

116 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



LINEAGE

116 Aero Squadron organized, 29 Aug 1917
Redesignated 637 Aero Squadron (Supply) 1 Feb 1918
Demobilized, 20 May 1919

116 Squadron (Observation) constituted in the National Guard and allotted to the state of Washington, 1921
Redesignated 116 Observation Squadron, 25 Jan 1923
Organized, 24 Jul 1924
Federally recognized, 6 Aug 1924
Redesignated 116 Observation Squadron, 41 Division Aviation, 8 Aug 1926

637 Aero Squadron Reconstituted and consolidated with 116 Observation Squadron, 41 Division Aviation, 20 Oct 1936. Consolidated organization designated 116 Observation Squadron.

Ordered to active service, 16 Sep 1940
Redesignated 116 Observation Squadron (Medium), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 116 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 116 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter), 2 Apr 1943
Redesignated 116 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 11 Aug 1943
Disbanded, 30 Nov 1943
Reconstituted, 21 Jun 1945
Redesignated 116 Fighter Squadron (Single-Engine), and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
Activated 15 Nov 1946
116 Fighter Squadron (Single-Engine) extended federal recognition 10 Feb 1947
Redesignated 116 Fighter Squadron (Jet), Jun 1950
Redesignated 116 Fighter Interceptor Squadron
Redesignated 116 Air Refueling Squadron

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX, 29 Aug 1917
Garden City, NY, 31 Oct-7 Dec 1917
St Maixent, France, 2 Jan 1918
Romorantin, France, 18 Jan 1918
Colombey-les-Belles, France, 6 Feb 1918-Apr 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 11-20 May 1919
Parkwater, WA, 6 Aug 1924
Gray Field, WA, 24 Sep 1940 (detachments operated from Yakima, WA, 16 Mar-1 May 1942,
and Hoquiam, WA, 25 May 1942-1942)
Corvallis AAFM, OR, 9 Mar 1943
Redmond, AAFld, OR, 16 Aug 1943
Corvallis AAFld, OR, 30 Oct 1943
Will Rogers Field, OK, 14-30 Nov 1943
Geiger Field, Spokane, WA, 1949
Fairchild AFB, WA

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 1917-1918
1 Air Depot, Feb 1918-Apr 1919
Unkn, Apr-20 May 1919
Washington NG (divisional aviation, 41st Division), 6 Aug 1924
Ninth Corps Area, 16 Sep 1940
Fourth Army, 3 Oct 1940
IX Army Corps, Nov 1940
Fourth Air Force, 1 Sep 1941
IV Air Support Command, 3 Sep 1941
70 Observation (later Reconnaissance; Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 13 Sep 1941-30
Nov 1943
141 Air Refueling Wing

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

DH-4, 1924
JN-6, 1925
TW-3, 1925
PT-1, 1927
O-2, 1926
O-17, 1928 (1925)
O-38, 1930
BC-1
O-47, 1938
O-49, 1940

P-39, 1943
AT-6,, 1947
P-51, 1947
F-51, 1947
F-84, 1949
F-86, 1951
F-51
F-86, 1953
F-94, 1955
F-89, 1957
F-102, 1965
TF-102
F-101, 1969
KC-135, 1976

Support Aircraft

C-47, 1952
L-5, 1947
T-33, 1949, T-33
B-26, 1947
TF-51
B-25, 1955
TF-102 1965
C-54, 1966
U-3, 1970
T-29, 1970
VC-131, 1975

COMMANDERS

Maj John T. Fancher, 6 Aug 1924
Cpt Harold R. Neeley, 29 Apr 1928
Maj Caleb V. Haynes, 18 May 1928
Cpt Warren W. Wadsworth, 18 Jul 1931
Maj Robert G. Breene, 17 Sep 1931
Cpt Robert W. Owen, 3 Jul 1934
Maj Robin A. Day, 14 Nov 1934
Maj Hillford R. Wallace, 2 Jun 1938
Maj Robin Day
Maj Charles Nelson
Maj Donald Stack, #1963
LTC Hal Riese
LTC Bill Gibson
LTC Bob Ackerman
LTC Dale Wainwright

LTC Gordon Cammack
LTC Bob Collins
LTC Charlie Waterman
Jacob Braig

HONORS

Service Streamers

Theater of Operations

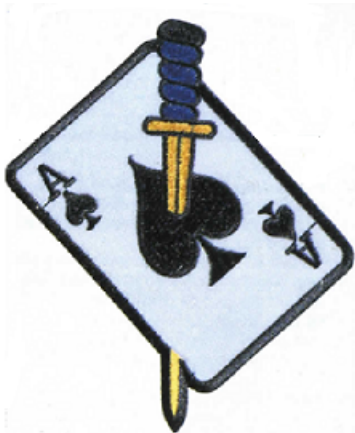
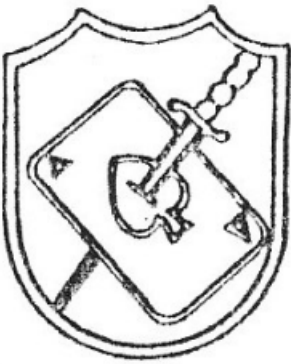
Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, 1983

EMBLEM



An ace of spades proper pierced by a stiletto bend sinisterwise, blade and guard gold, handle blue. (Approved 6 Jul 1931)

The notable ace of spades patch that is worn on the flight suits of the air crew of the 116 Air Refueling Squadron was approved in 1931. At that time the unit was known as the 116 Observation Squadron and was located at Felts Field in the Spokane Valley. The officer in charge of the photo section was Lt. Laurie Heral and he is credited with the original design of the squadron ace. Wing legend is that Lt. Heral came up with the idea during a late-night squadron poker game. The lieutenant removed the ace of spades from the deck and threw it on the table. All players agree the card was known as the death card. Lt. Heral decided that using the ace of spades alone as the squadron insignia wouldn't be enough of an attention grabber. He wanted to make a statement. Lt. Heral then took out a dagger and drove it through the center of the card. The ace and dagger insignia idea was born. The words "Caveat hostis" Latin for "Let the enemy beware" was added in a banner on the lower left corner of the playing card. The design was then sent to the Pentagon for approval. The ace of spades with the dagger was approved, but the banner was not.

Squadron members cut the ace and dagger silhouettes out of sheet metal and hand painted each one. They were then taken out to the flight line and screwed on each side of the fuselage of the unit's O-17. The silhouettes were placed slanted to the left. In photos taken during that era, the dagger's blade would point directly to the ground when parked on the flight line. Once the aircraft was airborne, the dagger would be in the appropriate position.

The Squadron's fuselage device and insignia was approved by the War Department on July 6, 1931 with Blazon as follows: "The fuselage device and insignia consists of an ace of spades proper, pierced by a stiletto band sinister wise, blade and guard gold, handle blue".

MOTTO

Let the enemy beware

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 116 Aero Squadron was organized at Kelly Field, South San Antonio, Texas. The original personnel consisting of 80 men reporting from Jefferson Barracks, MO. August 28, 1917 and 40 men reporting from Vancouver Barracks, Washington, August 29, 1917. The personnel were increased by an additional 14 men reporting from Jefferson Barracks, August 29, 1917. Additional number of men added bringing quota of enlisted men to 150 for month ending August 31, 1917. Officers none.

First Lieut. Russell Viet was assigned as Commanding officer on Sept. 18, 1917 but was relieved shortly afterward by 1st, Lieut. James P. Argersinger, who become Commanding Officer Sept. 24, 1917. The month of September was spent in the instruction of the men in the School of the Soldier, Squad and Company, guard duty, etc.

During the early part of October 1st. Lieut. Edward E. Fitzpatrick was attached to the squadron. Four enlisted men of the Medical Corps were attached at this time.

A transfer of 41 men was made from the squadron, and 41 men were transferred into the squadron from various casual companies. The squadron continued intensive drill in the School of the Company. On Oct. 26, 1917, the squadron entrained at Kelly Field with Garden City L.I. N.Y. as their destination. The squadron arrived at Garden City Oct. 31, 1917 and was quartered at Signal Corps Concentration Depot, Field N°2.

First Lieuts. Lawrence E. Cook and Mark L. Herron were assigned to Squadron on Dec. 4, 1917. Gain; Transferred in 6. Loss; Transferred out 7. Entrained at Garden City L.I. N.Y for St. Johns, New Brunswick on December 7, 1917. Arrived in New Brunswick December 10, 1917. Squadron embarked same date for Liverpool, England via Halifax, N.S. Arrived at Halifax Dec. 11, 1917, Resumed voyage to Liverpool on Dec. 14, 1917, in Allan Line Steamer, Tunisian accompanied by convoy of six transports and two cruisers, Arrived in Liverpool, England December 25, 1917.

Debarked December 26, 1917. Entrained at Liverpool for Southampton, England arriving at destination same date. Quartered at Shirley Warren Rest Camp Embarked on Channel Boat for Le Havre, France Dec. 29 arriving at destination the following day. Quartered at British Rest Camp at LeHavre.

Entrained at LeHavre, France for St. Maixent Jan. 1, 1918 Arrived at St. Maixent, France Jan. 2, 1918. Quartered at Conclaux Barracks, A.S. Concentration Barracks, Base Section Number 1 from January 2, to Jan. 17, 1918. 1st Lieuts. G. H. Frazier Jr. and James W. Rockwell transferred to Hq. Detachment A.S.C.B. number 1 on Jan. 17, 1918. The Squadron entrained at St. Maixent for Romorantin, Jan 17, 1918. Arrived at Romorantin Jan. 18, 1918. Reported with the 109th and 75th Aero Squadron being the first aero squadron to establish Air Service Production Center N° 2, the construction of railroad spurs and barracks was the first work done at that station.

Designation of 116 Aero Squadron (Service) changed to 637th Aero Squadron (Supply). Entrained at Romorantin, for First Air Depot, Zone of Advance Columbey-les-Belles, Meurthe-et-Moselle, Feb. 4, 1918. Arrived at First Air Depot Feb. 6, 1918 being the fourth aero squadron to reach the Zone of Advance. 1st Lieuts., L.S. Baird and C. W. Palmer, and 2nd Lieut. H. E. Sponsellor assigned on Feb. 7, 1918, to squadron. 1st. Lieut. E. E. Fitzpatrick attached. 1st Lieut. Turner B. Neal transferred out of the squadron. Work started with the construction of barracks, bomb proof shelters, ditching, and draining. The construction of a Flying Field began with no implements other than pick and shovel. Large wooden mauls were used to pound down the mole hills. After the English field at ochey had been heavily bombed the English squadron moves to 1st Air Depot airdrome for protection.

First Lieut. Janes P. Argersinger relieved of Command March 12, 1918 to report to C.A.S. Lofc for duty. 1st Lieut. Lyman S. Baird placed in command of squadron.

First Lieut. Richard Smith assigned to Squadron on April 23, 1918 as Commanding Officer relieving 1st Lieut. Lyman Baird.

Work in construction, transportation and supply continued. First Lieut. E. E. Fitzpatrick, attached was transferred to the 477th Aero Squadron on May 25, 1918. Private Arthur J. Stevens died at Base Hospital N. 66 of Scarlet Fever and Lobar Pneumonia, April 16, 1918. Buried in Grave N. 55 American Section of French Military Cemetery, Neufchateau.

First 1LT L. S. Baird relieved from duty with squadron. Capt. George D. Woolley assigned as Commanding Officer on July 11, 1918. 1st Lieut. Richard Smith relieved of Command., same date a transfer of 48 enlisted men was made to the 875 Aero Squadron (Repair) organized at this Post.

Personnel of organization engaged in transportation, aero repair and supply. First Lieut. Richard Smith transferred out of squadron on Aug. 17, 1918. Capt George D. Woolley relieved from command 2nd Lieut. Ralph D. McLaughlin assigned as Commanding Officer Aug 17, 1918.

Report the death of Private Cornelius W. Gist at Base Hospital 116, A.P.O. 731, Sept 30, 1918. Cause: lobar Pneumonia.

1Lt L. D. Mahan assigned as Commanding Officer. 2nd Lieut. L. D. McLaughlin relieved from Commandant appointed Post Censor on Nov. 16, 1918.

Captain Harold Pitts of the American Legion read a copy of a letter the Bureau had sent to Washington State Adjutant General Maurice Thompson; "...you are informed that February 29, this Bureau was granted authority for including in each National Guard Divisions, one aero unit..." Excitement turned to concern as he read on; "...there are no federal funds, limited service equipment, and but a few regular Army officers available. It is not therefore practical to proceed at the present time with the organization in all the National Guard Divisions." Shouts of frustration from the committee prevented Pitts from continuing. Before long their anxiety turned into strategy "How do we get one of the first units here?" Pitts had a suggestion, "A main concern of the Bureau is an available airfield for the unit. What about the old Parkwater Municipal Golf Course?" In the months following that meeting, the city agreed to lease the abandoned golf course to the hopeful aviators. Located along the Spokane River, it had an area of 1,000 feet by 1,500 feet which was regarded as big enough for any plane.

Four years of prolonged anticipation exploded in excitement when Adjutant General Thompson came through Spokane in the spring of 1924. He had a simple message: "Washington has been offered one of the 19 National Guard Observation Squadrons authorized by the National Guard Bureau. I've offered it to Seattle and Tacoma, but Spokane has an equal opportunity to get it. Whichever city can raise \$10,000 first for the erection of hangars is going to get the squadron." The General boarded a train for Washington, D.C. after that short address. He hardly reached the city limits before a group of businessmen wired, "The \$10,000 has been raised we want the

squadron."

By July, it had happened. The squadron was formed at least on paper. A list of personnel, some correspondence, a lease, and orders occupied a small desk drawer in the old armory building in downtown Spokane. Federal recognition was received on August 6, 1924. The 116 Observation Squadron, 41st Division Air Service, Washington National Guard was born. Officially it was a reorganization of an older Army squadron. During WWI, the 116 Aero Squadron was first organized August 19, 1917, and began service in France, December 30, 1917. February 1, 1918, the squadron was redesignated as the 637th Aero Squadron (Supply) and served as such until the Armistice, November 11, 1918. This unit was mustered out of service until its unit designation was reassigned to the Spokane squadron.

After successfully gaining community support for the unit, it became his task to supervise construction of the new hangars. In the early spring of 1925, the officers and enlisted men were busy erecting the buildings. While the federal government provided materials and local funds bought concrete, most of the labor was donated by the squadron members.

By March, the first airplanes were in Spokane. Fancher was informed that a shipment had arrived via the Northern Pacific Railroad—three crated aircraft. Fancher was in a fix. The state provided no funds to transport the planes to the Parkwater Municipal Airfield. No contractors could be hired to do the job anyway. They were afraid to handle the technically complicated machines. Oohn Dean and two other enlisted members of the squadron decided to get things moving. After borrowing two heavy planks from a lumber yard and a crowbar from the Northern Pacific, they headed for the railyard in a pickup. Using the planks as skids, they loaded the crates and hauled them to the airfield one by one. Having returned the borrowed items promptly, they pondered how they might assemble these air ships. After all, someone was going to have to do it! It wasn't long before three Curtiss 3N6-A2 "Oennys" were sitting on the new flight line. Oil "samples" were solicited from local suppliers to initially lube the engines. Three companies were induced to donate the oil by the prospect of future business from the squadron. They had no idea that there were no funds with which to buy oil at the time. Fifteen gallons of gas were charged on personal credit by Oohn Dean and the squadron was ready to fly. By May of 1925, the unit had a regular flying schedule.

July 6, 1925 marked the hiring of the first full-time personnel. Referred to as "caretakers" the six men maintained the field earning \$130 per month. By the end of the year, the 116 had established itself with a total of 23 officers, 120 enlisted men, 2 steel hangers, 1 TW-3, and 13 obsolete but functional Oennys.

On August 8, 1926, the squadron was redesignated as the 116 Observation Squadron, 41st Division Aviation. It was also expanded to include a photo section, medical detachment, and transportation section. More and better radio equipment kept arriving. With the improved performance of the airplanes, there were new responsibilities to support ground and coast artillery. Through 1926, the 116 concentrated on training and proficiency in its new rolls.

One of the young lieutenants of the 116 was owner and publisher of the Spokane Valley Herald. On May 29, 1927, Lieutenant Buell Felts was approaching the Parkwater Airfield after a training flight when at an altitude of 150 feet he dropped out of the sky. The 28-year-old entrepreneur was killed instantly along with his civilian passenger. His low altitude and lack of speed going into a turn are believed to have caused the crash. In September, the Parkwater Municipal Airfield was renamed in honor of the civic minded WWI veteran and was from then known as Felts Field.

13 Jun 1933, Lt Whitney Close and Lt George E Hallett were performing a simulated attack mission over/near Boise, Idaho. The two pilots collided in their O-38s and were killed upon impact with the ground. Speculation and rumors were abound that Lt Hallett could have recovered from the collision but elected to follow his close friend into the ground.

On August 31, 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order #8530 calling all National Guard and Reserve Forces to active duty. The objective was to train reserve components intensively to ensure combat readiness and make a show of force

By September of 1940, the 116 had been mobilized and its members inducted into federal service. The unit was ordered to Gray Field, at Fort Lewis, near Tacoma, Washington. It originally was assigned to General Headquarters, U.S. Air Corps. Later the squadron served under the Second, Third, and Fourth Air Forces. In 194-1 the 123rd Observation Squadron, Oregon National Guard, was activated and joined the 116 at Fort Lewis. The two units were assigned to the 70th Observation

The 116 was transferred to Corvallis Army Air Base at Corvallis, Oregon and received P-39 type aircraft. These were in addition to the O-47A currently flown by the 116.

Soon after the P-39s were in service, the 116 became redesignated as a Tactical Reconnaissance Unit.

A 90-day maneuver was ordered in August of 1943. It required the 70th Group Headquarters as well as the 116, 123rd, and 26th to deploy to Redmond Army Air Base, California. All personnel were restricted to the base for the entire exercise. Training was intensive in attack and defensive field problems with ground forces in sandy, semi-arid terrain.

Upon successful completion of the maneuvers, the 116 returned to Corvallis. In less than three weeks the unit faced another transfer. On November 17, 1943, the 116 moved to Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma. It was at Will Rogers that the 116 (and the 26th) was deactivated. The squadron existed no more. Some individuals were reassigned to recently activated Photo Reconnaissance Groups and Squadrons under the command of the 89th Reconnaissance Training Wing at Will Rogers. Others were sent to various tactical air corps units located at ports of embarkation. They would join forces overseas. By the end of 1944, nearly all the members of the 116 were serving overseas or enroute to overseas combat locations.

It wasn't long before the 116 showed signs of life once again. As former members arrived home efforts began to reestablish the unit. By September an active duty instructor had arrived. On November 15, 1946, the 116 Fighter Squadron was back in the air. The first AT-6C aircraft arrived at Felts Field. At month's end, full-time "caretakers" were hired and Lieutenant Colonel Frank W. Frost was named commander of the reactivated unit. The 116 was the first Washington National Guard Unit restored to duty after WW II.

The 116 Utility Flight was formed and commanded by First Lieutenant Charles Pray. Aircraft assigned to the flight were: four C-47s, (only two were to stay with the unit), four AT-6s, four B-26s, and one L-5. The principal mission of the flight was to tow targets for air-to-air gunnery.

Detachment "B" of the 242nd Air Service Group also joined the 116 at Felts Field. A supply section was added to the 116 as well as an armament section and weather section.

The 142nd Air Defense Wing was created which had authority over the 142nd Fighter Group in Portland, Oregon, and the 141st Fighter Group in Spokane. The 116 now fell under the 141st Group. Wing Headquarters was to be in Spokane with additional units under its command in Boise, Idaho, and Great Falls, Montana.

With all the new organizations, old problems arose. Few tools were available so aircraft maintenance was back to "NGRQ." Even with equipment shortages, the 116 was rated "70 percent combat efficient" in 1948 by Fourth Air Force. It was considered quite a feat for the 18-month-old unit.

The aggressiveness of the squadron was to be amply rewarded. In 1949 it moved to Geiger Field. The longer runway could facilitate new F-84. The 116 was to be the first National Guard unit west of the Mississippi to receive jet aircraft. Transition training consumed much of 1949 and 1950.

Thunderjets" were replaced in 1951 by F-86. The new aircraft had just come off the assembly line and were sent directly to Geiger with good reason. On February 1, 1951, the 116 was ordered to active duty and assigned to Continental Air Command. The 116 was to be the first F-86 unit to cross the Atlantic destination: Sheppard's Grove, Suffolk, England. Due to mobilization of European based units to Korea, the squadron was ordered to bolster NATO forces. The unit was released from active duty November 1952, but the aircraft remained in England. When the unit returned to Geiger Field they received their own aircraft once again, this time they had 20 F-86's and two T-33's to fill their inventory.

According to Lt. Col. Frank Frost, the 116 was selected to be the first F-86 unit to cross the Atlantic, "Just to show the Russian's what the United States reserve forces could do." The unit did just that. After stops in Labrador and Greenland, the 25 Sabrejets faced chilling weather in Iceland. In heavy rain with a ceiling of 500 feet and visibility at one-half mile, all aircraft made safe midnight landings. There were other squadrons in the European movement with more F-86 experience, but the 116 was picked to lead the way. Given the problems in weather forecasting,

the Air Force said it " had picked a good bet when [we] dispatched the National Guard Squadron across the Atlantic first." Frost's pride was always obvious but understated. He landed his aircraft, (the second plane to touchdown) climbed out, lit up a cigar and commented to the awaiting press, "Nice crossing."

While at Sheppards Grove, each squadron was to send one volunteer at a time to combat duty in Korea. The schedule had so many signed up that it would have taken several years to rotate the volunteers through combat assignments.

Although the unit was assigned to the Third Air Force It was under RAF control. By November of 1952 the 116 was headed home. But its aircraft stayed behind. The F-86's remained in England and became the property of the U. S. Air Force. A regular unit released from duty in Korea assumed the mission and aircraft of the 116. So the renowned flyers returned to Spokane with no planes. It was not long before a deal was worked out to borrow P-51H's from California. The unit picked up a C-47 and again had four AT-6's.

Once the reorganization of Air Force units was complete after the Korean War, jet aircraft were more plentiful. The 116 was again assigned its own aircraft in 1953. Twenty F-86s and two T-33s filled out the 116 inventory.

The 12 F-89s first received by the 116 were D models and not nuclear capable. By 1959, the aircrew had transitioned into the new aircraft. The next step was to replace the F-89-Ds with F-89-Os. They became the nuclear air-to-air weapon systems. Equipped with the "Genie" MB-1, the units now had an offensive punch. The aircrew members had to "qualify" each aircraft at the Tyndall Air Force Base Firing Center in Florida. Once accomplished, the two day summer camp of 1960 was a celebration of new facilities at Geiger Field.

Things stabilized for the Wing through the early 60's. The unit continued to perform 24-hour runway alert in support of the Air Defense Command (NORAD).

In June 1960, the F-89Ds gave way to F-89JS, and then the 116 FIS started to have real problems, losing one a year. On December 28, 1961, one crashed during an instrument approach and its crew was killed. On January 4, 1962, another F-89J exploded in flight and its pilot was killed. Another was lost on November 14, 1963, when its pilot lost control of the aircraft during a night practice intercept mission, but the crew ejected okay. Their last F-89 was lost on January 31, 1964, when it skidded off the runway.

15 Nov 1963. Two first Lieutenants on a routine training flight over central Washington encountered severe weather and turbulence. Radar observer Rollin Deschane and pilot Robert Boucher ejected after their F-89J was slammed by the storm. Deschane parachuted to safety. Boucher could not be found by an extensive search that lasted until 2 July 1964. It was eleven years later that a horseback rider happened across Boucher's remains. The resulting investigation determined that Boucher had been knocked unconscious by the jolt of the storm. His parachute did not deploy because it had not been connected to his zero-delay lanyard. The young

lieutenant had never regained consciousness when he impacted the ground.

New facilities were built at Fairchild Air Force Base to accommodate the Wing Headquarters and subordinate units. The 116 was housed in the old mess hall which had been condemned. Through a miracle of engineering, the 141st unit created a first-class operations center out of the dilapidated shell of a building. Soon the pride of the entire outfit radiated from a corner of the base. The Guard area shined brightly with new and renovated facilities. The aircraft were renovated too.

The first major deployment of six aircraft and 276 personnel took place in 1987 to Moron, Spain. This deployment provided an excellent training opportunity for all aspects of planning and managing an overseas wing deployment that proved valuable for years to come.

Aircrew, maintenance and support personnel responded to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on August 2, 1990, by rotating crews every two weeks to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Upon federal activation in December 1990, 307 members of the 141st and all eight KC-135's belonging to the unit deployed to the Persian Gulf. In support of Desert Storm, five aircraft were sent to Cairo, Egypt, and three aircraft were sent to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Aug 1990: Volunteers began flying missions in support of Operation Desert Shield.

20 Dec 1990: Called to active duty as part of Operation Desert Shield call-up.

15 Apr 1991: Released from active duty after taking part in Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

In June 1995, the first of several rotations of aircraft and personnel from the 141st deployed to Pisa, Italy, for Operation Deny Flight, NATO mission enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

January 13, 1999, one of the unit's KC-135E's crashed at Geilenkirchen Air Base, Germany, killing all four crew members. They were Maj. David Fite, Maj. Matthew Laiho, Capt. Kenneth Thiele and TSgt. Richard Visintainer. This was the first time the unit lost an aircraft or lives since beginning the aerial refueling mission in 1976.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Updated:

Sources

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