

HQ RHODE ISLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

LINEAGE

STATIONS

North Kingston, RI

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 143d Airlift Wing traces its history back to 1915 when concerned Rhode Island residents banded together in the true spirit of the citizen-soldier to purchase two Curtis Model "F" Flying Boats, one of which was assigned to the State National Guard. The border conflict in Mexico and America's entry into the First World War prevented much use, and in 1919 the National Guard aircraft, now obsolete, was sold as surplus.

In 1939 with war raging on both the European and Asian continents, President Roosevelt increased measures to prepare the Armed Forces for inevitable American involvement. The State of Rhode Island was allocated one of only two new observation squadrons authorized by Congress that year. The 152nd Observation Squadron was organized and less than one year later federalized for extended active duty. The training paid off. After American entry into World War II, the 152nd Observation Squadron immediately took up its primary mission of anti-submarine patrols along the Northeastern shipping lanes. In September 1944 the unit, now designated the 37th Photographic

Reconnaissance Squadron, transferred overseas. Assigned to the 15th Air Force, squadron pilots flew Photo Reconnaissance missions in northern Italy, southern Germany and the Balkans until the end of the war in Europe in June of 1945.

In 1946 the unit was reassigned back to the State of Rhode Island and designated the 152nd Fighter Squadron, SE. In September 1948 the 152nd received Federal Recognition and was assigned to the Continental Air Command program which tasked Air National Guard units with the defense of United States airspace. Flying Republic P-47 "Thunderbolt" and later the North American P-51 "Mustang" the unit trained for this M-Day mission. The Air Force, in an effort to upgrade to an all jet fighter force, required Air National Guard ADC units to upgrade to jet powered aircraft, the F-84 "Thunderjet". This requirement ultimately proved to be the downfall of the 152nd. The Rhode Island Airport Commission and National Guard authorities found themselves in a conflict over the use of TF Green Municipal Airport in Warwick for tactical jet operations. Unable to resolve these differences the Air Force removed the jets from the state; however, quick negotiations and the National Guard Bureau's desire to have a flying unit located in every state brought a new mission and the numeric designation which is carried to this day, the 143d.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources