

308 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

308 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 21 Jan 1942
Activated, 30 Jan 1942
Redesignated 308 Fighter Squadron, 25 May 1942
Redesignated 308 Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 20 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Activated, 20 Aug 1946
Redesignated 308 Fighter Squadron, Jet, 15 Jun 1948
Redesignated 308 Fighter Bomber Squadron, 20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 308 Fighter Escort Squadron, 16 Jul 1950
Redesignated 308 Strategic Fighter Squadron, 20 Jan 1953
Redesignated 308 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Apr 1957
Redesignated 308 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958
Redesignated 308 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 9 Oct 1980
Redesignated 308 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Oct 1986
Redesignated 308 Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991

STATIONS

Baer Field, IN, 30 Jan 1942
New Orleans AB, LA, 6 Feb–19 May 1942
Atcham, England, 10 Jun 1942
Kenley, England, 1 Aug 1942
Westhampnett, England, 25 Aug–23 Oct 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 8 Nov 1942 (operated from Casablanca, French Morocco, 10–31 Jan 1943)
Thelepte, Tunisia, 6 Feb 1943

Tebessa, Algeria, 17 Feb 1943
Canrobert, Algeria, 21 Feb 1943
Kalaa Djerda, Tunisia, 25 Feb 1943
Thelepte, Tunisia, 11 Mar 1943
Djilma, Tunisia, 7 Apr 1943
Le Sers, Tunisia, 12 Apr 1943
Korba, Tunisia, 20 May 1943
Gozo, c. 30 Jun 1943
Ponte Olivo, Sicily, 14 Jul 1943
Agrigento, Sicily, 19 Jul 1943
Termini, Sicily, 2 Aug 1943
Milazzo, Sicily, 2 Sep 1943
Montecorvino, Italy, 20 Sep 1943
Pomigliano, Italy, 14 Oct 1943
Castel Volturno, Italy, 14 Jan 1944
San Severo, Italy, 2 Apr 1944
Mondolfo, Italy, 3 Mar 1945
Triolo, Italy, 14 Jul–5 Aug 1945
Drew Field, FL, Aug–7 Nov 1945
Giebelstadt, Germany, 20 Aug 1946
Kitzingen, Germany, 30 Sep 1946–25 Jun 1947
Langley Field, VA, 25 Jun 1947
Turner Field (later, AFB), GA, 4 Sep 1947
George AFB, CA, 15 Mar 1959
Homestead, AFB, FL, 1 Oct 1962–5 Dec 1965
Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam, 7 Dec 1965
Tuy Hoa AB, South Vietnam, 15 Nov 1966–30 Sep 1970
England AFB, LA, 5 Oct 1970
Homestead AFB, FL, 30 Oct 1970
Moody AFB, GA, 1 Oct 1992
Luke AFB, AZ, 1 Apr 1994

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Manston RAF Stn, England, 26 Dec 1950–25 Jul 1951
Misawa AB, Japan, 20 Jul–16 Oct 1952
Chitose AB, Japan, 7 Nov 1953–9 Feb 1954
Eielson AFB, AK, 5 Dec 1956–7 Jan 1957
Hahn AB, Germany, 15 Aug–21 Aug 1958
Aviano AB, Italy, 22 Aug 1958–19 Jan 1959
Moron AB, Spain, 11 Jul–c. Dec 1959
Aviano AB, Italy, 7 Mar–c. 19 Jul 1961
Kadena AB, Okinawa, 13 Mar–30 Apr 1963
Itazuke AB, Japan, 1 May–3 Jul 1963
Cigli AB, Turkey, 9 Feb–5 May 1964 and 9 Mar–8 Jul 1965

Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 28 Apr–29 Jul 1972
Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, 11 Dec 1972–11 Jun 1973
operated from Moody AFB, GA, c. 11–30 Sep 1992

ASSIGNMENTS

31st Pursuit (later, 31st Fighter) Group, 30 Jan 1942–7 Nov 1945
31st Fighter (later, 31st Fighter-Bomber; 31st Fighter-Escort) Group, 20 Aug 1946
31st Fighter-Escort (later, 31st Strategic Fighter; 31st Fighter-Bomber; 31st Tactical Fighter)
Wing, 16 Jun 1952
3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 2 Dec 1965
31st Tactical Fighter Wing, 25 Dec 1966
4403rd Fighter Wing, 5 Oct 1970
31st Tactical Fighter Wing, 30 Oct 1970
31st Operations Group, 1 Nov 1991
347th Operations Group, 20 Nov 1992
56th Operations Group, 1 Apr 1994

ATTACHMENTS

31st Fighter-Escort Wing, 27 Jul 1951–15 Jun 1952
Alaskan Air Command, 5 Dec 1956–7 Jan 1957
Unkn, 15–21 Aug 1958, 22 Aug 1958–19 Jan 1959, 11 Jul–Dec 1959, 7 Mar–19 Jul 1961
18th Tactical Fighter Wing, 13 Mar–30 Apr 1963, unkn, 1 May–3 Jul 1963
7231st Combat Support Group, 9 Feb–5 May 1964 and 9 Mar–8 Jul 1965
31st Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Nov–25 Dec 1966
432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 28 Apr–29 Jul 1972
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 11 Dec 1972–11 Jun 1973
347th Operations Group, c. 11 Sep–19 Nov 1992

WEAPON SYSTEMS

F-4, 1970–1986
F-16, 1986
F-84, 1948–1957
F-100, 1957–1970
P-39
P-40, 1942
P-51, 1943–1945
P-51, 1947–1949
P-80, 1946–1947
Spitfire I
Spitfire IV
Spitfire Mk. VB
Spitfire V
Spitfire, 1942–1943

COMMANDERS

Maj Fred M. Dean, 30 Jan 1942
Maj Delwin B. Avery, 1 Sep 1942
Capt Frank A. Hill, 10 Feb 1943
Maj Delwin B. Avery, 4 Mar 1943
Capt Thomas B. Fleming, May 1943
Maj John H. Paulk, 8 Jul 1943
Maj Walter J. Overend, 14 Oct 1943
Lt Col James G. Thorsen, 18 Feb 1944
Maj Harry W. Dorris, 24 Jun 1944
Maj Leland P. Molland, 28 Jul 1944
Maj Frank A. Wagner, 4 Dec 1944
Lt Col James G. Thorsen, 2 Feb 1945-Unkn
Unkn, 20 Aug 1946-Oct 1947
Lt Col Shannon Christian, Oct 1947
Maj Ray M. Hilliard, Jul 1948
Lt Col Jerrold M. Vivian, 15 Aug 1952
Lt Col Frank W. Klibbe, Sep 1953
Maj John W. Santry, 17 Jan 1955
Maj John E. Pitts Jr., Jul 1956
Maj Donald N. Standfield, 24 Sep 1957
Maj Robinson Risner, 15 Mar 1959
Maj John B. Butler, 15 Jul 1960
Lt Col Virgil K. Meroney, 31 Aug 1960
Maj William Peters, 17 Dec 1961
Maj Louie E. Lovitt, 28 Apr 1962
Lt Col Alfred N. King, 14 Aug 1962
Lt Col Durward B. Russell Jr., 22 Sep 1964
Lt Col Alan E. Wockenfuss, Jun 1966
Lt Col Hubert N. Skidmore, 1967
Lt Col Jack M. Smith, 19 Mar 1968
Lt Col Thomas G. Ferrara, 1968
Lt Col James Rodeen, 30 Jun 1969
Lt Col William J. Hosmer, 30 Aug 1969
Lt Col Henry Buttelman, 28 Mar 1970
Lt Col David L. Robb, 6 Jul 1970-15 Oct 1970
Lt Col George L. Schulstad, 30 Oct 1970
Lt Col Benjamin F. Ingram Jr., 19 Feb 1971
Lt Col Robert F. Johnson li, 3 Oct 1971
Lt Col Thomas E. Colvin, 1 Sep 1972
Lt Col Steve Braswell, 10 Nov 1972
Lt Col Abner Prophett, 1 Mar 1973
Lt Col Henry D. Canterbury, 23 Jul 1973
Lt Col James D. Terry, 31 Jan 1975

Lt Col Earnest L. Coleman, 27 Jul 1976
Lt Col Wilbur E. Roberts, 6 Jun 1977
Lt Col Marcus F. Cooper Jr., 22 Jun 1978
Lt Col Timothy F. Mcconnell, 6 Feb 1980
Lt Col Lester D. Alford, 10 Aug 1981
Lt Col Kenneth A. Frey, 13 Apr 1983
Lt Col James P. Soden, 18 Nov 1983
Lt Col Max R. Hix, 27 Dec 1985
Lt Col Douglas M. Hosmer, 30 Oct 1986
Lt Col Robert R. Scott, 25 Oct 1987
Lt Col Michael B. Larkin, 28 Apr 1989
Lt Col Phillip B. Straley, 16 Jun 1989
Lt Col Fred Vanvalkenburg, 10 Jul 1992
Lt Col Ricardo M. Cazessus, 25 Jun 1993
Lt Col Kevin W. Smith, 1 Apr 1994
Lt Col William C. Coutts, 17 Mar 1995
Lt Col Lawrence L. Wells, 11 Jul 1996
Lt Col James M. Smothermon, 1 Dec 1997
Lt Col Michael C. Banton, 13 Dec 1999
Lt Col Samuel C. Johnston, 19 Jan 2001
Lt Col John M. Sieverling, 29 Jan 2002
Lt Col David E. Ellis, 9 Jul 2003
Lt Col Kenneth E. Lacy, 24 Jun 2005
Lt Col Jeffrey C. Schroeder, 16 May 2007
Lt Col Jeffrey R. Jensen 14 May 2009
Lt Col Christopher Colcord 2 June 2011
Lt Col D. B. Russell

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Algeria-French Morocco with Arrowhead
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France

North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Vietnam
Vietnam Defensive
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
Tet 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Vietnam Ceasefire

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Rumania, 21 Apr 1944
Poland, 25 Jul 1944

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
8 Jun 1966–16 Apr 1967
1 May–31 Dec 1968

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device
17 Dec 1966–30 Apr 1968
18 Dec 1972–27 Jan 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
4–16 Jul 1952
1 Mar–30 Nov 1962
23 Feb 1991–22 Feb 1993
1 Jul 1994–30 Jun 1996
1 Jul 1996–30 Jun 1998
1 Jul 1998–30 Jun 2000

1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2003
1 Jun 2003-30 Jun 2005
1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2006
1 Jul 2006-30 Jun 2007
1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2008
1 July 2008-30 June 2009
1 July 2009-30 June 2010
1 July 2010-30 June 2011

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
16 Dec 1966–15 Oct 1970

EMBLEM



308 Pursuit Squadron emblem: Following the shameless Japanese betrayal at Pearl Harbor, planes marked with the design of the rising sun flew at low altitude over Bataan and Manila, unhampered, and dropped death and destruction at will. They had no opposition. America was unprepared for treachery and had no planes in the sky. Nearly nine months later the Marines landed in the Solomons and drove the Japs into the sea under an umbrella of American fighters, bombers and interceptors. The scene has changed. The 308 Pursuit Squadron represents the American type of heavily armed pursuit ships capable of hurling the Solomon Island brand of lightning with swift, deadly blows. Their Disney presented insignia which they received at New Orleans Air Base at New Orleans, Louisiana, is that of a Trojan soldier complete with sword, shield, and head dress, advancing quickly on his enemy. He swings his sword fiercely to intercept the attack and hold him off for the kill.



Checky Argent and Vert, on an arrowhead point to base throughout Silver Gray fimbriated Sable, a dexter cubit arm vambraced fesswise issuant from sinister Argent grasping a sword point to base of the like, hilt of the second and piercing a cloud issuing from base White; all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached above the disc a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "308 FIGHTER SQ" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "EMERALD KNIGHTS" in Yellow letters. Yellow is an Air Force color and refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The checky field suggests the field of battle. The arrowhead denotes the aircraft of the squadron in association with the field of battle. The arm in armor, grasping a sword, symbolizes the unit's ability to defend the peace. The sword piercing the cloud stands for the sky, the unit's theater of operation. (Approved, 10 Jan 1962 and modified, 18 July 1995; replaced emblems approved, 14 May 1957 and 7 Mar 1952)

MOTTO

EMERALD KNIGHTS

OPERATIONS

The 308 was constituted Jan. 30, 1942, as the 308 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) and was activated at Baer Field, Fort Wayne, Ind. After five months of training in the P-39 Bell Aircobra, the unit joined the war in Europe when it was assigned to a base in England in June 1942. The squadron's aircraft did not accompany the unit to England and 308 pilots and technicians spent two months of intensive training in flying and fighting in the British Spitfire.

The squadron became operational and flew its first combat mission on Aug. 18, 1942, when it attacked enemy positions in occupied France. In November 1942, the unit moved to Gibraltar and supported the allied invasion of North Africa. In February 1943, the Spitfires of the 308 supported allied efforts which halted General Rommel's advance on allied positions. In July 1943, Spitfires from the 308 provided support for Allied Forces as the Invasion of Italy began with the capture of Sicily. As Allied bomber forces operating from Italian soil began the strategic bombing of Axis petroleum and communications facilities in central Europe and the Balkans, the 308 was re-equipped with the North American P-51 Mustang to replace the shorter-ranged Spitfire.

In August 1944, the P-51's were involved in the invasion of Southern France. In December 1944, the first destruction of a German jet fighter by a 308 P-51 occurred. By war's end, the 308 had earned two distinguished unit citations and was involved in eight campaigns.

On 8 February 1964, the 308 Fighter Squadron flew a non-stop mission from Homestead AFB, Florida, to Cigli AB, Turkey. The 6,600 mile trip required eight in-flight refuelings and set a new record for the longest mass flight of jet aircraft to cross the Atlantic. The flight also led to the wing receiving the Tactical Air Command Outstanding Fighter Wing Award for 1964, the second consecutive year it won that prestigious award.

In June 1965 the 307 TFS deployed to Beinh Hoa AB, Republic of Vietnam; the 308 TFS replaced them in December, having moved there as a permanent change of station.

From April to August 1972 the 308 TFS deployed to Udorn Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand to augment tactical air forces already deployed to that country, followed in July by the 307 TFS. In June 1972, Captains John Cerak and David B. Dingee of the 308 TFS were shot down and captured by the North Vietnamese, and confirmed as prisoners of war. In March 1973 both were released and returned to the United States.

The 308 TFS completed the wing's final deployment to Southeast Asia from December 1972 to June 1973.

On Oct. 1, 1986, the squadron was re-designated a fighter squadron and re-equipped with the F-16A and F-16B. The 31 TFW was the last active duty unit to fly F-16A/Bs. The 308 was the first in the wing to transition to the Block 25 version of the F-16C/D and subsequently to the Block 42 F-16 C/Ds.

Drama came to the 308 during the 1992 hurricane season. An urgent escape had to be made when it became clear that hurricane Andrew was going to strike the southern portion of Florida where the parent 31st FW is based. While the 309th FS moved its aircraft to Shaw AFB, South Carolina both the 307th FS and 308 FS moved to Moody AFB, Georgia. The following day on August 24th, 1992 Hurricane Andrew devastated Homestead AFB.

On April 1st, 1994 the unit moved to Luke AFB, Arizona where it became a training unit. Training by the 308 FS is not a typical syllabus as the 308 FS is the main training hub for turning out instructor pilots. The 'Emerald Knights' mission statement is to 'Provide the finest single-seat, single-engine F-16 fighter pilots for the combat Air Forces and produce top quality F-16 instructor pilots.' The role of training instructor pilots is not exclusive and the 308 FS still has classes of crew which are new to the Viper.

On 23 July 2001, at approximately 1831Z, an F-16DG, S/N 88-0167, assigned to the 308 FS, 56 Fighter Wing (FW), LAFB, Arizona experienced engine failure 10 minutes after takeoff, and impacted the ground 57 miles west south west of LAFB. The mishap pilot (MP), assigned to the 56 Training Squadron, 56 FW, ejected safely and sustained minor injuries. The mishap aircraft (MA) was destroyed upon impact with the loss valued at \$19,222,883.48. There was no damage to private property. The MP was leading a 2-ship continuation training (CT) surface attack tactics (SAT) sortie that included a low level on Victor Route (VR)-231. Seven minutes into the low level, while flying at 500 feet above ground level (AGL), the MP felt what he defined as an explosion and the aircraft vibrated violently. The MP zoomed (established a climb) the aircraft and pulled the throttle to idle. During the zoom, the aircraft continued to vibrate violently and RPM decayed through 20%. Upon hearing a radio call from his wingman that his aircraft was on fire, the MP ejected at 7500 feet mean sea level (MSL). There is clear and convincing evidence that two adjacent third stage disk inner airseal retaining fasteners in the low pressure turbine (LPT) failed and/or came loose and allowed it to move outward and forward. A section of this airseal made contact with the third stage vane inner airseal, liberating/damaging all third stage vanes and all of the following vanes and blades. Progression of damage led to drive shaft distortion, a titanium fire in the high pressure compressor (HPC) section, and engine seizure. Fragment(s) from the damaged LPT also pierced the outer case and the aft left A-I fuel tank, allowing fuel to ignite and sustain an engine bay fire through impact. Time between initial cockpit indications and engine seizure was approximately 30 seconds. Post ejection, there were flight control deflections that resulted in abrupt pitch-ups prior to impact. These deflections were likely caused by damage to flight control system wire harnesses resulting from A-I fuel tank damage and/or subsequent fire. Post impact examination of the wreckage and damage indicate that all other aircraft systems were within operational parameters prior to impact. There is clear and convincing evidence that the engine failure was caused by the loss of two adjacent third stage inner airseal retaining fasteners. However, the evidence is insufficient to determine whether the fasteners were lost due to a manufacturing defect or because they were incorrectly installed. Maintenance technical orders permit fastener installation at the depot (Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center (OC-ALC)) and intermediate (base) levels of maintenance. The third stage airseal fasteners in this engine were last installed at depot. OC-ALC is evaluating whether there is a manufacturing defect. Under 10 U.S.C. 2254(d), any opinion

of the accident investigators as to the cause of, or the factors contributing to, the accident set forth in the accident investigation report may not be considered as evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding arising from an aircraft accident, nor may such information be considered an admission of liability of the United States or by any person referred to in those conclusions or statements.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

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Unit yearbook. *Homestead AFB, FL. 1964.*

War Insignia Stamp Album, Postamp Publishing Co, 1942.