

112 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

112 Aero Squadron organized, 18 Aug 1917
Redesignated 633rd Aero Squadron, 30 Dec 1917
Demobilized, 19 Aug 1919

112 Squadron (Observation) constituted in the National Guard and allotted to the state of Ohio, 1921
Redesignated 112 Observation Squadron, 25 Jan 1923
Organized and Federally recognized, 20 Jun 1927

633rd Aero Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 112 Observation Squadron, 20 Oct 1936

Redesignated 112 Observation Squadron (Light), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 112 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Inactivated, 18 Oct 1942
Redesignated 112 Liaison Squadron, 2 Apr 1943
Activated, 30 Apr 1943
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 112 Bombardment Squadron (Light), and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
Extended federal recognition, 2 Dec 1946
Redesignated 112 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 9 Jul 1952
Redesignated 112 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Jul 1955
Redesignated 112 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 20 Aug 1962

Redesignated 112 Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX, 18 Aug 1917-19 Aug 1919

Hopkins Airport, Cleveland, OH, 20 Jun 1927

Pope Field, NC, 2 Dec 1940

Dover, DE, 29 Dec 1941

Georgetown, SC, 21 May 1942

Lantana, FL, 30 Aug 1942

Birmingham, AL, 18 Oct 1942

Salinas AAB, CA, 30 Apr 1943

Redmond AAFld, OR, 19 Aug 1943 (operated from Camp Abbot, OR)

Corvallis AAFld, OR, 6 Nov 1943

Portland AAB, OR, 24 Apr-18 May 1944

Kingston Deverill, England, 9 Jun 1944

Hurst Park, England, 20 Jun 1944

Heston, England, 30 Jun 1944 (detachment at Valognes, France, 6 Aug-9 Sep 1944) Jullouville, France, 27 Aug 1944

Buc, France, 24 Sep 1944 (flight operated from Namur, Belgium, 26 Oct 1944-11 Feb 1945)

Frankfurt-am Main, Germany, 21 Jun-Aug 1945

Drew Field, FL, 5 Sep-7 Nov 1945

Cleveland, OH, 1946

Lawson Field, GA, October 1950

Berea, OH, Mar 1952

Akron Canton Airport, Oct 1952

Toledo Municipal Airport, Toledo, OH, Apr 1956

Toledo Express Airport, Toledo, (Swanton, OH) Jan 1959

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 1917-1919

Ohio NG (divisional aviation, 37th Division), 20 Jun 1927

Fourth Corps Area, 25 Nov 1940

I Army Corps, Dec 1940

65th Observation Group, 1 Sep 1941-18 Oct 1942

70th Reconnaissance Group, 30 Apr 1943

II Air Support Command (later II Tactical Air Division), 11 Aug 1943

III (later I) Tactical Air Division, 1 Jan 1944

US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 4 Jun 1944

Ninth Air Force, 7 Jun 1944 (attached principally to Headquarters Command, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces, 7 Jun 1944-14 Jul 1945, but with elements attached to Headquarters Command, European Theater of Operations, US Army, or sections thereof, 7 Jun-1 Nov 1944, 15 Nov 1944-12 Feb 1945)

US Forces, European Theater, 10 Aug 1945

Third Air Force, 5 Sep-7 Nov 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

PT-1, 1927

BT-1,

O-2,

O-2H

O-11 1927

O-38, 1930

O-38B

O-38E

O-47, 1938

O-47A

O-47B

O-49

O-52

O-57 1941

O-58, 1942

L-5, 1943

L-5B

L-4,

L-6,

A-24 1943

UC-78, 1944

L-1

C-47, 1945

A-26B, 1946

RB-26, 1950

F-51

F-84, 1952

T-28, 1956

F-84, 1959

T-33,

F-100, 1970

A-7, 1979

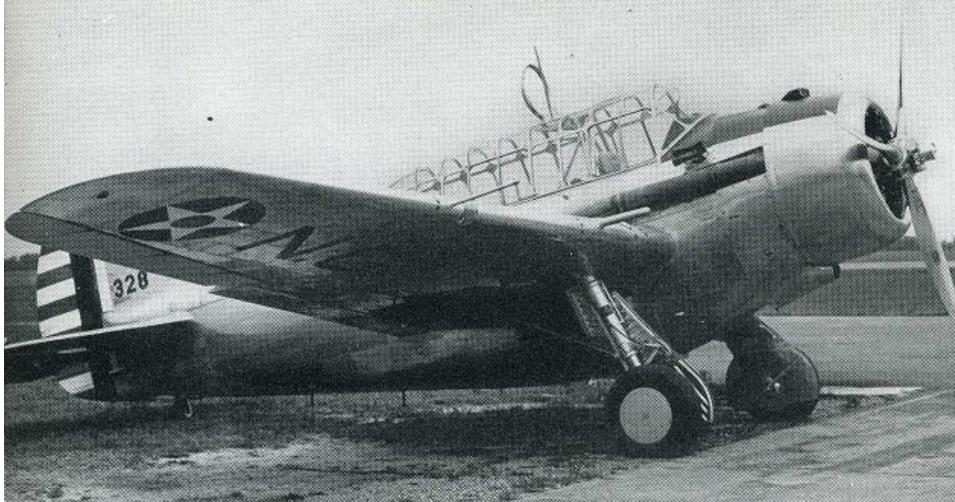
F-16, 1992

Support Aircraft

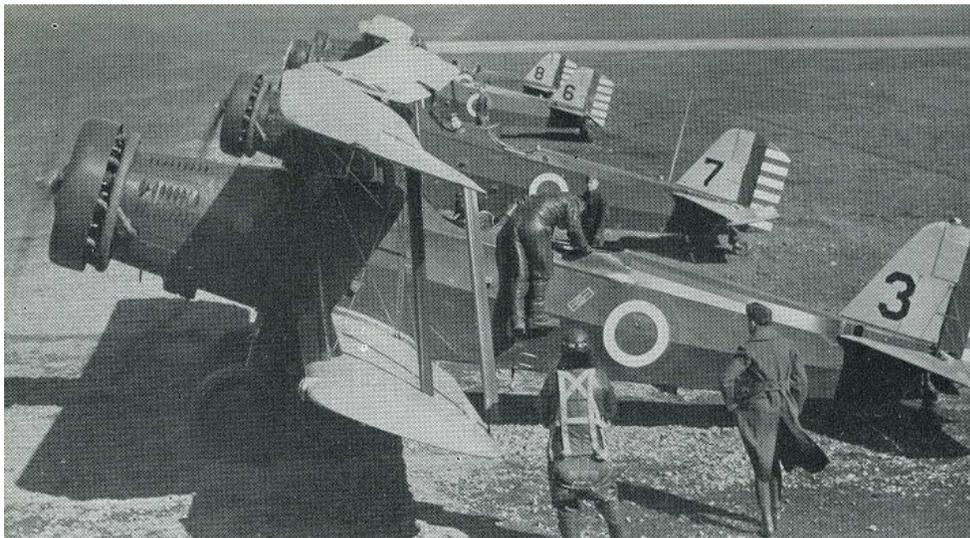
C-47

T-6,

C-54, 1970



Ohio National Guard O-47, 1938 (US Army National Guard)



Sunday drill operations, 1938 (US Army National Guard)

COMMANDERS

Maj Thomas J. Herbert, 20 Jun 1927
Maj Errol H. Zistel, 11 Apr 1931
Maj Fred L. Smith, 20 Sep 1934
Maj Clarence D. Barnhill, 16 Nov 37-Mar 1941
Maj Rufus F. Scott, Jr.
Cpt Edwin H. Frith
2LT Royal R. Moss
LTC Lloyd M. Griffin, 1946
Maj William Walker, 1949
LTC Warren B. Howe, 1952
LTC Milan R. Forkapa, Jr., 1954

Maj Richard C. Laufert, 1962
LTC Robert G. Etter, 1964
LTC Winston W. Hasel, 1966
Maj Robert Oberlin, 1967
LTC Winston W. Hasel, 1968
LTC Richard C. Laufert, 1969
LTC James White, 1977
LTC John Peebles, 1980
Maj John Murphy, 1982
Maj Bob Buchwald, 1984
LTC James Robertson, 1987



Maj Clarence D. Barnhill
(US Army National Guard)



Maj Barnhill and another officer inspect the photo section.
(US Army National Guard)

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater
Northern France
Rhineland
Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



The 112 emblem is a red circle with a thin white edge around it, a pair of wings in the center with five arrows crossed in the center with balloon tips on the arrows. This emblem was never used on the aircraft the squadron flew. (1927-1940).

On a white disk and in front of green outlines of clouds, a cartoon representation of a bee in flight over the top of a green and white globe of overall pattern issuing from base of disk; bee, black body with yellow and red stripes, yellow wings and face, white eyes and teeth, wearing a green helmet on its head, brown gloves on the front feet and black boots on the rear feet; the left hand gripping a yellow aerial bomb and the right one a black automatic, the tail terminating in a black exhaust pipe emitting a red curved trail passing through two puffs of white smoke and ending at a small black mark on the globe; the entire design except the clouds outlined in black. (Approved 9 Mar 1954)

The bee is social in its habits, living in communities where each member performs some service for the common welfare of all. The Guardsman, in addition to his everyday routine of living, participates in the activities of his National Guard unit, to be prepared to insure the security of his community and the nation should that security be threatened.

Like the bee community, our nation does not look for trouble or prepare itself for aggression. The bee is provided with a sting purely for defensive purposes; this alludes to the Air Guard as the sting is housed in the state of readiness of its various military units. The sting of the 112 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, as depicted by the armament carried by the bee, is the firepower of the unit's aircraft, always sharp and ready when needed.

MOTTO

Stingers

OPERATIONS

The 633rd Aero Squadron, formerly the 112 Aero Supply Squadron, was formed on 18 Aug 1917 from a nucleus of men who had been personally selected from recruits, in what was formerly known as the Lower Field, and placed on duty at the Camp Signal Supply Office. Maj Rufus F. Scott, Jr., was placed in command of the 112 Squadron in addition to his duties as Post Supply Officer and Commanding Officer of the 75th Aero Construction Squadron.

Thomas J. Herbert, first commander of the 112 Observation Squadron served as the first officer advisor representative in the HQ of the 37th Inf Div, Ohio National Guard. Errol H. Zistel moved up to serve as Air Advisor Representative in 1934.

Around this nucleus of men, which went to form the 112 Squadron, were gathered other men who were personally selected by Maj Scott and M. B. James MacFadden all of whom were placed on special duty at the Supply Office. M. E. MacFadden was one of the charter members of the Squadron, having been placed on duty at this field in connection with supply work from Fort Sam Houston, TX, where he was on detached service from the First Aero Squadron. Maj Scott was relieved from duty with the squadron on 9 Sep 1918, owing to the weight of his other duties, and was replaced by Cpt Edwin H. Frith. Cpt Frith was relieved on 13 Oct 1918, being ordered overseas, LT Moss then becoming the squadron commander.

The first Sergeant Major of the 112 Squadron was Sgt Harry J. Kennedy, but he filled the position only for a short while, as he was placed on special duty at the Ground Officers' Training School and later commissioned. Sergeant Kennedy was succeeded by SFC Ernest W. Bills, but as this soldier was shortly transferred to an outgoing squadron, he was replaced by SFC Joseph A. Bonneau. Cpl Irving Barkley was the original Supply Sergeant of the 633rd Squadron, but remained with the organization only for a short while, as he was placed on special duty at the Ground Officers' Training School. Cpl Barkley was succeeded by the present organization Supply Sergeant, SFC Robert T. Philp, a native Californian. Much credit is due Sgt Philp, as the condition of squadron, supplies were decidedly chaotic at the time of his taking it over. The "old boy" has stuck with the organization through thick and thin and claims that he will be with them to the end. The unit did serve within the continental limits of the United States and was mustered out of service on August 19, 1919.

An organization formed by the members of the squadron which has gained considerable fame, is the Order of I. M. A's (Indoor Military Aviators). The name was suggested by Sergeant Folk while in a sarcastic frame of mind and was adopted by the "Board of Governors" of the club. A number of delightful dances and banquets have been staged by the I. M. A's., all of which have been eminently successful from every standpoint.

The organization is extremely proud of the number of enlisted men which have been commissioned direct or sent to the various Officers' Training Schools throughout the country and later commissioned. It is a conservative estimate to state that 75 men have been commissioned directly and indirectly from the 633rd Squadron. It might be added, under the order which was issued just prior to the signing of the armistice and which permitted direct commission of men in the ranks of the Air Service, that of seventeen applicants from this organization, fifteen were passed and recommended for 2nd Lieutenancies in the Air Service.

Every member of the 633rd Squadron regrets that his silver service chevrons are not gold, but to their credit, it must be stated that it is not their fault as every Sergeant Major the squadron has had can testify. The enlisted personnel of the 633rd Squadron has operated the Post Supply Office from the beginning, and as all the boys can testify, there has been plenty of work on this

side of the ocean even if they were all anxious to cross to the other side.

The Thirty-seventh Aviation consists of the 112 Observation Squadron, the 112 Photo Section and the 112 Medical Section. Cleveland was selected as the location of the Thirty-seventh Division, and it was only after considerable preliminary work that the organization was whipped into shape and mustered into service on 20 Jun 1927. Major Emil Marx, now Adjutant General of Ohio, was largely responsible for organization of the aviation unit.

First commanding officer of Thirty-seventh Division Aviation was Maj Thomas J. Herbert, who was in turn followed by Maj Errol H. Zistel, Fred L. Smith and Clarence D. Barnhill. Hangar facilities were provided by the State, and land was furnished for a landing field by the city of Cleveland. The hangars were suitably dedicated on the first anniversary of the Squadron, 20 Jun 1928.

The Cleveland Airport, where the organization is quartered, has been greatly improved since the Squadron's organization, due largely to the work of Maj Jack Berry and the P. W. A. Camp Perry has served as the training ground of the organization, and permanent buildings for the use of the Squadron are now in the process of construction.

Federal recognition ceremonial observances were held on 20 June 1927, 8 p.m., at the old 6th Street Central Armory, Cleveland, Ohio. Oath: the 112 Aviation Service unit's members, being a part of the State Militia (Ohio National Guard) swore their oath of office to the State of Ohio and to the Governor of the State. At that time (1927) no oath of office was sworn to the Office of the United States or to the President of the United States. The first commanding officer of the 37th Division Aviation was Major Thomas J. Herbert, a former World War I pilot Major Errol H. Zistel was the 112 Observation Squadron's Operations Officer, who was in turn to inherit the commander's position (1929-1934), followed by Major Fred L. Smith (1934-1937), followed by Major Clarence D. Barnhill, (1937-1940), at which time the unit was called to active duty.

The first home of the planeless 112 Observation Squadron was the center hangar, (one of three old US mail hangars) donated to the unit by the City of Cleveland, Ohio. The hangar was located on the Cleveland Hopkins Airport (this airport was named in honor of Mr. Hopkins a former Cleveland City Manager). This field was to be the permanent home of the 112 Observation Squadron until Federal activation in 1940.

New hangar facilities costing over \$100,000 were furnished by the State of Ohio. The land was furnished for a landing field by the City of Cleveland. The new hangars were suitably dedicated on the first anniversary of the squadron, 20 June 1928. The 112 greatly improved its Cleveland airport facilities over the period of years. A large portion of the improvements were due to the hard work of Major Jack Berry and the great help of the PWA.

A few months after their Federal recognition the 112 Squadron received its first aircraft. Four PT-1, open, two place cockpit trainers arrived. Much enthusiasm attended this event and flight training began immediately. This was a sturdy aircraft for its day and the pilots of the 112 tell

many an exciting tale of their hair rising experiences while flying them.

By this time the training program was being performed in earnest. The summer of 1927 the 112 Observation Squadron spent their first year training as best they could at the Cleveland Hopkins Airport. In 1928 and for many years thereafter, Camp Perry Ohio, along the coast of Lake Erie, near Sandusky, Ohio, served as the main training ground for the 112's summer field training site. A former parade ground at the camp was sectioned off and used for a landing strip. The smooth grass of the parade ground served as a perfect landing field for the observation and training type aircraft of that period.

The 112 Observation Squadron took part in various Army maneuvers, cooperative missions, food dropping expeditions, air races, searching parties, artillery spotting and various other assignments which were completed with dispatch.

The first instructor of the organization was 1Lt Charles M. Cummings who was followed by 1Lt Charles Backes and Maj Christopher W. Ford.

It was in 1928 that Camp Perry, near Port Clinton, became the main training site for the 112. The pilots used a former parade ground as their landing strip and the smooth grass proved perfect for the military aircraft of that day. As a part of their training, the 112 participated in many varied missions such as food dropping expeditions, artillery spotting, search parties and support for various Army maneuvers.

In 1931, Captain Errol Zistel, then commander, narrowly escaped death during a test flight as his aircraft momentarily lost power during a steep turn on take off. As it hurtled downward from about 100 feet, a number of people on the ramp below escaped certain death as they fled pell-mell just seconds before the plane crashed on the very spot on which they had been standing. Capt. Zistel escaped with cuts about the face but his passenger, Sergeant John Lundsford, was knocked unconscious and suffered a fractured collarbone.

In 1936, some of the members of the 112 went to summer camp at Ft. Knox, Ky. In 1937, the unit got new aircraft in the O-47 In 1938 the unit held its summer camp at Volk Field, Wis., for the first time

The units were Federalized twice in 1939 for short periods of time 11 Nov. 1939 to 12 Nov. 1939 and again 22 Nov 1939 to 26 Nov 1939.

On 25 Nov 1940, the 112 answered the call to active duty. The 112 moved to Pope Field, North Carolina, the identity of the unit began to disintegrate as the experienced personnel were shipped out to other units. The remaining members plus fillers, were training for anti-sub patrol missions and the unit eventually moved to Dover, Delaware. While the 112 lost its home town identity, the men who were a part of the original unit carried on with the same sense of pride and effort that had always marked the unit.

The federal induction of the Ohio National Guard, 112 Observation Squadron on the 25th of November 1940 created many problems for both the members of the unit and the Army people who had to supply and billet (house) the unit. The unexpected and sudden Induction Order placing the members of the 112 on active duty meant the only place at that time for the unit's members to be housed in was the hangar constructed for the unit 20 June 1928. The personnel of the 112 Observation Squadron and attached units slept in the hangar, ate in the hangar and lived in the hangar for approximately thirty days while their new station was being equipped and made suitable for operation. "Begin wrecking 112 Squadron's hangar. Tearing down of the large red brick hangar and photographic laboratory on the south edge of Cleveland airport, which formerly housed the 112 Observation Squadron of the Ohio National Guard, was begun today to make way for the north-south runway of the Government's new bomber assembly plant. Constructed in 1927 at a cost of \$100,000, the two buildings are located on a six acre tract of land deeded to the state by the city. Since the squadron was mobilized by the War Department in November 1940 the buildings have not been in use."

The 112 saw the light of day again as a Guard unit when it was officially redesignated as The 112 Bombardment Squadron (Light) and allotted to the ANG on 24th May 1946. The Certificates of Federal recognition were signed on Dec. 2, 1946. The unit was based once again at Cleveland Hopkins Airport and was located in one of the hangers adjacent to the now closed bomber plant. The unit was to be equipped with the Douglas A-26 in April of 1947; the 112 had one dual controlled A-26 on the ramp. In addition to the A-26 the unit also had two L-5's and two T-II's for training bombardiers, navigators and gunners. The A-26's started to dribble in. One month there would be three on the ramp, next month there would be four or five and so on until the full squadron had arrived. In the meantime, the L-5's and T-II's were taken away from the unit.

The unit conducted its first summer camp since 1940 at Camp Attebury in 1948. Conditions were at best primitive with the housing consisting of single story, tar paper, GI barracks that had been closed since the war. There were coal stoves in the mess hall, no heat in the barracks, uniforms were worn on and off the base and the First Sergeant was God. Things went a little slowly and the fact that the unit literally had to make the facilities livable did not help the operations at all. But, despite the adversities, the camp went well and the unit returned to Cleveland with some valuable lessons learned from the first summer camp held since before WW. II. The unit had done such a good job at reopening a closed base that the following year they were sent to open another base closed since the war. Dover, Delaware. The motor convoy took two days with a one night stop at the halfway point.

No accommodations had been made for the over-nighter and the men slept in rolled up blanket underneath, inside of, and on top of the trucks. When they arrived at Dover they found pretty much the same situation as they had been faced with at Attebury. The barracks were single story, tar paper open bay barracks with no heat except for two buildings that had pot bellied stoves. Their stoves were well stoked at night and the men tried as best they could to place their bunks around the fire so that everyone could share the heat. Of course, during the night the fire would die down and the cold would creep back in. As a result, you roasted the first part

of the night and froze the rest.

The barracks formed a quadrangle with the latrine, which was heated, in the center. It was a welcome relief in the morning to leave the cold of the barracks for the warmth of the latrine. The trip between the two was fraught with hazard. The grass had not been mowed since anyone could remember and the entire camp was infested with ticks. The first order of business after a trip to or from was to remove the two or three ticks that had invariably attached themselves and were getting ready to start chomping.

The medics were up in arms about the ticks because of the danger of disease to say nothing about the number of burns they were treating. For those who have never encountered ticks, the accepted field method of removing a tick would be to hold a cigarette close to the tick so that the heat would cause the tick to back out. What usually happened was that the tick got fried and a portion of the skin got burned. The tick problem was so severe that a C-47 with spray gear was obtained and by the end of camp the problem had pretty well been eradicated.

Summer camp of 1950 saw the same game being played with unit being sent to Lockbourne, another base that had been closed since the war. But, by now, the men of the 112 were masters at the art of opening a base and conducting their normal operations at the same time and the camp went very well.

It was in the same year on Oct. 10th that the unit received its activation orders because of the Korean conflict.

When the activation call came the unit had to pack and load the equipment onto railroad cars. Everybody became a carpenter to build the number of crates that were required to move the unit. When everything was crated and packed the unit left for Lawson Field, Georgia, a part of Fort Benning. Unfortunately, the railroad wasn't as swift with the equipment and some of it didn't arrive for three or four weeks. The aircraft and men were there but no parts were available. They were treated rather shabbily by their hosts. The Air Force blues came out at this time and every man in the unit got his issue of the new uniform before the first man in the 112 got his. The ration break down always saw the 112 on the short end of the stick with not only the quantity but also the quality. In addition, the messing facilities were at best only fair and the cooks, members of the 112, were less than that. As a result the food was terrible. In a word, it was slop. According to some it was not even edible.

When the unit first reached Lawson Field the combat ready crews were loaded on civilian contract aircraft and shipped almost immediately overseas. Unit integrity was gradually lost and the unit became a ripple-dipple to train rusty jocks that had been called up from the inactive reserves. By early spring of 1951 most of the combat ready crews were gone and the unit was sent to Chambley, France, where it served out the remainder of its twenty one month active duty tour.

When the unit was released from active duty in Aug. of 1952, the facilities at Cleveland were

still occupied and unavailable to the unit. good foresight on the part of the planners in Washington had already prompted construction of a new home for the 112 at Akron-Canton Airport. Unfortunately, planning and reality don't always coincide and the facilities were not completed when the unit came off of active duty.

It was designated the 112 Fighter Bomber Squadron and assigned to Berea, Ohio. In Oct 52, the squadron moved to its new facilities at Akron Canton Airport, North Canton, Ohio. All the while the unit was recruiting, hiring and growing and in THE SPRING of 1953, the 112 moved to the Akron-Canton Airport. It wasn't a very impressive show — two tents, two wooden shacks, some almost finished buildings, four P-51's, some AT-6's and about a dozen men. Aircraft assigned at this time was the F-51. The 112 started out with H model P-51's but soon ran into parts problems because only a few hundred H's had been built. In early 1954 the H models were replaced with D models; war-weary birds from a Minneapolis Guard unit that was converting to jets. one bright spot was the announced fact that the unit would only have to fly the 51's until the runways at Akron-Canton could be lengthened to accommodate the jets the unit was scheduled to receive.

In 1954 the Air Force lost six P-51's in a series of mid-air break ups that cost six pilots their lives. The wings were coming off the aircraft, folding up and over, smashing the canopy and either killing the pilot immediately or jamming him into the cockpit in such a way that he couldn't get out. The Air Force thought the pilots were overstressing the aircraft and since they were going to be phasing the P-51 out of the inventory pretty soon, they didn't investigate as thoroughly as they might have. The seventh similar break up occurred in Nov. of 1954 when Laufert had his P-51 in a slight climb at 350 MPH. Without warning, the left wing tore loose, reared up like a striking snake and smashed down on the canopy. But seven was to be Laufert's lucky number that day as the wing missed Laufert and hit the canopy directly behind him, shattering it completely and leaving only the frame. The aircraft began to tumble end for end and when Laufert unfastened his seat belt to get free the tumbling airplane threw him out like a stone from a sling shot. Laufert survived and for the first time was able to tell the Air Force what was really happening. An airplane redlined at 525 MPH should not come apart at 350MPH in a shallow climb. The Air Force listened, but they had other problems that had a higher priority. The F-100 was coming out at that time and it was also doing nasty things like killing pilots. So the upshot of the P-51 problems was that the Air Force restricted the G loads under which the aircraft could be operated. While that decision may have satisfied the people in the Puzzle Palace, it didn't gladden the hearts of the pilots who had to fly the planes. Meanwhile, a metallurgist from the Timkin Roller Bearing Co. who was a pilot in the Mansfield unit took some metal samples from Laufert's aircraft and ran tests. The results showed gross metal fatigue; the birds were just plain old and tired from all the years of combat and usage. This discovery led to a tentative decision to ground the aircraft. Unfortunately, that decision did not become final until 1956 and it took the death of another pilot to force it.

In the meantime, the 112 lost two other P-51's in 1954 during a planned air to air engagement. Two pilots, Ormen and Eppinger, had a mid-air when somebody misunderstood a radio call

during the fracas. Ormen's prop cut the tail off of Eppinger's aircraft and both pilots were forced to bail out. Ormen escaped with minor injuries; Eppinger's back was broken, although he did recover and subsequently returned to flying status.

But once again politics and vested interests raised their ugly heads and the project to lengthen the runways ran into problems. Every time the Guard Bureau tried to acquire land to extend a runway the move was blocked. There were rumors that a local housing developer and a well known area businessman considered the area much too economically valuable to be allowed to be used for lengthening runways to accommodate jets and besides, jets were noisy and dangerous. There was a clause in the lease that stated if the Air National Guard vacated the facilities, they would revert to the counties that owned the airport. Plans to extend the runway were proposed and rejected. It appeared as though the local interest would win the day and force the Air Guard to vacate the property. But wiser heads in Washington were determined not to lose a few million dollars worth of facilities. With every move to improve the facility to accommodate jets blocked by constant action and inter-county squabbling, the Guard Bureau announced that the 112 would relocate to friendlier climates and would be replaced by a Troop Carrier Squadron which could use the existing runways. But that's another story and the move didn't occur until 1956.

All during this time the battle over the runways and the search for a new home for the 112 continued. Toledo, Ohio, expressed a willingness to provide that new home at its new airport facility, Toledo Express, which was in the final stages of construction. The Guard agreed to extend the runways an additional 1,800 feet and construct its own facilities while the city agreed to install the extra necessary lighting. Other minor details were worked out, the bargain was struck and in Feb. 1956, Toledo City Council approved of the contracts calling for the construction of a \$2,500,000.00 Ohio Air National Guard facility at Toledo Express Airport. Even though the new facility was not ready, the 112 was eager to leave Akron Canton and move to the new community that was happy to have them.

The old Toledo commercial airport, Toledo Municipal with its now vacant hanger facilities appeared to be a perfect interim solution and in March, 1956, the 112 held its first drill in the new community. Two officer technicians, Forkapa and Laufert together with 15 airmen, most of them technicians, came to Toledo to form the nucleus of the new unit. So, here we go, starting to build a new unit all over again. Some of the Guard pilots made the drive from Akron Canton on drill days to fly with the unit at its new home but the unit literally was starting from scratch again. The unit went again to Alpena for its summer camp that year and it was then that the final tragedy occurred that forced the grounding of the aircraft. The pilots were understandably very nervous about their birds. But training had to continue, so the pilots flew the maneuvers required but they did their best to fly them carefully. The aircraft were now beyond the point of even careful flying. A 2nd Lieutenant fresh from flying school, Gerald C. Gorton, was doing a slow roll when his one wing folded back and smashed down on him. He never got out.

That was the final straw. The Adjutant General of Ohio, Maj. Gen. Errol Zistel told the Air

Force that his pilots would not fly the P-51 any longer and the ancients were consigned to the bone yard. This precipitated another problem. The extension of the runways at Toledo Express had not been completed which meant that the jets the unit was scheduled to receive could not be used. But the pilots had to continue training in order to maintain proficiency so the Air Force provided T-28's, a tandem, two places, low wing trainer, as a stop gap until jet facilities were available. That situation existed until the winter of 1957-58 when the runway extension and ramp were completed at Toledo Express. Even though the hanger facilities were not completed, the unit moved to the new base and began operations in truck trailers, using ground powered heaters to keep them warm. Two T-33 jet trainers arrived, and the unit pilots began their transition into the age of the jet. At one point the unit thought they would receive F-100's. In fact, tail numbers of designated aircraft were in the hands of the unit. But the winds of fortune are capricious at best and the Formosa crisis forced the diversion of the F-100's to the Chinese effort. It was decided that the 112 would get the F-84F, a swept wing fighter that was a very hot bird in its day. The F-100 was just starting to be placed in the hands of the troops in any appreciable numbers. Since the F-84F was so much hotter than anything the 112 had flown before, the Air force decided that the safest bet would be to let the jocks transition in something a little less speedy. So, the unit received six F-84E's, the straight wing predecessor to the F-84F, to let the pilots get used to higher speeds and no prop torque.

But the shadow of danger was looming larger and in August it struck. Second Lieutenant David E. Mulvaney, fresh from flying school and with the unit for only a few months, was flying an air to air gunnery mission over Lake Michigan on a target used by jet fighters called a Dart. The Dart, which had replaced the old rag target, could be towed at high speeds, including supersonic. This gave the pilots a chance to practice at the speeds they would use in actual combat. It was a hazy day, the kind of day that pilots refer to as a "High Sky" where water and sky meet and blend with no definable horizon. As Mulvaney started his roll in for the attack he lost the target, a not uncommon thing for a new pilot. But as Mulvaney continued into the roll and got over on his back he must have also become disoriented. He called, "I've lost it", and thinking he was right side up, dove straight down. The water was 800 feet deep at that point and nothing was ever recovered.

Annual training in 1961 proved to be an exciting change for the men of the 112. Instead of operating for a two week period from a single base, the plans were to simulate a North-Atlantic crossing without ever leaving the country. This was to be accomplished by having the pilots fly from the East Coast to the West Coast with some of the fighters utilizing air refueling to fly non stop with others landing at AF bases with distances between them that approximated the "island hopping" techniques that would be used to lieu of air to air refueling. The route of flight was from Toledo, Ohio to Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C., K.I. Sawyer AFB, Mich., Minot AFB, N.D., Mt. Home AFB, Idaho and finally George AFB, California. The exercise went beautifully. But when the men landed at George AFB they found that there was to be no rest for the weary. They went almost immediately into an intensive air to air gunnery program.

On August 2, 1961, all members of the 112 were "Frozen" in the unit. This meant that no releases would be authorized except in the case of extreme hardship. October 1, the unit was called to active duty. The 122nd Tac Ftr Wg readied for the deployment overseas to Chambley, France. The 163rd Fighter Interceptor Sq., from Fort Wayne was to be the first unit to deploy with the 112 going second and the 113th FIS following last. The first group to deploy, formed by units from all over the country, consisted of some 200 aircraft and was the largest overseas Tactical Fighter deployment in the history of the AF, and it was done by the Guard. Never deployed.

In Oct 61 the world situation once again dictated the necessity for calling the unit to EAD (Berlin Crisis). During this period of extended active duty, unit integrity was maintained as the unit performed its entire tour of duty as a unit, at Toledo Express Airport. The unit was released from extended active duty 20 Aug 62.

Another pilot of the 112, a young Captain by the name of William R. Shalkhauser, the Squadron Ops Officer, dies when his F-84F crashed during a rocket firing exercise.

But while supply was having trouble getting footlockers some of the pilots were having trouble getting enough flying hours in. One of the regulations which had come down said that the flying schedule had to be made up one week in advance and that once the pilot had been assigned to an aircraft it could not be changed. So, if when the day came to fly you had a sick pilot in a good bird and a healthy pilot in a sick bird you couldn't switch. As a result, everybody stayed on the ground. Sounds dumb, but that's why it happened.

One of the cross country training missions that the pilots flew during this period took them from Nellis AFB, Nevada, to Navy Alameda, Calif. Now, the approach to the Naval Air Station at Alameda crosses a ship channel which requires the pilot to level off on final to clear the ship's superstructures and then continue the descent. This meant that the pilot had to add power if he wanted to make the runway which, after all, is the object in landing an aircraft. The young pilot flying lead, who shall remain nameless, had been briefed on this but, evidently in the excitement of arriving at a new base, forgot. As a result, he landed with his main gear short of the runway. The nose gear slammed down on the concrete, breaking off the nose wheel which went rolling down the runway. When all the smoke and dust cleared, there sat the F-84F with large concave wrinkles in its skin where the airframe had buckled from the impact of the nose gear hitting. Now, Ex SAC Commanders are notorious for doing nasty things to commanders whose troops do things like breaking airplanes. So, it was decided to treat the matter as an incident rather than an accident by keeping the dollars and man hours involved in repair below a certain figure. This meant that the nose gear and the tips of the fuel tanks, which had scraped on the runway when the nose wheel departed the aircraft, got fixed, along with the wrinkles in the sheet metal.

But the airframe never got fixed. As a result you had to fly the airplane after that with heavy right rudder at high speeds and heavy left rudder at low speeds. The final cap to the whole story occurred when Laufert, then a technician with the unit, was sent down to fly the aircraft

home. On departure out of the Naval Air Station the left fuel tank fell off the aircraft into the bay. The tower never said anything because they felt sure the pilot would say something and Laufert never said anything because he figured nobody had noticed it. As a result nobody said anything and Laufert pressed on.

The pilots weren't the only ones having all the "fun". The flight surgeon at that time was Capt. Razor, an Air Force Reserve augmentee, who joined the unit because of the activation. He was the units first flight surgeon and had a penchant for the good life. Tiring of the grim existence of the men who were forced to stay at Toledo, he found an obscure regulation that stated that the flight Surgeon would accompany the unit on TDY.

Gary Chudzinski, "Chud", and Bill Porter had flown into Denver, the mile high city, on a cross country hop to George AFB in California, "Chud" checked the temperature on landing and found that the high temperatures combined with high altitude would limit them to a partial load of fuel even though there was 11,000 feet of runway.

After fueling, the two pilots taxied out, using the overrun to gain every available foot of runway. "Chud" had briefed single ship take off with a ten second interval. There were thunderstorms-building up to the south and he wanted a join up before they entered the weather so they could make a turn to the southwest. With the throttle at full power, the F-84 began to roll slowly down the runway. A thousand feet, two thousand feet, three thousand feet and the bird seemed to be barely moving. Six thousand feet, then seven thousand feet slid by. At this point, "Chud" was pushing so hard against the throttle it is a wonder he didn't snap it off. At nine thousand feet, all three gears were still on the ground and little beads of perspiration were forming on "Chud's" upper lip. At 10,500 feet he pulled back on the stick and the aircraft staggered off the ground with the tires just a few feet off the ground as the bird crossed the end of the runway. Cleaning it up, he began to accelerate and looked back to find Porter, who was nowhere in sight. "Chud" really wanted to join up before hitting the weather so he called, 'Number two, are you airborne?' Back came the answer, "I'm on the roll." It was long after the briefed ten second interval but "Chud" was more concerned about joining up than he was curious about the delay so he didn't pursue it. Later that day at George he turned to Porter and asked, "How come you didn't roll at ten seconds?" Bill didn't hesitate with his reply. "I wanted to see if you made it before I started." Chud", remembering his own take off roll, replied he didn't blame him and they both had another beer.

The late sixties had been a good period with respect to accidents. The unit had lost two F-84F's in 1965 when Laufert and Mann had a mid-air after a hydraulic failure but both pilots had ejected and were not injured. This was the second crash for Laufert and he was subsequently to receive an award at his retirement party for having destroyed the highest tonnage of our own aircraft.

In 1970, the unit received its first F-100 with Laufert, who had already checked out in the F-100, bringing it up from Luke AFB. As it turned out, 1970 was to be a year of tragedy as well as a change. In January, Major Lenny Haskovec who was forced to eject from his F-84

over a gunnery range at Nellis AFB, lost his life when the aircraft seat followed him after separation and struck him in midair, breaking his neck. Jim Boney almost lost his life in April of 1970 when the controls on his F-84 malfunctioned on take off and his aircraft crashed and burned. Only incredibly fast action by the crash and rescue guys prevented Jim from becoming fatality number two.

In May of 1975, Charlie Bell and Al Barelka, the unit safety officer at that time, were up in F-100F practicing instrument approaches. On one approach, just as the bird was on short final and at critical air speed, something went terribly wrong deep inside the aircraft. Seconds later Charlie was dead and Al was crawling out of the back seat of the crashed fighter with his body in flames. He would live, but it would be at the cost of months and months of pain and rehabilitation. Charlie's funeral was probably the largest that the Toledo area had ever seen. There were thousands of people and hundreds of cars. He was loved and respected in both the military and civilian communities because as a Guardsman he worked and lived in both. The 112 suffered the loss of another comrade only one month later when Mike Mann died as he ejected from his F-100 too close to the ground.

1976, the unit went to Nellis AFB, the first Air National Guard unit to ever participate in Red Flag. The 180th TFG was the first Guard unit ever to be invited to participate in "Red Flag" as the strike arm of the "Blue Forces." Using standard U.S. Air Force tactics, the pilots of the 112/180th TFG attacked realistic targets and electronically simulated SAM and gun sites on the Nellis AFB Ranges. "Red Flag", in reality a mock war, is a new concept in tactical pilot training and is being fought because one of the lessons learned in Southeast Asia was the fact that aircrews survival rates increased dramatically once that pilot had flown approximately ten combat missions. Through the use of electronic simulation and actual air to air engagements, the aircrews were subjected to a situation that employs all of the weapons and tactics that would be found in an actual combat engagement. Added realism was given to the training through the use of search and rescue exercises. Aircrews were "shot down", taken out into the desert equipped only with equipment they would normally have with them when they got "zapped". The pilots were required to live in the same environment and overcome physical handicaps in rough terrain. The objective was then to evade the enemy, contact friendly forces and escape.

The 112 moved from the success of Red Flag of 1976 to the success of Snow Bird at Davis Monthon AFB, Tucson, Arizona, in early 1977. Snow Bird accomplished two things, it gave the pilots a chance to test their skills on totally unfamiliar ranges and it also gave them a chance to escape the killer blizzard that hit Ohio in 1977.

The 180th TFG converted to the A-7D in 1979. The Group was named an Air Force Outstanding Unit in 1985 and again in 1990. In 1989, while deployed at Panama for Coronet Cove, 180th A-7s were employed during Operation Just Cause. In addition, volunteers were provided for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1991.

OPERATIONS. GOLD RUSH II, Alaska, October 1966 in support of US strike forces: Commando

Elite, Hawaii, September 1968 in support of troops deploying to Vietnam.

On 15 June 2007, at approximately 0027 hours local time (L), an F-16CG fighter aircraft, S/N 89-2031, crashed shortly after takeoff, approximately 5.5 nautical miles from the departure end of runway 32, Balad Air Base (AB), Iraq. The mishap aircraft (MA) was assigned to the 112 Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (EFS), deployed from the 138th Fighter Wing, Oklahoma Air National Guard, Tulsa, Oklahoma. The mishap pilot (MP) was assigned to the 112 EFS and deployed from the 180th Fighter Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, Toledo, Ohio to the 332d Air Expeditionary Wing, Balad AB, Iraq. The MA was destroyed upon ground impact. The MP made no attempt to eject and died immediately on impact. No personnel or objects on the ground were injured or destroyed during the crash. The mishap sortie began as a night close air support mission. Approximately 90 seconds after takeoff roll, the MP deviated from the planned climbout by initiating a level off at 4,500 feet mean sea level (MSL). The MA entered a slow, insidious right hand bank to 36.6 degrees right wing down. When the MP recognized the right bank, he made an aggressive roll correction toward wings level attitude. Under night instrument meteorological conditions (IMC), this rapid correction created a physiological condition commonly referred to as "the leans" which produced a sensation to the MP that he was overcorrecting to the left. After the correction towards wings level, the MP then diverted his attention away from his instrument crosscheck. The MA began another slow right hand roll to approximately 120 degrees right wing down attitude. Absent a discernable horizon, this imperceptible angular acceleration would leave the MP feeling as if the aircraft was maintaining a wings level attitude. An altitude alert aural warning at approximately 4,000' above ground level brought the MP's attention back to his instrument crosscheck. The MP interpreted the "ALTITUDE-ALTITUDE" voice warning and the false sensation of wings level as a pitch problem and immediately applied aft stick pressure resulting in approximately positive 2 Gs pull increasing the rate of descent. The MP did not make any significant bank angle corrections, reinforcing the conclusion that he did not perceive the insidious roll that led to an overbank condition. In the final two seconds of the mishap sequence, the MP recognized the overbank situation and began an appropriate nose low recovery by rolling toward the horizon and increasing back stick pressure. The MP did not have sufficient altitude to complete the recovery maneuver prior to ground impact. The aircraft impacted the ground, and the MP sustained fatal injuries. By clear and convincing evidence, the cause of the mishap was spatial disorientation resulting from the MP's aggressive roll correction shortly after initiating a level off maneuver and the inability to establish an effective crosscheck while operating in the low altitude environment. I further find sufficient evidence that the night instrument meteorological (IMC) conditions, which offered no visible horizon were substantially contributing factors.

1991 30 November, During routine training mission, pilot Lt. Michael Young, 28, bailed out of his disabled USAF LTV A-7D-9-CV Corsair II, 70-1054, of the 180th Tactical Fighter Group, Ohio Air National Guard, based at Toledo Express Airport, Swanton, Ohio, over the coast of Michigan's Thumb area. He landed in Lake Huron, and was dragged 12 miles in his parachute by winds before being lost and presumed drowned. The jet impacted in a wooded area near Port Hope, Michigan. Rescuers were unable to reach pilot at the speed he was being dragged, and survival was unlikely in the 38-degree water.



LTC Thomas J. Herbert, first commander of the Squadron. (US Army National Guard)



Sgt Simon Hummon observing his crew at work, 1938. (US Army National Guard)



Phoning the radio headquarters in Puff Target Practice, 1938. (US Army National Guard)



Inspecting a target. 1938. (US Army National Guard)

USAF Unit Histories
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