

123 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

123 Observation Squadron, and allotted to NG, 30 Jul 1940
Activated, 18 Apr 1941
Ordered to active service, 15 Sep 1941
Redesignated 123 Observation Squadron (Light), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 123 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 123 Reconnaissance Squadron (Bombardment), 2 Apr 1943
Redesignated 35 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, 11 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 123 Fighter Squadron and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
Activated, 26 Jun 46
123 Fighter Squadron (Single Engine) extended federal recognition, 30 Aug 1946
Redesignated 123 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Mar 1951
Inactivated, 1 Nov 1952
Activated, 1 Dec 1952
Redesignated 123 Fighter Squadron, 31 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Portland, OR, 18 Apr 1941
Gray Field, WA, 25 Sep 1941 (detachment operated from Hoquiam, Wash, 15 Mar-Aug 1942);
Ontario AAFld, CA, 16 Mar 1943
Redmond AAFld, CA, 20 Aug 1943
Gainesville AAFld, TX, 10 Nov 1943
Will Rogers Field, OK, 5 Feb-10 Apr 1944

Guskhara, India, 13 Jun 1944

Kunming China, 1 Sep 1944 (flights at Nanning, China, 16 Sep-6 Oct 1944, and Yunnani, China, 16 Sep 1944-10 Feb 1945) Chanyi, China, 17 Sep 1944 (flights at Chihkiang, China, 19 Oct 1944-1 Sep 1945; Suichwan, China, 19 Nov 1944-22 Jan 1945; Chengkung, China, 10 Feb-13 May 1945; Laohwangping, China, 27 Feb-1 Sep 1945; Kunming, China, 14 May-31 Jul 1945; Nanning, China, 31 Jul-1 Sep 1945)

Luliang, China, 18-24 Sep 1945

Camp Kilmer, NJ, 5-7 Nov 1945

Portland Apt (later AFB), OR 1946-1952

Portland IAP, OR 1952

ASSIGNMENTS

Oregon NG, 18 Apr 1941

70 observation (later Reconnaissance) Group, 15 Sep 1941

77 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 11 Aug 1943

III Reconnaissance (later Tactical Air) Command, 30 Nov 1943

AAF, India- Burma Sector, 5 May 1944

Fourteenth Air Force, c. Sep 1944

Tenth Air Force, 1 Aug 1945

Fourteenth Air Force, 25 Aug-7 Nov 1945

142 Fighter Group 1946-Feb 1951

Fourth Air Force

142 Fighter Group

325 Fighter Interceptor Group (attached to 325th Fighter Interceptor Wing Mar 1951-Feb 1952)

4704 Defense Wing

142 Fighter-Interceptor Group (later Fighter Group, Fighter Interceptor Group, Operations Group), 1952

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

O-47, 1941

O-49, 1941

O-46, 1941

BC-1, 1941

B-25, 1943

DB-7, 1943

P-39, 1943

F-5, 1944

B-25, 1945

F-51, 1946

F-86, 1952

F-51

F-86, 1953

F-94, 1955

F-89, 1957
F-89, 1957
F-89, 1960
F-102, 1966
TF-102
F-101, 1971
F-4, 1980/1982
F-15, 1989

Support Aircraft

C-47, 1952
C-45, 1955
B-25, 1957
VC-54, 1966

COMMANDERS

Maj G. Robert Dodson, 18 Apr 1941-30 Apr 1942
Lt Col Patrick O'Grady,
Lt Col Mike Thomas, #1991

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater
India-Burma
China Defensive
New Guinea
Western Pacific
Central Burma; China Offensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



On an ultramarine blue disc, crossed by an irregular patch of yellow to form land and water areas a stylized red hawk, in flight, toward dexter base, grasping in its talons a black aerial machine gun and a black aerial rocket. (Approved, 24 Jan 1950)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine patrols, 8 Dec 1941-10 Aug 1942; combat in CBI, 12 Sep 1944-Aug 1945.

Aug 1939 General George A. White, Oregon Adjutant General, contacted the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Williams, to request allocation of a National Guard Air Corps squadron to Oregon. The situation in Europe was becoming critical and air power was gaining significance. A year later, on 1 Aug 1940, the authorization was given to form the 123 Observation Squadron.

LTC B. F. Giles was sent from the National Guard Bureau to survey possible sites for the proposed unit. Swan Island was offered as a possible location. LTC Giles recommended against

it for several reasons. He felt that the Swan Island field was inadequate for the takeoffs of high-speed, modern aircraft. He was also concerned that the Civilian Pilot Training Program located there could possibly interfere with military operations. As a result, LTC Giles recommended that the proposed unit be located at the Portland-Columbia Airport which was under construction. The National Guard Bureau allocated \$50,000 for a new hangar, and the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) supplied an additional \$250,000. A bill was rushed through the state legislature to pay for architect's fees. Oregon adopted the same plans that the Maryland National Guard had used for their hangars. Since the Maryland design was already approved by the government, the 123 OS. was spared the lengthy approval process. They were housed in interim offices at the Swan Island Airport while awaiting the construction of the new building. The hangar, was never built. The unit was called to federal service the following year, before ground could be broken for the facility.

On 16 Sep 1940 all units in Oregon, except the still forming 123 OS were federalized. This left the infant unit without trained leadership to call upon. On 4 Feb 1941 Maj Carlisle Ferris was assigned as the instructor pilot and advisor for the 123 OS. Later that month, Reserve 2Lt. George Robert Dodson, was promoted to major and given command of the new unit, as he was the only qualified pilot in the vicinity.

In Mar 1941 the 123 OS began accepting applications for enlistment and conducting physicals. By the end of Mar, the 105 men needed to gain federal recognition had been enlisted. They had also added another officer: 2Lt. Wallace J. O'Daniels. 2Lt. O'Daniels, also from the 321 Obs. Sq., was promoted to captain. On 18 Apr 1941 the 123 OS was federally recognized, and 108 enlisted men and the two officers were sworn in a mass ceremony at the downtown armory located at Northwest Tenth and Couch.

The first drill was held on 11 May 1941 with pay for a day of drill of one dollar! Drills were held every week on Sunday morning from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., with later drills were alternating between Sunday and Monday. Full-time caretakers were hired at salaries of between \$125 and \$200 per month to manage and protect the government property when the unit was not drilling.

Maj Ferris went to Lowry Field in Denver on May 16, 1941 to pick up the 123's first airplane, a North American BC-1A, aircraft number 39-807. This aircraft, usually used to train aerial gunners, was used by the 123 to train pilots in aerial photography. By early June the men were completely outfitted in uniforms, and the unit had received its second airplane, a Douglas O-46A, which was used for pilot training and photographic missions.

The 123 heard rumors of activation throughout the early summer of 1941. These rumors proved true, and on September 15 the unit was activated by an executive order. On 25 Sep 1941 the 123 OS assembled in downtown Portland, marched down 6th Avenue to Union Station, and then boarded the train for Gray Field, at Ft. Lewis, WA. Once there, they joined with the 116 Obs. Sq. from Spokane to form the 70 Observation Group. Maj. Dodson assumed responsibilities as the 70 Obs. Grp. Executive Officer and Capt. O'Daniels became the 123 Obs.

Sq. Commander.

The 70 Obs. Grp. reassigned half of the 116 Obs. Sq.'s North American O-47 aircraft to the 123 OS. The O-47 was a three-place plane used for gunnery, observation and aerial photography. During one phase of their training at Ft. Lewis the squadron set up a complete field camp. Simulated bombing attacks were made on the camp with paper sacks of flour with several "casualties" covered in flour, being taken to the field first aid tent. A later two-week field maneuver was held at the Shelton Municipal Airport, Shelton, Washington. Although civilian automobiles were not permitted at the encampment, the First Sergeant's car mysteriously appeared at the camp. The conscientious 123 members impounded the car by removing its wheels and chaining them to a tree, where they stayed for the duration of the exercise.

The 123 OS flew one of the first missions from a US base on 7 Dec 1941. The sortie was an uneventful observation flight over the Oregon and Washington coast. A detachment was established at Moon Island Airport, Hoquiam, WA where these coastal patrol missions were continued. Mess facilities and quarters were in the Masonic temple in Hoquiam.

In 1941 the 123 OS was redesignated the 123 Observation Squadron (Light) and in early 1942 the unit was additionally tasked to fly artillery-spotting missions from the Yakima Municipal Airport. This new mission required a maintenance detachment at Yakima. Extremely cold weather proved a challenge to maintenance crews working without hangar facilities on the open field and several aircraft were damaged while landing on iced and snowy runways. The 123 was still at Gray Field in Sep 1942.

By April of, 1943 the 123 OS had moved to Ontario, CA and was redesignated the 123 Reconnaissance Squadron, under the command of Maj R A. Campbell. On 10 Aug 1943 the unit was again redesignated, this time as the 35 Photo Reconnaissance Squadron and was relocated to the Redmond Army Air base in central OR to participate in a large-scale air and ground exercise. That same month the unit converted to A-20 and B-25.

In Jan 1944 the 35 Photo Recon. Sq. was ordered to Will Rogers Field, OK. Maj A. J. McChristy assumed command as the unit converted to the P-38. Not all of the original 110 members of Oregon's 123 OS converted and moved with the 35th. As early as 1942, many of the unit members were dispersed to fill vacancies in other units around the world. The few who remained with the unit soon found themselves bound for "exotic" overseas locations. In April 1944 the men boarded a Liberty ship in Newport News, Virginia and following their voyage, the ship landed in Oran, Algeria. The trip wasn't exactly a sea cruise. For 30 days the men slept and ate in the cargo holds, sharing their "quarters" with a shipment of ammunition. Unsuccessful submarine attacks and enemy aircraft alerts increased the drama of the trip.

When they arrived at Oran, they learned that a ship in the convoy preceding theirs, carrying the 33 Photo Recon. Sq., was sunk with no survivors. Three members of the original 123 Obs. Sq., Leonard Mayer, Albert Miller and Bruce J. Green were assigned to the 33d and went down with the ship. After one night in Oran, where the 35th sampled the native liquor, they boarded a

British troop ship to Bombay. India., landing at Bombay on 6 Jun 1944, the same day troops landed on the Normandy beachhead. In Bombay the men boarded a train for a hot and dusty trip across India to Gurhkana, near Calcutta; a trip that proved to be as unpleasant as the ocean voyage. The grueling ride took several days in a train that appeared to be at least 100 years old. Nights on the train were filled with the sound of scuttling cockroaches and even many years later the stark Impressions remain. "There is no way I can describe the horrors of India," wrote one man, "the oppressive heat, the monsoons, and absolutely no sanitation. Natives walked the street with leprosy, elephantiasis and God knows what else. It was the nearest thing to hell on Earth. We got our orientation from the CO, the doctor, and the chaplain - all cows are sacred, don't touch; always wear long sleeves and boots, and sleep under a net. Everything that crawls or flies is poison." Another of the original Oregon Air Guard members said, "the newsreels back then couldn't begin to show how terrible it was, because the one thing they couldn't communicate was the smell. The stench was nearly overwhelming. In the evenings the poor would put the dead and dying out on the street corners where a truck came by each morning and took them away. Those who were still alive in the morning when the truck came by were left until they died." He said "the Indians seemed to believe that once the sick person was out of their house, they weren't responsible for them anymore."

The unit changed addresses once again in Sep 1944, when they were ordered to China. They were transported "over the hump" in C-46s and C-47s. Upon landing in Kunming they were transported 100 miles north by convoy to Chanyi, where the squadron put all of their photo reconnaissance training to work tracking Japanese troop movement in their F-5s as part of the Fourteenth Air Force. The unit's headquarters were in Chanyi. and one flight of four aircraft was based there. Three other flights of four F-5s each were based at Nanning, Kunming and Chihkiang. Conditions in China were only slightly better than in India. The trees were green. And at 6000 feet elevation, there was snow in the winter. The Chinese hosts provided food and housing for the Americans. To the Americans, who had been raised on meat and potatoes, the food was strange and unappetizing. The small village, much the same as it had been for several thousand years, had no sanitation. Everything had to be flown in to the remote location, including PX rations and their precious lifeline to home, the mail. In Chihklang, there was a Catholic school run by Belgian nuns and Father White, a priest from Ohio and the men from the 35th befriended them. At the school, the men could get a good meal, including much-missed mashed potatoes and fresh vegetables. The GIs returned Father White's kindness by giving him military clothes and pipe tobacco.

While overseas, each man was allowed 24 bottles of beer a month. The beer ration was delivered by supply ship and then transported over land or by air to the remote areas. The chance sinking of the monthly beer transport ship accomplished more than all the propaganda from the War Information Office. In their anger, sparked by the loss of the beer shipment, the American forces launched attacks on Japanese forces with renewed gusto. This may have been a cause for one of the 35 Photo Recon. pilots to order the external fuel tanks of his F-5 loaded with napalm. He then dropped the load on a suspected Japanese position. General Chennault, 14 AF Commander, thought little of the attempt and advised the unit to stick to taking pictures.

When the war ended in 1945, the 35th burned their excess equipment and were flown back to India. From there, they were transported to New Jersey and then home to Oregon. The 35 Photo Recon. Sq. was inactivated 7 Nov 1945 at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. The 35th was redesignated the 123 Fighter Squadron (Single Engine) in May 1946. 123 was allocated to the Oregon National Guard, effective 26 Jun 1946 and was federally recognized in Aug 1946.

1 Feb 1951: Two units of the Oregon Air Guard were called to federal service in response to the Korean conflict - the 123 FIS and the 123 Weather Station (type A). The rest of the 142 FG was activated on 1 Mar 1951. The 142 FG was never called to combat as a unit, but many Individual members were assigned to other outfits and sent to Korea. Nine 123 Fighter Squadron pilots were activated and assigned to combat units in Korea. They were: Capt. Albert Arthur, ILt. James Byers. Capt. Taylor White, ILt. Robert Daggett. ILt. Gregory James. ILt. Wallace Parks, ILt. Orval Tandy, ILt. Richard Andrews and ILt.. Earnest Wakehouse. Flying F-51s. they provided ground support by bombing and strafing railroads, supply lines and troop convoys. Often the enemy returned the fire. Ernest Wakehouse recalled that in at least 30 percent of the missions the pilot would land with bullet holes somewhere in the airplane.

First Lt. Orval Tandy was shot down in Korea and was a prisoner of war for two years. Tandy began his military career when he enlisted in the Army Air Force as a mechanic in 1942. He was accepted into flight school and was commissioned in 1944. Tandy did not go overseas. Instead. In 1946. he left the Army Air Force and joined the Oregon National Guard as an F-51 pilot. Lt. Tandy arrived in Korea in June 1951. While flying his 57th mission, Lt. Tandy was shot down. He was returning with his flight from a morning interdiction mission near the Yalu River on September 5, 1951. The flight was strafing a train when Tandy's F-51 was hit in the engine by ground fire. He bailed out at around 1000 feet, landing on a small hill.

There was little cover on the low hill. and after he landed he could see Chinese troops in the surrounding rice paddies. A Korean woman and her children approached his hiding place. She picked up his parachute and what little survival gear he had and left him hiding in a ditch covered with leaves. The remainder of his flight circled the area where Tandy lay hidden. As long as the planes circled, the Chinese troops stayed away. The planes grew low on fuel after 15 to 20 minutes and had to return to base.

Once this protective cover was gone, the Chinese swarmed up the hill. The Chinese marched Tandy for four days to a prisoner of war camp, called the Brickyard, near Pyongyang. His left leg had shrapnel in it, and infection soon set in. There were 42 other prisoners at the Brickyard. Tandy was told that quite a few prisoners had already died there. Five weeks later, around Thanksgiving, all of the prisoners in the Brickyard were marched for 14 days to the Yalu River. They were fed the normal camp fare, consisting of one cup of soupy rice in the mornings and one in the evenings. In addition, they were given a ball of millet about the size of a baseball, which they ate while walking during the day.

Three prisoners died on the march. There was snow on the ground, and most of the prisoners, including Tandy, had only their summer issue of clothing to wear. None wore jackets, and a few had no shoes. The prisoners were taken to a place called Camp 2, within a mile or so of the Yalu River. The camp held about 300 prisoners, most of whom were officers. Most were Americans from all the services, but some of the prisoners were British and Turkish. Medical

care was non-existent in the camps. Although several of the prisoners were military doctors, they had no equipment or supplies with which to treat their fellow prisoners. A few months before their release, some of the prisoners were taken to a Chinese doctor just outside the camp gate.

The doctor had no medical supplies and limited expertise, and the health of the prisoners did not improve under his care. Tandy had only his sidearm and a knife. He was wearing undershorts, a summer flight suit and flying boots. This was to be his only clothing for two years. Tandy weighed 170 pounds when he was shot down. When he returned home, he weighed 128 pounds.

The 142 Fighter Group lost three of its members in aircraft crashes in 1951. They were Capt. Carl Brose. 1Lt. Paul Tiggert, and 1Lt. Richard Price. The three pilots died in F-51 aircraft in unrelated accidents.

The 142 FG was inactivated November 1, 1952, The 142d was redesignated a Fighter Interceptor Group, and the 123 was made a Fighter Interceptor Squadron. In September 1953 the 142 FIG converted to the F-86A. With this new aircraft, the unit officially became part of the Air Defense mission.

Summer camp 1956 was held at Gowan Field in Boise. ID While the unit was on duty there, two Oregon Air Guard fliers were killed in the crash of an F-94. The crew members were Korean combat veteran Cpt Wally Parks and 2Lt John Kominoth.

1957: The 142 Fighter Group's T-33 were fitted with wingtip collection pods. The pods were designed to collect radioactive material as the jets were flown through clouds following above ground nuclear tests. The T-33s and several of the 123 aircrews were involved in the collection.

4 Oct 1957: F-89s arrived at Portland to replace the F-94. In subsequent years the F-89 fleet would be updated with more advanced models.

Jan 1959: Two 123 FIS airmen were killed in the crash of an F-89H. They were 1LT Jerry Powell and 1LT James Long.

In September the Hs were replaced by F-89Js, of which they lost four in operational accidents. The first took place on February 25, 1961, after its crew ejected after losing its attitude gyro during instrument flight. Their second loss was on December 26, 1962, when the F-89 caught fire in flight and its crew had to abandon it. The ejection was successful, but the aircraft did destroy a house when it crashed. Their third F-89 loss was on June 6, 1964, when an engine exploded on takeoff, but its crew got out okay. Their last loss occurred on November 25, 1964, during a landing incident, and once again its crew was unhurt.

1 Jul 1961: The 123 Fighter Squadron assumed their first 24-hour runway alert, flying F-89J.

Jan 1962: The "Texas Plan" was instituted in the ORANG. This plan called for Guardsmen to pull

days of active duty throughout the year to support the 24-hour alert mission of the 142d Fighter Group. The plan did away with annual summer encampments for flying organizations and for units directly supporting them.

May, 1962: It was announced that the ORANG would become the nation's only "school house" for F-89 Radar Intercept Officers. RIOs, occupying the rear cockpit position, were the predecessors of the Weapons Systems Officers (WSOs) who flew in later two-seat fighters. The school provided training for eight students and was staffed with twelve instructors from the active Air Force. The ORANG provided all of the support for the school.

Maj. Charles Sams and Capt. Cliff Landis were making a routine flight from Portland to McClellan AFB, California on the 23rd anniversary of the formation of the Oregon Air Guard. April 18, 1964. Sacramento approach control contacted them and directed them to descend their F-89 from 29,000 feet to 7,000 feet. They were told by Sacramento that a small private aircraft had become lost in the weather on a flight from San Francisco to Lake Tahoe. The pilot had filed a VFR flight plan.

When he discovered the weather had closed in over the mountains, he attempted to turn around but got lost in the growing cloud bank. Sams and Landis agreed to attempt to intercept the aircraft. It took 6 intercepts before the crew of the F-89 was able to lead the small single-engine Swift to an area of clear weather. A Navy aircraft was vectored into the area and completed the escort, delivering the Swift to a safe landing at the Sacramento Municipal Airport. During the intercepts, Maj. Sams had to slow the F-89 to within 10 knots of stall speed in order to stay with the small craft.

Both crew members received the "We Point With Pride" Award from the Air Defense Command for their efforts. The Air Defense Command commander, Lt. Gen. Herbert Thatcher, announced the award, saying that the crew certainly saved the life of the civilian pilot as well as his plane. The crew and its accomplishments were featured in an issue of Interceptor Magazine.

7 Dec 1965: "McNamara Scuttles Portland Air Base, Oregon Guard to Take Over Defense Duties," read the headline on the front page of the Oregonian newspaper. It was announced that the active Air Force base at Portland would be closed but that the air defense commitment would be assumed by the ORANG. The F-102A belonging to the 460th FIS were passed to the Guard.

In January 1966 the 123 FIS obtained F-102As from the 460th FIS that was in the process of being inactivated at Portland.

1972: 1Lt Michael Fisher and Maj Bob Tracy flew a mercy flight that assisted in saving the life of an infant in Boise, Idaho. The child was suffering from a potentially fatal breathing disorder. 1Lt Fisher and Maj Tracy transported a specialized breathing apparatus to Boise for the child in an F-101.

20 Dec 1972: Cpt David Seitz was killed in the crash of an F-101B near Hillsboro. He was alone in the two-seat jet. The tragedy, combined with the awful job of recovering the wreckage, was

taxing to everyone who took part, including members from every flying, communications, and tactical control unit.

1974: The new year brought the energy crisis to Portland's 142 FIG. All flying was "suspended until further notice by the Pentagon due to energy considerations." Flights of alert F-101s in response to "active air" scrambles were excepted. Additionally, heat in buildings was lowered to 65-68 degrees, and the transportation sections was ordered to consolidate operations and use only essential vehicles. The flying ban lasted 18 days.

Fall, 1976: 123 FIS crews brought home the gold in the F-101 category from the 1976 William Tell air-to-air Weapons Meet, while the CAMS maintainers swept the weapons loading competition. LtCol Don Tonole and Maj Brad Newell captured the overall "Top Gun" title.

September 22, 1976 two F-101s departed Portland for Tyndall AFB, Florida. The two Jets stopped at Buckley Field, Colorado to refuel. As they launched from Buckley, the second Voodoo, piloted by Capt. Steve Peglow and Lt.-Col. Gerry Clark, crashed. A heavy, silent cloud of mourning swept the base and the local community. The Guard is a family who shares its grief and its joy.

May, 1980: The quiet routine of the 18 May 1980 Unit Training Assembly at Portland Air Base, including the dedication of the new FIG Headquarters building, was broken by an announcement that Mount Saint Helens, a long-dormant volcano, had erupted. The mountain, in neighboring Washington State, is a scant 45 miles to the north of Portland. The plume of smoke and ash which billowed from the volcano resembled the mushroom cloud from a nuclear detonation, and ORANG members watched in amazement as this eruption continued for the better part of the day. The mountain erupted in several smaller bursts during 1980 and 1981, and periodic "ash" warnings were received in Portland and the surrounding areas. The ash, which was the consistency of scouring powder, blew across the runway each time an airplane taxied.

Fall, 1980: The 142 FIG transitioned from the F-101B to the F-4C. Several of the veteran Phantoms bore red stars on their splitter vane, signifying the downing of enemy MIG fighters in the skies over North Viet Nam more than ten years earlier. Aircraft tail number 64-776 had the distinction of three red stars, one confirmed "kill" each with each of the weapon systems on the aircraft (Sidewinder and Sparrow missiles, and Vulcan gatling gun).

Jul, 1983: A 142nd F-4C crashed into the Pacific Ocean during a training exercise. The two crewmen, Capt. Terry Allen and Capt. Bill DeJaeger, successfully ejected and were quickly plucked from the ocean. Both men received only minor injuries.

In August 1985 the National Guard Bureau announced that the Oregon Air Guard would stand alert in Germany with members of other Air Guard units. The deployment to Ramstein, West Germany covered the 18 month period during which the 86th TFW converted from the F-4 to the F-16. Eight Air Guard units, including Oregon, supplied personnel for the operation, dubbed

"Creek Klaxon." The deployment had many members of the Oregon Guard brushing up on their high school German. Because of his national reputation in standardization and evaluation and training, Maj. Terry "Spike" McInsey was asked by the European detachment commander to prepare the operations plan. Over the deployment period, 73 members of the Oregon Guard, spanning all Job specialties, rotated through the German alert detachment. Lt.Col. David E. B. Ward, Deputy Commander for Operations, was selected as the permanent Maintenance Officer for the Creek Klaxon deployment. Lt. Col. Gerald Sorenson replaced Lt. Col. Ward, and Maj. Mike Fisher was selected as the Deputy Commander for Maintenance.

MSgt. Don Schmidt, the designer of the 123 FIS Redhawk insignia, which he modified from earlier versions, was honored with the 1985 Chester E. McCarty award for his contributions to the Oregon Air Guard. His work, which ranges from cartoons to fine acrylic and oil paintings, can be seen in offices all over the base.

Mar 1987: The 142 FIG was awarded the USAF Outstanding Unit Award for the third time.

In June 1987 the 142 FIG participated in Copper Flag at Tyndall AFB, Florida. This exercise was established to train aircrews in integrated tactical air roles.

1988: A change in the defense posture of the United States, combined with the closing of the 318th FIS at McChord AFB, Washington brought a change in conversion plans for the 142nd FIG. Although the 114th TFTS at Kingsley Field continued on schedule with their conversion to the F-16A/ADF fighter, it was announced that the 123 FIS would receive the F-15A Eagle instead.

Jan 1989: An ORANG F-4C crashed into the Pacific during a routine training mission. The pilot, 2Lt Mike Markstaller, sustained multiple injuries in the ejection. Tragically, the Weapon Systems Officer, 1Lt Mark Baker, was killed.

October of 1989, T-33 53-5943 retired from service

123 F-1 Squadron: federalized ANG 10 Feb 51 at Portland MUT.--Aprt., OR, as the 325th F-1 Wing; called 123 Ftr Sq, S.F., when federalized with F-51D acft; received some F-86E in Jul 51, but these were withdrawn and unit was listed with F-51D on 31 Dec 51; transferred to 4704th Defense Wing 6 Feb 52; cony- to F-86F acft by 30 Jun 52; released from AD and returned to control of State of Oregon 1 Nov 52.

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION F-15A, S/N 75-0040 123 FIGHTER SQUADRON, 142D FIGHTER WING OREGON AIR NATIONAL GUARD, PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT 26 JUNE 2007 On 26 June 2007 at 1331 local time, an F-15A aircraft, serial number 75-0040, impacted the Pacific Ocean 42 nautical miles west of Arch Cape Oregon during a training mission. The mishap pilot (MP), Major Gregory D. Young, was fatally injured and the mishap aircraft (MA) was completely destroyed. Search and Rescue efforts recovered remains from the MP and some wreckage. The mishap occurred within Warning Area 570, an authorized restricted airspace for military training, and caused no damage to private property. The MP was assigned

to the 123 Fighter Squadron, 142d Fighter Wing (142 FW), Oregon Air National Guard (ANG), at Portland International Airport. The 142 FW mission is air defense of the Pacific Northwest, air superiority, support of national security objectives, and response to state and local contingencies. The MP served on active duty for 10 years as a T-38 flight instructor and F-15 pilot, until he transferred to the ANG in 2006. The MA was part of a flight of four aircraft including another F-15 and two F/A-18s from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 112, Naval Air Station, Fort Worth, Texas. The mission was planned as a Dissimilar Air Combat Training sortie involving engagements between the two F-15s performing as adversary support ("red air") against the two F/A-18s performing as friendly forces ("blue air"). The mission proceeded as briefed until the mishap, which occurred during the second engagement when all four aircraft were maneuvering in relation to each other. The Board determined that the mishap was unrelated to the airworthiness and maintenance of the aircraft.

The AIB president found clear and convincing evidence that the MP experienced unrecognized spatial disorientation, which caused him to misperceive his attitude, altitude, and airspeed, until the MA impacted the water.

1989 3 January 1989, Oregon Air National Guard McDonnell-Douglas F-4C Phantom II, 63-7626 (?), of 123 FIS/Oregon ANG from Portland, Oregon, crashes on a training mission 30 miles off Tillamook Bay, injuring both crew, who were plucked from the Pacific Ocean, authorities said.

Air Guardsmen from the Oregon Air National Guard's 142nd Fighter Wing on July 6 landed their F-15C Eagles at Campia Turzii, Romania, where they will train with their Romanian Air Force counterparts as part of a theater security package deployment to Europe. Over 200 personnel from ANG and Active Duty units deployed to Romania as part of the 123 Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, which is currently carrying out training and cooperation activities in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Campia Turzii has served as a hub for training activities connected to OAR, and the 123 EFS takes over as the lead unit of the TSP from the 159th EFS, composed of F-15Cs deployed from the Florida ANG's 125th FW. The 159th EFS arrived in Europe in March, with 12 F-15Cs, and rotated to several training sites in multiple countries. The squadron's mission in Romania will be to support OAR activities and to show US dedication to "security, stability, and peace in Europe, and to work on interoperability with our NATO allies," said Lt. Col. Sean Sullivan, the 123 EFS commander. 2015

The first Air National Guard theater security package to Europe concluded on Sept. 25 as F-15Cs from the Oregon ANG departed Campia Turzii in Romania. The aircraft were assigned to the 123 Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, states the release. "The impact we have had on the mission, I believe, has been a resounding success," said Lt. Col. Sean Sullivan, 123 EFS commander. "We have really been able to show our commitment to Europe and our partners here that we are really in it for the peace and stability of Europe and really the whole region." Twelve F-15Cs from the Florida ANG's 125th Fighter Wing arrived in Europe in March to kick-start the Guard TSP. The 123 EFS took over as the lead unit in July. The third TSP, comprised of a dozen A-10s from the 23rd Wing at Moody AFB, Ga., has already started arriving in Europe. "The TSP is another way the Air Force is increasing [its] rotational presence in Europe to reassure our allies

and partner nations that our commitment to European security is a priority," said Lt. Gen. Tom Jones, vice commander of US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa. 2015

A quartet of Oregon Air National Guard F-15Cs and support personnel from the 123 Expeditionary Fighter Squadron have wrapped up a short visit to Kecskemet AB, Hungary, announced. US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa. The Air Guardsmen arrived earlier this month to train with Hungarian counterparts and test their ability to conduct combined air operations out of the base. The fighters are from the 142nd Fighter Wing at Portland, Ore., and are deployed to Europe this summer as part of a theater security package in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve. The F-15Cs visited Hungary from their forward deployment to Campia Turzii, Romania, in order to collaborate and train with the Hungarian air force. Training activities included integrating communications and gaining proficiency working with Hungarian equipment and operating out of new facilities, 123 EFS officials noted. The Hungary deployment marked the first ANG F-15C deployment to the country as part of OAR. "It's important for the Guard to show that we are helping to support the Active Duty and all the missions that are out there," said Lt. Col. David Christensen, the 123 EFS director of operations. 2015

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 13 December 2024

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency, U.S. Air Force, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

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