

## 27<sup>th</sup> SPECIAL OPERATIONS GROUP



### LINEAGE

27<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Light) established, 22 Dec 1939  
Activated, 1 Feb 1940  
Redesignated 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Group, 23 Aug 1943  
Redesignated 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, 30 May 1944  
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945  
Activated, 20 Aug 1946  
Redesignated 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter-Escort Group, 1 Feb 1950  
Inactivated, 16 Jun 1952  
Redesignated 27<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Group, 31 Jul 1985  
Redesignated 27<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 28 Oct 1991  
Activated, 1 Nov 1991

### STATIONS

Barksdale Field, LA, 1 Feb 1940  
Hunter Field, GA, 7 Oct 1940-21 Oct 1941  
Philippine Islands, 20 Nov 1941  
Batchelor, Australia, Mar-4 May 1942  
Hunter Field, GA, 4 May 1942  
Key Field, MS, c. 14 Jul 1942  
Hattiesburg, MS, 15 Aug 1942  
Harding Field, LA, 25 Oct-21 Nov 1942  
Ste-Barbe-du-Tlelat, Algeria, 26 Dec 1942  
Nouvion, Algeria, Jan 1943  
Ras el Ma, French Morocco, c. 4 Apr 1943  
Korba, Tunisia, Jun 1943  
Gela, Sicily, Jul 1943  
Capaccio, Italy, Sep 1943  
Guado AB, Italy, 4 Nov 1943  
Pomigliano, Italy, 19 Jan 1944  
Castel Volturno, Italy, 10 Apr 1944  
Santa Maria Afd, Italy, 8 May 1944  
La Banca, Italy, 7 Jun 1944  
Ciampino, Italy, 12 Jun 1944

Serragia Airdrome, Corsica, Jul 1944  
Le Luc AB, France, Aug 1944  
Salon Afd, France, 30 Apr 1944  
Loyettes, Airdrome, France, c. 11 Sep 1944  
Tarquinia Airdrome, Italy, Oct 1944  
Pontedera Airdrome, Italy, 3 Dec 1944  
St Dizier, France, c. 22 Feb 1945  
Toul-Ochey, France, c. 19 Mar 1945  
Biblis, Germany, Apr 1945  
Sandhofen, Germany, 24 Jun 1945  
Echterdingen, Germany, 15 Sep-20 Oct 1945  
Camp Shanks, NY, 6-7 Nov 1945  
Fritzlar, Germany, 20 Aug 1946-25 Jun 1947  
Andrews Field, MD, 25 Jun 1947  
Kearney AAFld (later, AFB), NE, 16 Jul 1947  
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 16 Mar 1949-11 Nov 1950  
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 6 Jul 1951-16 Jun 1952  
Cannon AFB, NM, 1 Nov 1991

#### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Taegu AB, South Korea, 5 Dec 1950-15 Aug 1951  
Itazuke AB, Japan, 31 Jan-2 Jul 1951

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Southeast Air District (later, 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force), 1 Feb 1940  
3<sup>rd</sup> Air Support Command, 1 Sep 1941  
V Bomber Command, c. 20 Nov 1941 (under operational control of American-British-Dutch-Australian Command, c. Mar-4 May 1942)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Air Force, 4 May 1942  
3<sup>rd</sup> Bomber Command, 7 Jul 1942  
III Ground Air (later, III Air) Support Command, 10 Aug 1942  
Twelfth Air Force, c. 25 Dec 1942  
XII Air Support (later, XII Tactical Air) Command, Jul 1943  
XII Fighter (later, XXII Tactical Air) Command, 20 Sep 1944  
63<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing, 21 Feb 1945  
XII Tactical Air Command, 30 Mar 1945  
64<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, 7 Jul-Oct 1945  
64<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, 20 Aug 1946  
Strategic Air Command, 25 Jun 1947  
Eighth Air Force, 16 Jul 1947  
27<sup>th</sup> Fighter (later, 27<sup>th</sup> Fighter-Escort) Wing, 15 Aug 1947-16 Jun 1952  
27<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, 1 Nov 1991

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

XII Tactical Command, 20 Sep-2 Oct 1944  
First Tactical Air Force [Provisional]

## **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

A-24, 1941  
A-20, 1941, 1942-1943  
A-36, 1943-1944  
P-40, 1944  
P-47, 1944  
Unkn, 1945  
P-47, 1946-1947  
P (later, F)-51, 1947-1949  
F-82, 1948-1950  
F-84, 1950-1951  
F-111, 1991-1996  
EF-111, 1992-1998  
F-16, 1995

## **COMMANDERS**

Col. Clarence L. Tinker 1 Feb 40-Mar 41  
Lt. Col. William B. Wright Mar 41-5 Jul 41  
Col. Guy McNeil 5 Jul 41-Nov 41  
Col. John H. Davies Nov 41-17 Dec 41  
Maj Alexander R. Sewall, 18 Dec 1941-unkn  
LTC Harry F. Van Leuven, 14 Jul 1942  
LTC John D. Stevenson, 11 Apr 1943  
Col Dorr E. Newton, 6 Aug 1943  
Col Stephen B. Mack, 22 Apr 1944  
Col William R. Nevitt, 11 Sep 1944-7 Nov 1945  
Col C. T. Edwinson, 20 Aug 1946  
Col Robert P. Montgomery, 18 Nov 1946  
Col C. T. Edwinson, 24 Feb 1947  
Col Edwin A. Doss, 15 Aug 1947  
Col Cy Wilson, 21 Jan 1948  
Col Donald J. M. Blakeslee, 7 Dec 1950  
LTC William E. Bertram, 2 Mar 1951  
None (not manned) 6 Aug 1951-16 Jun 1952  
Col Donald A. Lamontagne, 1 Nov 1991  
Col Thomas G. Runge, 20 May 1992  
Col Gale W. Larson, 21 Oct 1994  
Col Loyd S. Utterback, 14 Oct 1995  
Col Phillip M. Breedlove, 25 Jul 1997  
Col Jay H. Lindell, 28 May 1999  
Col Bennett M. Bitler, 18 Jun 2001  
**Col. William P. West** - Special Operations Group

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

None

## **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Philippine Islands

East Indies

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Anzio

Rome-Arno

Northern France

Southern France

North Apennines

Rhineland

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korea

CCF Intervention

First UN Counteroffensive

CCF Spring Offensive

## **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

## **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations

Philippine Islands, 7 Dec 1941-[Apr] 1942

Philippine Islands, 8-22 Dec 1941

Philippine Islands, 6 Jan-8 Mar 1942

Italy, 10 Sep 1943

France, 4 Sep 1944

Korea, 26 Jan-21 Apr 1951

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1992-31 May 1993

1 Jun 1996-31 May 1998

1 Jun 2002-31 May 2004

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

9 Nov 1950-31 May 1951

## **EMBLEM**

Per bend Azure and Or, in sinister chief a dexter hand clenched couped at the wrist; in dexter base a magnolia blossom, leave all Argent fimbriated and garnished Sable, all within a

diminished bordure of the second. Approved for the 27th Group on September 12, 1940, and for the 27th Wing on July 11, 1952.

## **EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE**

### **MOTTO**

INTELLIGENT STRENGTH

### **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

The 27th Special Operations Group, located at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M., is one of four groups assigned to the 27th Special Operations Wing. The group accomplishes global special operations taskings as an Air Force component member of the United States Special Operations Command.

It conducts infiltration/exfiltration, combat support, tilt-rotor operations, helicopter aerial refueling, close air support, unmanned aerial vehicle operations, non-standard aviation, and other special missions. It directs the deployment, employment, training, and planning for squadrons that operate the AC-130H, AC-130W, PC-12, Do-328, M-28, CV-22, MC-130J, MQ-1, MQ-9 and provides operational support to flying operations.

### Organization

There are nine squadrons and three tenant units within the group.

- 27th Special Operations Support Squadron, provides operational support to flight operations
- 3rd Special Operations Squadron, MQ-1 Predator
- 16th Special Operations Squadron, AC-130H Spectre gunship
- 33rd Special Operations Squadron, MQ-9 Reaper
- 20th Special Operations Squadron, CV-22 Osprey
- 73rd Special Operations Squadron, AC-130W Stinger
- 318th Special Operations Squadron, PC-12 and M-28
- 522d Special Operations Squadron, MC-130J Commando II
- 524th Special Operations Squadron, Do-328
- 43d Special Operations Squadron, provides specialized intelligence support
- 56th Intelligence Squadron provides, provides specialized intelligence support
- 551st Special Operations Squadron, provides specialized training on multiple weapons systems

Activated for bombardment operations on 1 Feb 1940. Moved to the Philippines in Nov 1941. The group's A-24 aircraft, which had not arrived by 7 Dec, were diverted to Australia after the Japanese attack on the Philippines. The group's commander and 20 pilots who were flown from

Luzon to Australia to get the aircraft did not return because of the continued Japanese advance in the Philippines. Some of these pilots saw service in Java, Feb-May 1942, before they were assigned to another group. The men left on Luzon flew missions against the Japanese with available aircraft and served as infantrymen in the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. Although a few managed to escape, most were either killed or taken by the Japanese as prisoners of war. The group received three Distinguished Unit Citations (DUC) for their heroic efforts in the Philippines, late 1941 and early 1942. The group was transferred, without personnel and equipment, from Australia to the United States on 4 May 1942. Trained with attack aircraft until Nov 1942. Moved to North Africa in Nov and Dec 1942. Began combat operations with the Twelfth Air Force in Jun 1943. Took part in the reduction of Panellera and Lampedusa and supported ground forces in the Allied conquest of Sicily. Covered the landings at Salerno and received a DUC for preventing three German armored divisions from reaching the Salerno beachhead, 10 Sep 1943. Supported Fifth Army during the Allied drive toward Rome. Participated in the invasion of southern France and assisted Seventh Army's advance up the Rhone Valley, receiving a DUC for helping to disrupt the German retreat, 4 Sep 1944. Took part in the interdiction of enemy communications in northern Italy, and assisted in the Allied drive from France into Germany during the last months of the war. Returned to the United States, Oct-Nov 1945. Trained for fighter operations in Germany, 20 Aug 1946-25 Jun 1947, when it was transferred, without personnel and equipment, to the United States for service with the Strategic Air Command. Moved to the Far East in 1950 for temporary duty with Far East Air Forces during the Korean War. Operating from bases in South Korea and later Japan, flew missions in support of ground forces, earning another DUC for missions between 26 Jan and 21 Apr 1951. Among these missions was close support of the largest paratroop landing in the Korean War and escort for B-29 bombers on raids over North Korea, including combat with enemy MIG-15 fighters. Returned to the United States in Jul 1951. Not operational after Aug 1951, when its squadrons were attached for operational control to the wing. Added electronic combat mission to its fighter role in Jul 1992. From late 1992 to 1998, served as the only Air Force group with F-111 or EF-111 aircraft. Took part in numerous training exercises and deployed personnel and aircraft periodically to southwestern Asia to enforce no-fly zones over Iraq. In 1998, began training Republic of Singapore F-16 pilots. After terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D. C. in Sep 2001, began deploying personnel and aircraft in operations associated with the Global War on Terror.

The 27th Strategic Fighter Wing had its origin in the 27th Bombardment Group which was activated at Barksdale Field, La., 1 February 1940. The Group consisted of Hq and Mq sq, 27th Bomb Group and the 15th and 17th Bomb Squadrons.

Shortly after the arrival of the Group they were caught in the Japanese attack without having received their planes and as a result, the Group was completely split up. Some flying personnel were evacuated, but the majority were either killed or captured by the Japanese. For their action in the first days of the war, the 27th Bomber Group was cited for three Presidential Citations.

During the spring of 1942, the organization was transferred from Sumac, less personnel and equipment, to Savannah Army Air Base, Georgia, and from there to Key Field, Meridian, Mississippi where it was organized on 14 July 1942, with Lt Col Harry Van Lenven designated commanding officer.

On 12 December 1952, the Group departed from the New York port of embarkation for North Africa. The Air Echelon completed the move in the Group's new A-20's.

In April 1943, all pilots, gunners, and A-20's were transferred from the Group. The Group then received new flying personnel, the A-36 dive bomber, and was redesignated the 27th Fighter-Bomber Group.

After a short training period, the organization entered combat for the second time on 6 June 1943, with Col. John D. Stevenson commanding. The Group moved to Gola, Sicily, from Tunisia, North Africa, after the invasion on 18 July 1943. Col Stevenson was "shot down" in combat in August 1943, and taken as a POW. He was replaced by Col Dorr E. Newton, and the Group moved to San Antomio, Sicily, on 31 August 1943.

In September 1943, the designation of the Group was as follows: 16th to 522nd; 17th to 523rd; and 91st to 524th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons. It was also during September that the 27th Fighter-Bomber Group received its fourth Presidential Citation for the annihilation of a German division which was being rushed from Southern Italy to oppose the Salerno Bridgehead.

In January 1944, the A-36 Fighter Bombers were changed for P-40's and shortly afterwards, for P-47's. Later the organization was redesignated the 27th Fighter Group.

In April 1944, Col Stephen B. Mack assumed command of the 27th, and the Group made repeated moves to various parts of Europe, finally settling at Salon, France on 26 August 1944, at which time it was assigned to the 12th Air Force.

In September, Col William R. Nevitt assumed command of the 27th and remained in command until the Group was disbanded.

The Group was relieved from the 12th Air Force on 20 February 1945, and on 20 May of the same year, was further assigned to the 9th Air Force.

On 6 November 1945, the 27th Fighter Group returned to the U. S., where it was deactivated at Camp Shanks, N. Y., effective 7 November 1945.

Reactivation of the 27th Fighter Group took place in the European Theater, 20 August 1946, through Headquarters XII Tactical Air Command and was located in Germany. On 25 June 1947, it was relieved from its overseas assignment and assigned to the Strategic Air Command, to be transferred, less personnel and equipment, to Andrews Field, Camp Springs, Maryland.

On 16 July 1947, it was again transferred, less personnel and equipment, from Andrews Field to Kearney Field, Nebraska, for a permanent change of station to be under the 8th Air Force.

The 27th remained at Kearney, leaving only for practice missions at other various bases in the U. S., using F-82's.

On a chilly morning in November, pilots and mechanics of the 27th Fighter Group watched as their ship, laden with A-24 "Douglas Dauntless" aircraft slipped under the Golden Gate toward the open Pacific. After the bridge faded from sight, the men went below to get rid of the chill with hot coffee and some talk. The year was 1941, the destination, Ft. William McKinley in the Philippines, the men and machines of the 27th Fighter Group were fighting and dying in the holocaust which was to change the entire world. By Christmas of that year, the 27th was moved to Bataan. Four months later, the 27th Fighter Group was just a number on paper. Every plane had been lost, every pilot and ground crewman had been killed or captured in the fighting.

In May of 1942 at Hunter Field, Savannah, Ga., the 27th Fighter Group came alive again with new men and machines. On Dec. 12, 1942, the group equipped with Douglas A-20, shipped out for North Africa. Two weeks later they were airborne against the enemy. The 27th, already the proud possessor of numerous citations and battle honors, hard won in the Philippines, collected more in the North African campaign. On July 19, 1943, the group arrived in Sicily. There they acquired A-36s which were to be the forerunner of the P-51. From Sicily the 27th conducted strikes against the Germans in a general push north, winning more battle honors and citations for acts of valor in action against the enemy.

The 27th landed in Italy in September of 1943 and remained based at various air fields there for the next nine months. During this period, the 27th logged more combat time than any group in the U. S. Army Air Force. Having traded in their A-36s for P-47 "Thunderbolts," the 27th was transferred to Corsica where they stayed for one month. The next stop was France. After eight months there, the group reached German soil. The month was April, 1945, and the 27th did not leave Germany until after the surrender. On the long road from the Philippines to Germany, the 27th collected 12 battle honors and seven citations for bravery in action against the enemy.

Upon leaving Germany, the 27th Fighter Group returned to the United States and was located at Kearney, Neb. There they were re-equipped with F-82 and were redesignated the 27th Fighter Escort Wing, a part of the Strategic Air Command. On Mar. 16, 1949, the wing moved to Bergstrom Air Force Base, Tex., and converted to F-84E. In the summer of 1950, the wing won the McKay Trophy for ferrying 190 F-84s. across the Atlantic to two European based fighter wings. The 27th remained based in Texas until the Korean conflict erupted. December 1950 found the wing in Teagu Air Field, Korea, flying close air support, interdiction, and escort missions with 5th Air Force. In January 1951, the unit was relocated at Itazuke Air Base, Japan. From there, the 27th continued the battle against the Communists until August 1951 when it returned to the United States to re-equip with F-84Gs.

In October 1952, the 27th deployed 75 F-84Gs across the Pacific to Misawa AB, Japan, a record for a mass crossing which still stands.

After returning to Bergstrom and re-equipping with swept wing F-84Fs the 27th was redesignated Strategic Fighter Wing. In the summer of 1957, the wing became the 27th Fighter-Bomber Wing in Tactical Air Command and conversion began to the F-101. A 27th Wing pilot set an international speed record in the F-101 of more than 1,250 miles per hour over the 1,000 kilometer closed course. Also in 1958, a flight of 27th Wing pilots set a trans-Atlantic speed record, from Andrews AFB, Md., to Liege, Belgium. In February of 1959, the 27th designation



was transferred to Cannon AFB and took over F-100 based here. The 27th has been in every corner of the world fighting the cold war, carrying the fist and flower emblem to any place which looks like trouble, and quickly assuring anyone who starts something that the 27th will finish it. Final score: 17 battle honors and 10 citations for bravery.

The 27th FEG flew its first combat mission from Taegu AB, South Korea, on 6 Dec 1950. The F-84 crews, although trained in long-range escort, began combat by flying armed reconnaissance and close air support missions, and then added bomber escort, combat air patrol, flak suppression, and precise dive-bombing missions against bridges, tunnels, and airfield runways. An F-84 pilot destroyed the group's first MiG-15 in aerial combat on January 21, 1951. The group returned to Japan at the end of January to continue combat from Itazuke AB. In late June, it redeployed to Texas, but the 524th Squadron remained behind until early August to fly combat with the 136th FBG

#### 27th Tactical Fighter Wing

Formed as the 27 Bombardment Group (Light) on 22 December 1939 and then activated on 1 February 1940, this unit trained with A-20s in the United States until November 1942. On deployment to Africa it converted to A-36 aircraft and began operations with the Twelve Air Force in June of 1943, serving in the Mediterranean Theater until the end of the war. During 1944 the unit was redesignated the 27th Fighter Bomber Group and operated P-40s and P-47s. The P-47 served with the unit throughout the war and into 1947 when the Group was assigned to the USAFE. Later, in 1947, it returned to the United States and was assigned to the Strategic Air Command. During this time it was equipped with the F-51D; however, by 1948 it was operating F-82Es. By 1950 the unit had re-equipped with the F-84E. Now redesignated 27th Fighter Escort Group, it moved to the Far East for duties with the Far East Air Force. It saw action during the Korean War and was based at Itazuke, Japan until mid-1951. By 1956, the unit was redesignated as the 27th Strategic Fighter Group and, in 1957, re-equipped with the F-101A/C. It retained the Voodoo until 1958

Constituted in the Regular Army on 22 December 1939 as Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 27th Bombardment Group (Light). Activated on 1 February 1940 at Barksdale Field, LA, and assigned to the Southeast Air District. Transferred on 7 October 1940 to Hunter Field, GA. Assigned to the III Air Support Command 1 September 1941. Departed from the port of San Francisco on the U.S.A.T. President Coolidge and arrived at Manila, PI, 20 November 1941. Transferred to Clark Field, PI, on the same day. Location 7 December 1941— Clark Field, PI. Status: Active in the U. S. Air Force as the 27th Operations Group at Cannon A.F.B., NM.

The history of the 27th Special Operations Wing spans five wars and more than 70 years of almost continuous service. On 1 February 1940, the US Army activated the 27th Bombardment Group (Light) at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, equipping the new wing with B-18 aircraft. In October of that year, the wing moved to Hunter Field, Georgia, and began training in the new A-20 and A-24 aircraft. By November 1941, they were "ready" for the war that seemed inevitable. The men of the 27th left their homes and loved ones for the Far East.

While future allies reeled from Axis attacks around the world, there was no war in the Philippines. Arriving at Fort McKinley on 20 November, the 27th readied itself for delivery of its A-24 Dauntless dive-bombers. Concern grew as days turned into weeks and still the planes had not arrived. When the Japanese attacked the Philippines, on 9 December 1941, the situation had not changed.

To avoid capture or destruction, the ship carrying the planes diverted to Australia when the war escalated. On 18 December, Maj John H. Davies, 27 BG (L) commander, and twenty aircrew flew to Australia to retrieve their planes. However, a swift Japanese advance prevented his group from returning to the Philippines.

The remainder of the wing evacuated to the Bataan Peninsula, and arriving there on Thanksgiving Day, formed the 2nd Battalion (27th Bombardment Group) Provisional Infantry Regiment (Air Corp). For the 99 days following the attack on Pearl Harbor, until their surrender to the Japanese, they became the only Air Force unit in history to fight as an infantry regiment. They also had the dubious distinction of being the only unit to be taken captive in whole.

After their surrender they were forced to endure the infamous Bataan Death March. Of the 880 or so airmen who were taken, less than half survived captivity. Major Davies, his small group, and the few remaining wing personnel who evacuated Bataan before its fall were assigned to the 3rd Bombardment Group.

The name of the 27th was not allowed to be lost. On 4 May 1942, the 27 BG (L) transferred back to Hunter Field without men or equipment. Six months later the wing was once again ready for combat. Maintenance and support personnel went by sea to North Africa while aircrews and A-20 aircraft flew to South America then across to Africa. These aircraft and aircrews were transferred to the 47th Bombardment Group. The 27th began to rebuild for the third time with A-36 dive-bombers. Finally, the re-formed 27 FW flew its first combat missions of the war on 6 June 1943.

Flying A-36, P-40, and finally P-47 aircraft, the 27th Fighter-Bomber Group, as it was redesignated, fought the rest of the war in Europe. Its list of battles is a chronology of the war in Southern Europe. It includes the invasions of Sicily, Italy, Salerno, Southern France, and Anzio. It participated in the taking of Monte Cassino, the drive on Rome, attacked the Siegfried Line, and supported the Allied drive into Germany. With five Distinguished Unit Citations and a Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, it was among the most decorated air units in Europe.

Having served with distinction, the 27th Fighter Group was inactivated on 7 November 1945. In August 1946, the unit again activated, flying P-47s out of Fritzlar Air Base (AB), Germany. It stayed in Germany until transferred, without men or equipment, to Andrews Field, Maryland, in June 1947. A month later it was assigned to Strategic Air Command (SAC) and moved to Kearney Airfield, Nebraska.

## **Lineage**

The 27th SOG has a long and distinguished history since its inception as the 27th Bombardment Group (Light) at Barksdale Field, La., Feb. 1, 1940. Elements of the 27th BG were in the Philippines when the Japanese invaded the island in December 1941, and aided in the fight against the invading force. The Japanese eventually overran the country, and as a result, many members of the 27th BG were taken prisoners of war and forced to participate in the Bataan Death March in 1942.

Throughout the last 68 years, the 27th designation has been assigned to several groups and wings at a myriad of locations. The 27th was organized as a fighter wing in August 1947, at Kearney Airfield, Neb. Later, in February 1958, in a move to preserve the heritage of the 27th, Air Force leadership transferred the designation to Cannon AFB, replacing the 312th Wing.

Since 1958, the wing had supported F-100s, T/AT-33s, F-111s and F-16s.

The 27th Operations Group was re-designated as the 27th Special Operations Group on Oct. 1, 2007.

Air Force Special Operations Command inactivated the 73rd Special Operations Squadron at Cannon AFB, N.M., and transferred its aircraft and personnel to Cannon's 16th SOS last week,

officials announced. "A squadron with almost 100 years of history does not just get inactivated," 27th Special Operations Group Commander Col. Robert Orris said during the June 12 ceremony. "We will preserve this squadron and its guidon until it begins the next chapter in its phenomenal history," he added. The 16th SOS operated AC-130H Spectre gunships until the unit's final airframe retired last month. The 16th SOS now transitions to the AC-130W Stinger II gunship variant, transferred from the former 73rd SOS, according to a release. AFSOC retired the AC-130H and is reshuffling its gunships in preparation to transition to the new AC-130J Ghost rider. The command is retaining 26 legacy gunships, which will be phased out as new AC-130Js enter service. 2015



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Air Force Order of Battle  
Created: 26 Nov 2010  
Updated:

#### Sources

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