	UC-78	42-58206	23 Anti-Sub	26 Anti-Sub	Drew Field, FL	MACB	Jones, Stephen G	Hillsboro, FL

430416	RA-29	41-23386	23ASS	26AWG		LAC	Campbell, William C	Batista Fld
430915	B-25G	42-65040	23ASS			KCRMF	Jenson, Lloyd O	Edinburgh AB, BWI

Constituted as the 76th Bombardment Squadron (Medium) on 20 Nov 1940 and activated on 15 Jan 1941. It was re-designated as the 23d Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy) on 3 Mar 1943 and disbanded on 6 Feb 1944. Reconstituted as the 23d Troop Carrier Squadron on 11 Nov 1944, the unit transported cargo and personnel throughout the European Theater of Operation until its inactivation on 7 Sep 1946. The Air Force revived the unit on 9 Jul 1956 as the 23d Helicopter Squadron at Stewart AFB, Tennessee where they served at Phalsbourg France, RAF Wethersfield UK, and Wheelus AB Libya until their inactivation on 8 Jan 1958.

The Vietnam War saw the unit's reconstitution as the 23d Tactical Air Support Squadron

operating from Hakhon Phanom Royal Thailand Air Force Base (RTAFB), Thailand, from 15 April 1966 to 22 Sep 1975. They inactivated on 22 Sep 1975 only to be reactivated on 30 Nov 1975 at Bergstrom AFB, Texas to train forward air controllers. They then moved to Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona on 1 Jul 1980 until their deactivation on 1 Nov 1991. Finally, on 15 Jan 1994, the Air Force reactivated the unit with its current name at Fort Rucker, Alabama to train future helicopter pilots in the UH-1H.

History of the 23rd Helicopter Squadron
The original H-21 Squadron (345th TC Sq, Assault Rotory Wing) which was operational in Sewart AFB Tennessee under Maj Gregg Hartley, when Don Berger and I had come from H-19 helicopter training at San Marcos, TX..

Starting in November '55, we flew the H-21 at Sewart AFB with Maj Jesse Ammons, Capt Ed Hook and many others.

On 6 July '56, the 23rd Helicopter Squadron (under the 322nd Air Division in France) was initiated and transferred from the 345th Wing.

The squadron was set up with Detachments.
Hdq Detachment with Jim Blackburn as CO. Jesse Ammons was Vice CO, Jesse Lewis was Instructor and Standards. Dave Ryan was Personnel. Art Godwin - Comm, John Rivers and Don Berger - Maintenance.

1st Detachment consisted of Bob Roy, Larry Cooper, Chuck McClusky, Dick Lanzendorf, and Al Rogers. This Det went with the Headquarters at Phalsbourg AB, France.

4th Detachment was Don Berger, Carl Crews, Harry Dunn, Bill Kuschel and Chuck Smith, also to Phalsbourg AB

2nd Detachment was Ed Hook, Norm Eldridge, Carl McTaggart, and Jim Barron, which shipped off to England.

3rd Detachment was Stewart Spenser, Don Clayton, Herb Trail, Royce Bowman and Watson, which went to Wheelus AB in support of TAC fighter Training.

On 12 October we departed from Tennessee. The helicopters were cocooned and shipped with Pilots and crews by the Military Sea Transportation Service from Biloxi/Gulfport, LA (or a week or two avoiding a tornado around Florida) to across the Atlantic and on Bremerhaven Germany. We docked there for a few days while the H-21s were de-cocooned and put back together and flight tested. One engine at Bremerhaven had failed piston rods (very common at this time!)

On 7 November, the first two H-21s left Bremanhavenin and headed across south Germany toward Phalsbourg AB. Along the way, one of the helicopters No. 52867 - we were in the British zone near RAF Alhorn - had an engine failure and a quick autorotation in a farm near

Badbergan in northern Germany. Spent a week in the local "guasthouse". The winter snow and a British Van crew guarded our bird a couple miles out - while waiting a call from UASFE at Ramstein.

A week later a British\Officer came by and took three of us to RAF Alhorn (left 2 of the crew to wait for an engine change). Next fun was they took us to a train out of Oldenburg - which none of us had ever been on - and went down to Stassbourg. The only military people at Phalsbourg were about 2 hours away- and picked us up after midnight.

Our wives had already been shipped in a troop carrier and were a few weeks ahead of us and were living in Italian "trailers" on the base. The runway - built by the French, for a Fighter Wing - had sunk in - so the 23rd Heli guys were only Officers/Crews around except for two Doctors, a Priest and some cooks! We provided our own music and dancing! We had to drive or fly to Ramstein to pick up our "funny money" since no or little US money used or available!

A week later - a crew flew back up to Badbergen to pick up the bird which had been an engine failure.

On the return to Phalsbourg - the third engine failure occurred within 1-2 miles of the last failure. The folks from RAF Alcorn came in with several helpers and large trailer to tow the bird back to the airfield. The road was one of the somewhat ancient brick roads which just barely had the width of the H-21 wheels. With several troops, flashlights and night - the crew just trying to guide the tow truck missed a brick, which jammed one of the rear wheels as the truck kept moving and ripped the entire landing gear rigging out of the cabin and the H-21 rolled over on its side! The next morning the H-21 was literally cut in half and hauled up to RAF Alcorn - and then flown in pieces to Chataureaux AB in France for major overhaul. It is unknown what happened with the H-21?

Operations began at Phalsbourg on 7 Nov '56 (Cdr Jim Blackburn, Jesse Ammons, Bob Roy and the Pilots and Crews) .Primary operations were for airlift for families between Phalsbourg, Landshtul, Ramstein, Sembach, Hahn, Bitburg Hospital, Spangdahlem, and Weisbaden Hospital. Other missions supported radar sites along East German border.

Some of interesting missions:
4 of the H-21s in Wheelus Det 3, which was at Wheelus AB - primarily supporting the TAC Fighter training aircraft at a Vertical bombing range west of Tripoli.

In the meantime the Det 2, with 4 other a/c were based at RAF Weathersfield supporting England based bombing/gunnery ranges.

ONE OF OUR MOST INTERESTING ASSIGNMENTS was to provide a three ship flight demo for the Paris Air Show in 1957. The day prior to our demo we gave preliminary show for the head of the USAF delegation at Dreau AFB.

During one of our landing approaches the forward rotor blades of the #2 aircraft hit the rear blades of the lead aircraft.!!! We all landed immediately. Each of the rotor blades lost about

18"of length. THANK GOD FOR WOODEN BLADES. After an inspection of all aircraft, and an all night work effort we got two sets of blades and one rotor hub from Phalsbourgh, changed them, flew over to Paris and gave a flawless demo.

In Dec '57 the 23rd was shut down and many of the H-21s were given to the French in Algiers

23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron- Conducted close air support missions in the Laos Panhandle (Ho Chi Minh Trail) area. This part of Laos was referred to as "Steel Tiger". The unit was called "Operation Cricket". They flew low and slow in the O-1 Bird Dog (Cessna) supporting ground troops and calling in air strikes to disrupt activity on the Trail. The O-1 was subsequently replaced with the faster, more maneuverable OV-10.

The 23rd TASS was created out of Det 3 of the 505th in April, 1966 by Lt. Col. (selectee) Robert L. Johnston (known as Louie). LC Johnston selected Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai AFB for operations in the Steel Tiger portion of the Laos Panhandle (Ho Chi Minh Trail between Nape Pass and Tchepone area). The 23rd was originally a 505th detachment from about January of '66 until April, when the squadron was activated officially. Also officially it was at Udorn, though the only part of it that was there were personnel and pay records. We were all at NKP, and until the A-26s arrived in June we were the only combat outfit stationed there that was allowed across the Mekong. The rescue Jollies and Sandies went all too often, of course, but they were tdy from Udorn. Air Commandoes were supposed to be doing civic action in Thailand and were not even allowed weapons until the Eagles arrived. T-28s weren't blooded until '67.

Five FAC's went to NKP in January to test the idea of working the Steel Tiger portion of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and many more came there TDY during the following months. Losses of 23rd TASS pilots started in March with Karl Worst, whose plane disappeared in an apparent mid-air with an F-105 during and air strike. Next was Joe Brown, in Mu Ghia Pass, in early April. Then in May Lee Harley was shot down very near the border of North Viet Nam in the valley now named for him, on a recently-discovered alternate trail. In June Warren P. "Willie Pete" Smith was shot down, and Tom Wolfe was killed in the jump seat of an A-26 Nimrod that was shot down by heavy triple-A during an orientation flight, in Harley's Valley.

The 23rd TASS, like those in Vietnam, flew Cessna O-1s in 1966 and part of 1967. All this squadron's aircraft were the F variant, whose most important difference was a variable-pitch propeller. Many of them were camouflaged at first, including that of Karl Worst, and were repainted gray with very small markings by a contractor at Tan Son Nhut, a few at a time.

The unit was called Operation Cricket, which name the area airborne control ship took for a callsign, and the original pilot callsign was Gombey. For some reason this was changed to Nail in mid-1966, and that stayed. I have heard that the 23rd TASS was the last such squadron to be disbanded; they even participated (A-10s) in the Gulf War! The well-known unit patch, Jiminy Cricket with a walkie-talkie and an umbrella, was sold to the squadron by Disney for $1, after being requested by Nail John Taylor.

Those who are interested in the 23rd TASS should see Jimmie Butlers book, A Certain Brotherhood, a novel about the unit. Another excellent book authored by a former 23rd TASS

FAC is 'The Rescue of Bat 21,' by Darrel Whitcomb. Darrel's book is a factual account of the famous and very costly rescue of an Intruder flight officer in Vietnam.

Contributed by Bill Tilton wtilton@erols.com

As part of this reorganization, on 1 July 1993 the Air Force redesignated ATC as Air Education and Training Command (AETC) and activated Nineteenth Air Force, assigning it to AETC to manage its flying training mission. Within the realm of helicopter pilot training, AETC assumed command of Air Mobility Command's 542d Crew Training Wing and its helicopter crew training mission at Kirtland. Air Education and Training Command became responsible for a number of helicopter crew training courses. For the UH-1N, AETC now provided initial and mission qualification, as well as tactical and nontactical training for pilots, copilots, and flight engineers. Training officials at Kirtland also provided the same training for MH-53 and MH-60 crews. Additionally, wing personnel provided an MH-53J aerial gunner training program, a basic helicopter flight engineer course, and courses to qualify personnel as instructor pilots or instructor flight engineers on the three types of AETC helicopters stationed at Kirtland.

The Air Force redesignated the 1550th Combat Crew Training Wing as the 542d Crew Training Wing on 1 Oct 91. The Air Force inactivated Military Airlift Command (MAC) on 1 Jun 92 and activated Air Mobility Command (AMC) in its place.

Not only had AETC assumed helicopter crew training responsibilities, but it picked up crew training for other weapon systems as well. At this same time, the Air Force Chief of Staff reviewed all wing designations. In order to preserve those with the most illustrious history, the Air Force changed several numerical designations within AETC. Thus, the Air Force redesignated the 58th Fighter Wing, Luke AFB, Arizona, as the 58th Special Operations Wing (SOW) and transferred it to Kirtland. At the same time it inactivated the 542d Crew Training Wing at Kirtland. To further refine its organizational structure, on 15 January 1994, AETC realigned its helicopter training function by inactivating Detachment 1, 14th Flying Training Wing, and activating the 23d Flying Training Flight at Fort Rucker and assigning it to the 58th.

MAJOR CHANGES
IN
HELICOPTER PILOT TRAINING 1944-1994
by DICKJ. BURKARD
History and Research Office
Headquarters Air Education and Training Command
Randolph AFB, Texas
December 1994

The 23d Helicopter Squadron, equipped with the Piasecki H-21B "Workhorse," was the first flying unit assigned to Phalsbourg after its completion, and was the only USAF helicopter squadron in Europe. This squadron was supplied to USAFE by the 314th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium (TAC), from Sewart AFB, Tennessee. A similar helicopter squadron was dispatched to Japan.

The H-21 Bs deployed to France by first flying 500 miles south to Brookley AFB, Mobile, Alabama, where they were loaded on an aircraft transport ship, TCUV-64 Tripoli. All eighteen H-21s, squadron personnel, and support equipment arrived in Bremerhaven, West Germany, on 1 November 1956, after nineteen days at sea. The 23d Sq personnel de-cocooned, inspected, tested, and then flew their helicopters across Ger¬many and France to Phalsbourg, arriving between 7 and 15 November 1956. One helicopter was damaged enroute, requiring depot repairs.

The squadron was assigned to the 322d Air Division at Evreux AB for operational control, mission scheduling, and airlift priorities. The 23d Helicopter Squadron provided very useful general airlift support throughout France. The H-21B had a Wright 1820-103 engine driving the two rotor assemblies. It could lift 4,000 pounds and be fitted with a 250-gallon drop-tank for range extension. Standard helicopter missions included: Special Air Lift Mission (SAM), Administrative Support Mission (DC), and Emergency Air Evacuation Mission (EAE). The H-21 was ideal for transferring injured U.S. personnel and dependents that required major medical attention to full-service hospitals from remote military sites across Europe. No H-21 night flying was permitted in France.

Phalsbourg had plenty of hangar space and quarters for the 23d Squadron. It could keep all its H-21 Bs indoors. But the 23d Helicopter Squadron had some difficulties operating from Phalsbourg. Neither a wing nor group operations staff was assigned to the base, and the squadron had insufficient manning to provide a complete base flight operations section. The H-2 Is had only a low frequency ADF (ARN-59) installed for radio navigation. The Eschbourg radio beacon, when installed in the spring of 1957, finally provided a means of finding Phalsbourg in bad weather. The 23d had no helicopter losses and no fatalities during its brief fourteen months of flying in France.

The 322d Air Division recommended that the 23d Helicopter Squadron be divided into four detach-ments for greater utilization. Detachments #1 and #4 remained at Phalsbourg with ten aircraft. Major maintenance was performed by teams dispatched from Phalsbourg, and all H-21B-peculiar spare parts were stocked at Phalsbourg.

Detachment #2 flew four H-2 Is to RAF Wethers-field, UK via Fontainebleau, Evreux AB, Lille, France, and on across the English channel. These four H-21Bs were equipped with air-sea hoist provisions for res¬cue flights. Their first task was to assist in the rapid assembly of a ground radar antenna structure at RAF Upper Heyford. The H-21Bs lifted large antenna seg¬ments and saved at least four weeks of time erecting these antennas.

Detachment #3 relocated four H-21Bs to Wheelus AB in December 1956. The H-21 was designed for rapid disassembly and reassembly for this type of air movement; both rotor assemblies were removable, and the fuselage split in half to make smaller and lighter loads. This process required eight hours work by an eight-man team at each end of the Workhorse's jour¬ney. The four H-2 Is were moved to Wheelus to sup¬port gunnery range operations at El Uotia and Tarhuna, and to assist the TM-61 Matador missile launches and flight test programs. This required some long range flights of 250 miles into the desert to missile target sites such as Mizda. Soon after arrival, on 22 March 1957, Det #3 recovered one injured pilot and one fatal¬ity from an RB-57A crash that occurred on the gun¬nery range, and then supported the crash investigation team for several days. Their mission was so successful that after the 23d HSq departed France, six of their H-21 Bs continued to operate at Wheelus AB, supported by the 7272d Flying Training Wing. During 1960 the helicopters participated in an ongoing long distance rescue mission when they evacuated American and European civilians from the Congo where they were being threatened by rioting native troops.
USAFE felt the limitations of helicopter airlift were not worth the costs, and decided to eliminate the 23d Helicopter Sq from its force structure after four¬teen months in Europe. During this same time, the U.S. Army in France was obtaining similar helicop¬ter airlift capabilities, which made the 23d redundant. The squadron was inactivated on 8 January 1958, as part of USAF-wide reductions due to DOD budget cuts. Ten H-21Bs from Phalsbourg and two from RAF Wethersfield, UK, were returned to Brookley AFB, Alabama, in August 1959. They were shipped to CONUS on the aircraft transport ship, TCVU-64 Tripoli.

By the late 1980s, the Vietnam vintage OA-37BS and OV-10As were reaching the end of their useful lives. In the eyes ol the Air Force, so was the A-10, as far as front-line combat operations were concerned. Beginning in 1987, selected A-10As were redesignated as OA-10As, the first serving with the 23rd TASS. There is no physical difference between an A-10A and a fast FAC OA-10A. Because they only employ rockets for target marking and do not utilize the majority of the A-10A's arsenal, the OA-10A costs about $45-30) less per hour to operate than an A-10A. In these days of ever decreasing defense budgets, every penny counts, and the OA-10As are not counted as fighter aircraft under the CFE treaty.

On 2 August, 1990, Kuwait, a former British protectorate, which had been independent since 1961, was invaded by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army. President George Bush had begun forging an international coalition of allied forces against Hussein to drive the Iraqi's out of Kuwait. The deployment of the American units occurred under the code name "Operation Desert Shield." Four A-10 squadrons were included in the first deployment and had moved to King Fahd International Airport (KFIA), Saudi Arabia, by the end of August. The A-10s deployed as squadrons (not wings) to the Gulf region. The 354th TFW's contribution consisted of the 353rd and 355th TFSs. The organization in Saudi Arabia in charge of the deployed units was known as the 354th TFW (Deployed). The 74th and 76th TFSs of the 23rd TFW were deployed under the 23rd TFW (Deployed). The deployed wings kept the same command staff as the 354th and 23rd TFWs back at their U.S. bases. The two units were later merged into a single wing referred to as

the 23/354 TFW (Deployed). The wing was jointly commanded by officers of both contributing wings. In December, 1990, 9th AF established the 14th Air Division (Provisional) to control all deployed tactical fighter wings. Also, the wings were redesignated to more official provisional designations. The 354th TFW (Deployed) officially became 354th TFW (Provisional), though the unique command structure actually resulted in the 23/354 TFW (Provisional). Three more A-10 squadrons arrived in the Gulf area in December. The 23rd TASS deployed joining six of their OA-10s which had deployed in October. The 511th TFS also deployed. In early January, 1991, these three squadrons joined the 23/354th. At the height of the deployment there were 155 A-10s at KFIA. February 19: 76-0543, 23rd TASS, was shot down. The pilot, LTC Jeffery Fox was captured. February 27: 77-0197, 23rd TASS crashed on landing. The pilot, LT Patrick Olson was killed in the crash.

23rd TASS: The 23rd TASS, carrying the unit's Vietnam War callsign of Nail FAC marked each air control mission with a black nail painted on the left under the windscreen. Nose art was added to the left side. 76-0547 was loaned to the 706th TFS and carried mission credits painted on the right side of the nose.

23 TASS
A10
NF
790177

23 TASS
BEST IN THE WEST
BLUE TAIL CAP WITH 3 YELLOW STARS
NF
OA10
770223
770210
760516

To sharpen their skills further, rescue forces began, on February 15, 1974, to conduct their own training exercises. These events usually took place at an abandoned airport at Loeng Nok Tha, seventy miles south of Nakhon Phanom. Other elements of the search and rescue task force joined the HH-53s from the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. These included 3d Tactical Fighter Squadron A-7s, and OV-lOs from the 23d Tactical Air Support Squadron, HC-130Ps from the 56th Special Operations Squadron, and, to determine their usefulness in search and rescue missions, AC-130 gunships from the 16th Special Operations Squadron. Exercises, conducted weekly, involved rescue attempts in various situations. To add realism, "survivors" were placed on the grounds of the Loeng Nok Tha airport to evade, be spotted, and eventually picked up by an HH-53.

Assigned to the 23d Flying Training Squadron

TH-1H HUEY

Mission: The TH-1H is a light-lift utility helicopter used to train Air Force helicopter pilots. The helicopter is used for training contact, instrument, remote, low-level navigation, formation and NVG operations.

Features: The TH-1H is capable of flight in instrument and night time conditions. The crew complement is normally three (instructor pilot and two student pilots), but may be flown single-pilot depending on weather and mission requirements.

Background: The TH-1H is the newest of more than 15 variants of the original Huey first flown in 1956. The TH-1H, the latest version of the UH-1H Huey, has undergone an extensive refurbishment that includes upgraded components and a new avionics suite with a glass cockpit. Whereas the old helicopters were equipped with traditional round dial gauges for altitude, speed, etc., the glass cockpit takes the same information and displays the information digitally on three monitors. Four round dial gauges, however, remain in case there is a total failure of the new system.

The TH-1H's advanced electronics provide expanded training opportunities and improved operational capabilities by upgrading the engine, transmission and rotor system. It has the latest multi-function displays allowing for future upgrades and providing new aircrews with a seamless transition from the T-6 to a follow-on rotary wing aircraft such as the CV-22, any future Reserve helicopters and the Common Vertical Lift Support Platform.

The TH-1H is a Bell UH-1H helicopter with an integrated upgrade kit, or Huey II kit, which encompasses a more powerful engine, and new dynamic components including nose and tailboom. The cockpit and mission equipment upgrades include a change from analog to digital cockpit, the addition of crashworthy seats, and total rewiring. These modifications literally transform a legacy aircraft into a state-of-the-art training platform compatible with future operational aircraft. This undergraduate training platform develops multiple pilot skills and transitions those skills faster across multiple aircraft.

The first TH-1H underwent testing and evaluation in 2007. The Air Force received the first production aircraft in April 2008. Instructor training began in June 2008. The first class to fly the TH-1H started in September of 2008.

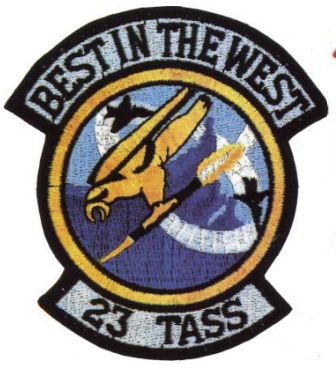
C-12 and C-21 Training

The 81st Training Wing at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, lost C-12 and C-21 training. On 1 October 1999 the C-12 training program transferred to Fort Rucker, Alabama, under the control of the 23d Flying Training Flight, a unit that reported to the 58th Special Operations Wing located at Kirtland AFB.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION TH-1H, T/N 73-21840 FORT RUCKER, ALABAMA 30 JUNE 2009 During a night training sortie on 30 June 2009, a TH-1H aircraft, tail number (T/N) 73-21840, experienced a hard landing due to loss of tail rotor thrust at 2140 local time (L) in Conecuh National Forrest near remote training site 406 (RT-406), 43 miles west of Cairns Army Airfield (KOZR). Following the hard landing, the mishap pilot (MP) and two student pilots egressed the aircraft and were subsequently picked up by a local U.S. Army Search and Rescue helicopter. The three pilots were transported to Southeast Alabama Medical Center for medical evaluation where they were treated for minor injuries associated with the force of the impact. The mishap aircraft (MA) was based at Fort Rucker, Alabama and assigned to the 23rd

Flying Training Squadron, of the 58th Special Operations Wing, to provide undergraduate helicopter pilot training for the United States Air Force. The mishap occurred within the lateral boundaries of Alert Area 211 (A-211) in South Central Alabama. A-211 is specially designated airspace which may contain a high volume of rotary and fixed wing training. The MA sustained $6.7M in damage. There was no damage to private property. The MA departed KOZR at 2052L to conduct night vision goggle (NVG) remote procedures training. Approximately 48 minutes after takeoff, while conducting high reconnaissance of RT- 406, at 300' above ground level (AGL) and approximately 65 knots with a 15 knot right quartering tailwind, the aircraft experienced a loss of tail rotor thrust, yawed right, and entered an uncontrollable right rotation about its vertical axis. The MP managed to make it to an open field upon which he entered a near vertical autorotation and the aircraft landed hard, impacting the ground in a level attitude at over 1,500 fpm (24 to 38 Gs). Investigation revealed that the number one tail rotor drive shaft hanger bearing assembly failed. The aft splines of the shaft and coupling had deteriorated to the point that they no longer meshed, causing complete loss of tail rotor thrust. The failure of the number one hanger bearing assembly spline shaft and aft coupling is the root cause of the mishap. Sufficient evidence exists to conclude that a misalignment somewhere within the tail rotor drive system and flawed assembly of the bearing to the shaft contributed to the spline shaft and coupling failure. The MP was rested, current, and qualified. Given the flight parameters where the tail rotor lost thrust, he performed admirably to land the aircraft without fatality. All maintenance personnel who worked on the MA were well trained, experienced, and qualified. A thorough review of maintenance documentation and procedures revealed no adverse trends which could have contributed to the accident. The misalignment and flawed assembly were not readily identifiable due to lack of vibration analysis and inadequate maintenance technical data.

Enlisted Aviator Course is First of its Kind The 23rd Flying Training Squadron at Fort Rucker, Ala., conducted the first training flight of its new Career Enlisted Aviator Rotary Wing Fundamentals course, according to unit officials. The course—the first of its kind in the Air Force—will act as a "crash course in helicopter operations," providing enlisted aircrew members with a foundation in flying before they get to their graduate-level training at Kirtland AFB, N.M., said TSgt. Seamus Feeley, CEARF student flight chief, in a release on May 10, three days after the inaugural flight. Before the course, enlisted aircrew members, including aerial gunners and flight engineers, would arrive at Kirtland without any prior flight experience. As such, failure rates for mission qualification training on helicopters and CV-22 tiltrotor platforms were "upwards of 50 percent," according to the release. Squadron officials hope this course will change that. "CEARF will save lost time and money by reducing washouts and allow more individuals to successfully complete training and fill a critically undermanned career field," said Feeley. The course takes 36 training days to complete. CEARF will train about 88 flight engineers each year, states the release. 2013


BEST IN THE WEST
23 TASS


23RD TASS
STEEL TIGER
200
FAC
MISSIONS
ON THE TRAIL
BARREL ROLL
CAM BODIA


23RD TASS
STEEL TIGER
100
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MISSIONS
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TACTICS DET
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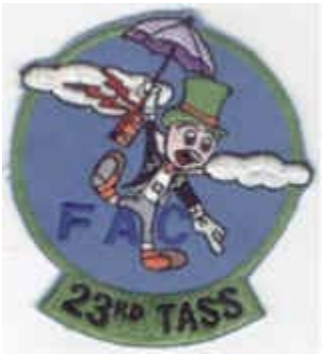
NKP THAILAND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NIGHT
NAIL
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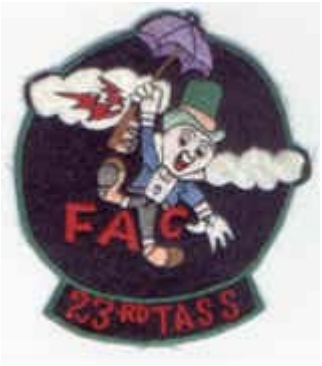
FAC
23RD TASS


23D FLYING TRAINING SQ


23D FLYING TRAINING FLT


23D FLYING TRAINING SQ

Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 28 Aug 2010
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Sources
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