

## 47 FIGHTER SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 47 Fighter Squadron trains A-10 pilots in initial qualification, forward air controller (FAC), and senior officer formal courses utilizing state-of-the-art computer-based academic and combat flying training programs, and world class administrative procedures. The unit maintains the capability to provide combat commanders with expertise and support in contingency, war fighting and special operations support.

### LINEAGE

47 Pursuit Squadron (Fighter) constituted, 22 Nov 1940  
Activated, 1 Dec 1940  
Redesignated 47 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor), 12 Feb 1942  
Redesignated 47 Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942  
Redesignated 47 Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 20 Aug 1944  
Inactivated, 15 Oct 1946  
Redesignated 47 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 10 Oct 1952  
Activated, 1 Dec 1952  
Discontinued, 1 Jul 1960  
Redesignated 47 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 17 Apr 1962  
Organized, 1 Jul 1962  
Inactivated, 1 Jul 1971  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1973  
Redesignated 47 Fighter Squadron, 1 Feb 1992

### STATIONS

Wheeler Field, TH, 1 Dec 1940

Bellows Field, TH, 22 Feb 1942  
Haleiwa Field, TH, 25 Mar 1942  
Barking Sands, TH, 29 Jul 1943  
Mokuleia Field, TH, 8 Nov 1943  
Bellows Field, TH, 8 Jun 1944-27 Jan 1945  
South Field, Iwo Jima, 27 Feb-25 Nov 1945  
Bellows Field, TH, 25 Nov 1945  
Wheeler Field, TH, 9 Feb-15 Oct 1946  
Niagara Falls Muni Aprt, NY, 1 Dec 1952-1 Jul 1960  
MacDill AFB, FL, 1 Jul 1962-1 Jul 1971  
Barksdale AFB, LA, 1 Oct 1973  
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 30 Sep 2013

### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, 25 Jul-22 Nov 1965

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

15 Pursuit (later, 15 Fighter) Group, 1 Dec 1940-15 Oct 1946  
4708 Defense Wing, 1 Dec 1952  
518 Air Defense Group, 16 Feb 1953  
15 Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955-1 Jul 1960  
Tactical Air Command, 17 Apr 1962  
15 Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Jul 1962  
1 Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1970-1 Jul 1971  
917 Tactical Fighter Group (later, 917 Tactical Fighter Wing; 917 Fighter Wing), 1 Oct 1973  
917 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992  
917 Fighter Group, 1 Jan 2011  
924 Fighter Group, 30 Sep 2013

### **ATTACHMENTS**

2 Air Division, 25 Jul-22 Nov 1965

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-26, 1941  
P-40, 1941-1943  
P-36, 1941-1943  
P-47, 1943-1945  
P-51, 1944-1946  
F-47, 1952-1953  
F-86, 1954-1958  
F-102A, 1958-1960  
F-84, 1962-1964  
F-4, 1964-1971

A-37, 1973-1980

A-10A, 1980

## **COMMANDERS**

Maj Gordon H. Austin, 1 Dec 1940

Maj Joseph F. Hunker, 12 Feb 1942

Maj Jack M. Hounsom, 16 Sep 1942

Lt Col Norval K. Heath, 6 Mar 1943

Maj Thomas W. Mackey, 16 Apr 1944

Maj John A. Piper, 11 Nov 1944

Maj Theon E. Markham, May 1945

Capt Walter H. Powell, 19 Jul 1945

Capt Ernest W. Hostetler, 31 Jul 1945

Maj Theon E. Markham, 5 Aug 1945-unkn

Maj Orrell Culwell, 1 Dec 1952

Lt Col Rufus Woody Jr., 1953

Maj James L. Price, 1955

Lt Col Harold D. Collins, 1956

Lt Col Leonard L. Thomas, 1 Jun 1958-unkn

Lt Col Maurice Morrison, 1962

Lt Col Jack A. Robinson, 1964

Lt Col Aubrey C. Edinburgh, c. Jul 1967

Lt Col William M. Conner, 20 Sep 1968

Lt Col Solomon D. Whitten Jr., 20 Apr 1970

Lt Col Donald W. Martin, 25 Nov 1970-1 Jul 1971

Unkn, 1 Oct 1973-1976

Lt Col Benjamin Voss, Jun 1976

Lt Col Stanley F. Smith, Mar 1980

Lt Col Gerald P. Huckabee, Jun 1980

Lt Col William D. Tracy, 17 Oct 1981

Lt Col Gerald P. Huckabee, 1982

Maj Ty Gregory, 1982

Lt Col Francis A. Rauch Jr., Dec 1982

Maj George C. Rhymes, Dec 1986

Lt Col Jerry D. Prather, 24 Apr 1989

Lt Col Robert L. White, 1 Jan 1991

Lt Col John H. Bordelon, 1 Oct 1993

Lt Col James W. Graves, 27 Jul 1996

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Central Pacific  
Air Offensive, Japan  
Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Vietnam  
Vietnam Defensive

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

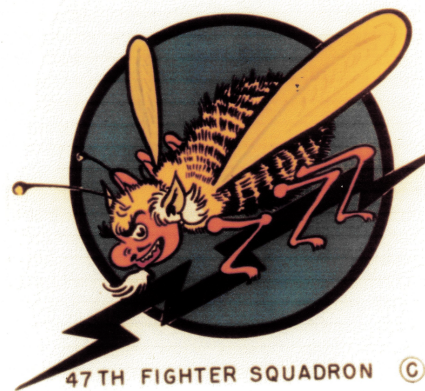
Distinguished Unit Citation  
Japan, 7 Apr 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with the Combat "V" Device  
25 Jul-22 Nov 1965

#### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 Jan 1965-1 Jun 1966  
1 Jan-31 Dec 1969  
2 Jul 1993-1 Jul 1995  
1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1999  
1 Oct 2001-1 Aug 2003  
1 Oct 2007-30 Sep 2009  
1 Jan 2017-31 Dec 2018

#### **EMBLEM**





47 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine emblem: Over and throughout a medium blue disc, border black, the caricatured figure, TURNIP TERMITE, body yellow, face and legs orange, ears and wings yellow green, riding a large, black, jagged lightning bolt toward dexter base. (Approved, 19 Sep 1944)



The "Spade 47" was used during the post war years while assigned to Air Defense Command (1952-60). The terrible termite today adorns the 47th TFS patch.





47 Fighter Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, the caricatured figure "Turnip Termite" body Or, garnished with Sable hair. Face and legs Tenné, ears and wings Vert, riding a large Black jagged lightning bolt toward dexter base, displaying a look of ferocity on its face, antennas, brow line, mouth and ears detailed of the second, teeth and eye detailed Argent, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached below the disc, a Green scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "47 FIGHTER SQ" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The caricature, Turnip Termite, is a traditional figure that the unit uses which dates back to the 1940's.

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**MOTTO**

Dogpatchers: Following the attacks on Pearl Harbor, the 47 FS deployed in support of the Pacific Island Campaigns. Flying missions from the Solomon Islands and Iwo Jima, members of the 47 FS gave their deployed locations the nickname "Dogpatch"; which was taken from the Al Capp cartoon strip Li'l Abner. The town of Dogpatch, in the words of Al Capp himself was , "...an average stone-age community nestled in a bleak valley, between two cheap and uninteresting hills, somewhere...." Most of the squadrons member came from rural America of the 1940s so, to name their base Dogpatch, after one of the most popular comic strips locations of the day, was very natural. The mascot for the 47 FS is the Turnip Termite, also taken from the Li'l Abner comic strip. The termites were known for swarming farms in Dogpatch and destroying

everything in sight. The 47 became well known for doing the same thing to the Japanese during W.W.II! The tail flash of today's 47 FS A-10s carries a turnip termite holding a yellow lightning bolt with the word "Dogpatchers" under the bolt.

## **OPERATIONS**

The 47 Fighter Squadron was activated Dec. 1, 1940, as the 47 Pursuit Squadron, one of three squadrons assigned to the 15th Pursuit Group, Wheeler Field, territory of Hawaii. The squadron also flew missions from Hawaiian stations of Bellows, Haleiwa and Mokuieia Fields, as well as Barking Sands. On 7 Dec 1941, The 47 Pursuit Squadron, between 0815 and 1000, made two flights. In the first flight were 2d Lieut. Kenneth Taylor, 2d Lieut. George Welch, 1st Lieut. John Webster, 2d Lieut. John Daines, each flying P-40's and 1st Lieut. Robert Rogers in a P-36. In the second flight were 1st Lieut. Robert Rogers, 2d Lieut. George Welch, 2d Lieut. Kenneth Taylor and 2d Lieut. Harry Brown in P-40's and 2d Lieut. John Daines in a P-36. Lieut. Welch shot down two Japanese planes in the first flight and two during the second flight. Lieut. Taylor shot down two Japanese planes during the first flight. Lieut. Brown shot down one Japanese plane during the second flight. Lieut. Daines was shot down at approximately 0915 over Schofield Barracks, probably by our own anti-aircraft troops.

Air defense in northeastern United States, 1952-1958.

In July 1965, the 47 deployed to Ubon Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand, and compiled 1,743 combat missions over Southeast Asia. The squadron returned to MacDill Nov. 27, 1965, and converted from a training mission to a combat training mission before being deactivated July 2, 1971.

Trained for A-37 close air support and special operations, 1972-1980 and for A-10 close air support and battlefield interdiction, 1980.

Periodically deployed A-10s and personnel to Italy to support NATO operations in the Balkans, 1993-1996.

Provided A-10 training for reserve pilots, 1996. Since that time they have participated in Operation Century Eagle 1999 & 2001, Saguaro Patriot 2001, Patriot Claw 2001 and Patriot Buccaneer 2002.

During the first tactical and conventional gunnery competition open to A-10s, Hawgsmoke 2000, the 47 took First Place for Top Hawgsmoke Tactical Unit, Top Overall Pilot and Top Overall Tactical Pilot. Then during the next Hawgsmoke competition in 2002, they won Top A-10 Squadron in the world.

In June 2003, the 47 FS deployed to Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport, Miss., for Operation Patriot Pursuit.

The 47 Tactical Fighter Squadron, AFRES, received their first A-10s in June, 1980, delivered



direct from the factory to AFRES. The 47 TFS became the 47 Fighter Squadron (FS) on June 1, 1992. They again assumed the pilot training mission for AFRES and ANG A-1 Os on October 1, 1996.

Barksdale Reservists Reorganizing Air Force Reserve Command officials are making organizational changes at Barksdale AFB, La., to improve Reservists' support of B-52 bomber operations there. On Jan. 1, AFRC will inactivate Barksdale's 917th Wing, which consists today of B-52 squadrons and an A-10 ground-attack unit, wing spokeswoman Jessica d'Aurizio, told the Daily Report Monday. At the same time, the command will activate the 307th Bomb Wing, a unit with a Cold War heritage, to subsume those B-52 units: the 93rd Bomb Squadron, 343rd BS, plus maintenance and support elements. The 93rd BS is the Air Force's sole B-52 schoolhouse, while 343rd BS airmen support the operations of Barksdale's active duty 2nd BW. Meanwhile, the inactivating 917th Wing's A-10s of the 47 Fighter Squadron will remain at Barksdale, but transfer to the organizational control of AFRC's 442nd Fighter Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., said d'Aurizio. These moves will "make us more efficient and allow us to concentrate on the B-52 mission," she said. The 47 FS is transitioning from a training unit to combat-coded status, she noted. Barksdale will host a ceremony on Jan. 8, with Lt. Gen. Charles Stenner, Air Force Reserve chief, presiding, to mark these changes, she said. 2010

A quartet of A-10 pilots from Air Force Reserve Command's 47 Fighter Squadron at Barksdale AFB, La., broke 20,000 combined Warthog flight hours during a formation sortie from the base. That's a feat never before accomplished by any four A-10 fliers. During their July 15 flight, Lt. Col. David Deaton, Lt. Col. Brady Glick, then Lt. Col. James Macaulay, and Lt. Col. Marc Olson shattered the previous record of 17,742 combined hours that they set in 2008. "I'm grateful that God has blessed me by allowing me to serve my country for this long," said Deaton after the flight. "This milestone is really a testament to the professionalism of the maintainers and the durability of the 'Hawg," added Macaulay, who leads the group with 5,200 flight hours. "In 20,000 hours, none of us have punched out or had a major mishap," he noted. Upon landing, Macaulay was promoted to the rank of colonel. 2011

Four A-10s deployed from Barksdale AFB, La., bombed, strafed, and sank the USNS Niagara Falls, a decommissioned naval supply ship, during the massive ongoing Rim of the Pacific exercise off the coast of Hawaii. "I think they underestimated the ability of the A-10," said Maj. Grant McCall, a pilot with Air Force Reserve Command's 47 Fighter Squadron, in a July 20 Barksdale release. He added, "Other groups were supposed to shoot at the target . . . but never got the chance because we sank it" during the July 14 mission. The A-10s hit the ship with four inert 2,000-pound laser-guided bombs, one of which penetrated the hull, before pummeling the ship with cannon. "The 30 millimeters were pounding the ship and sending monster geysers of water up in the air. It was a spectacular sight, like something out of old World War II footage," added Lt. Col. Jim Travis, 47 FS commander. 2012

A-10 pilots from Air Force Reserve Command's 47 Fighter Squadron at Barksdale AFB, La., tested a new helmet-mounted situation display and a new survival radio in simulated combat during the RIMPAC maritime exercise off the coast of Hawaii. Known as Scorpion, the full-color



helmet display indicates a target's position on the ground or in the air without requiring the pilot to break visual contact with his surroundings. "This system has greatly enhanced situational awareness and the ability to target more dynamically and quickly," said Lt. Col. Robin Sandifer, a 47 FS pilot, in a July 27 release. The second piece of new hardware, the Lightweight Airborne Recovery System, allows searchers to more easily locate a crash. "We hit a button, it interrogates the radio . . . and we know exactly where [the downed airmen] are," explained Lt. Col. Tom McNurlin of the Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Command Test Center in Tucson, Ariz. RIMPAC runs through Aug. 3. 2012

Officials at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., inactivated Air Force Reserve Command's 45th Fighter Squadron, passing its A-10 pilot training duties to AFRC's 47 Fighter Squadron, which was transplanted from Barksdale AFB, La. "During the last five-plus years, members of the 45th FS have trained A-10 mission-ready pilots alongside our regular Air Force team," said Col. John Russell, 924th Fighter Group commander, at the March 8 ceremony. Davis-Monthan inactivated the Active Duty 358th Fighter Squadron last month and rolled it together with the Reserve 45th FS as the 47 FS, according to a release. The reformed 47 FS is now the Air Force's only "combined classic and Active association," according to a separate March 20 release. Under the arrangement, AFRC pilots will fly with the 347 FS—one of D-M's two remaining Active Duty A-10 training squadrons, while Active Duty pilots will in return fly with the Reserve unit. 2014

The departure of the base's final three A-10s, belonging to the Air Force Reserve's 917th Fighter Group, came about three months before the group is scheduled to be inactivated. With the inactivation in late September, the group's 50-year run at Barksdale will come to an end. The inactivation was included as part of the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act. Airmen and members of the community gathered on the flight line to say goodbye to the A-10s in a farewell ceremony. The aircraft will have a new home at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. "While today is somewhat sad as we are going to fly the last Barksdale A-10s to their new home, really today is about celebrating the impact of the 917th," said Col. John Breazeale, the group's commander. "Today is about the thousands of 917th Airmen and their service to our nation." The 917th was originally formed Jan. 17, 1963, at Barksdale as the 917th Troop Carrier Group assigned to the 435th Troop Carrier Wing. Its mission was to administer and support its assigned 78th Troop Carrier Squadron, which was equipped with C-124s. Breazeale said the 917th has much to be proud of. "Today we celebrate the Airmen who activated the group in 1963," he said. "I guarantee they had no idea what the next 50 years would bring, for Barksdale or the 917th. Today we celebrate the hundreds of lives saved or protected by 917th Airmen over the skies in Bosnia in the 1990s and, most recently, in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. "The 917th FG proudly served our nation at Barksdale and deployed locations for over 50 years. It has been an honor to be a part of Team Barksdale and the local community." "The departure of the last three A-10s was a sad event for me and for the Reserve," said Col. Jonathan Ellis, 307th Bomb Wing commander. "The A-10 Thunderbolts have been a fixture in the skies over the community for decades, and the unit closure will have a deep impact on all the Reserve family. The 307th Bomb Wing team stands ready to lend a hand in whatever fashion we can to make the transition for the fighter group as smooth as possible." Though this is the end of the A-10 era at Barksdale, Ellis is ready for the future. "I am excited about the future of Reserve

operations at Barksdale and look forward to bringing a number of 917th FG members on board as we continue to define the future of B-52 operations across the enterprise," he said. Col. James Travis, 47 Fighter Squadron commander, gives a double fist pump as he taxis an A-10 Thunderbolt II on the ramp at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., June 3. Travis was piloting one of six A-10s being transferred to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., on that day. The transfer of all the A-10s from Barksdale is due to the recent Force Structure Action Implementation Plan that dictates the 917th Fighter Group and 47 FS at Barksdale will be inactivated this year on the last day of September. 2013

The Air Force Reserve Command's 47 Fighter Squadron won the biennial A-10 competition at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., according to a July 16 release. The 47 FS competed against 13 other A-10 teams. Dubbed the Hawgsmoke, a nod to the discontinued Air Force gunnery competition Gunsmoke, the event led with a remembrance ceremony to honor fallen A-10 pilots. The event is typically a two-day competition, including "team and individual scoring of strafing, high-altitude dive-bombing, 30-degree dive-bombing, Maverick missile precision, and team tactics," said Maj. Kyle Lanto, pilot instructor for the 355th Training Squadron. This year's competition lasted four days, and focused only on strafing, A1C Sivan Veazie. The actual competition took place July 10, he said. The "competition is an opportunity for camaraderie, fellowship of the world's premier close air support fighter, and a legacy of its pilots and support crews" . 2014

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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#### Sources

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The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *MacDill AFB, FL*. 1965.

Unit yearbook. *32nd Air Division*. 1955.