

366th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON, MEDIUM



MISSION

LINEAGE

366th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 28 Jun 1942

Activated, 1 Mar 1942

Inactivated, 25 Dec 1946

Redesignated 366th Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 11 Jun 1947

Activated, 1 Jul 1947

Inactivated, 6 Sep 1948

Redesignated 366th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 20 Dec 1950

Activated, 2 Jan 1951

Inactivated

STATIONS

Salt Lake City, UT, 1 Mar 1942

Geiger Field, WA, 11 Jun 1942

Muroc, CA, 4 Jul-23 Aug 1942

Grafton Underwood, England, 12 Sep 1942

Chelveston, England, 11 Dec 1942

St Trond, Belgium, 25 Jul 1945 (operated principally from Foggia, Italy, and Tunis, Tunisia, Sep-Nov 1945)

Lechfeld, Germany, 19 Dec 1945-25 Dec 1946 (operated principally from Roberts Field, Liberia, Jan-Apr 1946 Gibraltar and Port Lyautey, French Morocco, Sep-Oct 1946)

Andrews Field, MD, 1 Jul 1947-6 Sep 1948

MacDill AFB, FL, 2 Jan 1951

Bunker Hill AFB, IN, 1 Jun 1959

ASSIGNMENTS

305th Bombardment Group, 1 Mar 1942-25 Dec 1946

305th Bombardment Group, 1 Jul 1947-6 Sep 1948

305th Bombardment Group, 2 Jan 1951

305th Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1952

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942-1946

B-17E

B-17F

B-17G

B-29, 1951-1953

B-47, 1952-1961

B-58, 1961

COMMANDERS

LTC James M. Smith, #1954

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Offensive, Europe

Air Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

France, 4 Apr 1943

Germany, 11 Jan 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jan 1954-1 Mar 1957

EMBLEM

A yellow orange disc within a grayed blue annulet, piped black and bordered orange, surmounted by a white death's head with stylized wings of the same, shaded blue, above a red aerial bomb falling to dexter base, all casting deep drop shadow black. (Approved, 17 Jul 1944)

The Squadron Insignia was adopted and approved during the squadron's previous activation and was authorized for reuse in July 1951. It consists of two circles, the outer being blue in color and the inner, orange with a flying skull dropping a bomb.

MOTTO

Rock Em Sock Em

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 17 Nov 1942-25 Apr 1945. Photo-mapping, Jun 1945-Oct 1946. Apparently not manned, 1947-1948.

The 366th Bombardment Squadron was reactivated at Mac-Dill AFB, Florida on the 2nd of January 1951. Lt. Col. John H. Geer was its first Commander. One year later, Lt. Col. Leo C. Lewis assumed command and served until September 1952. From this date, until the present time, Lt. Col. James M. Smith has commanded this unit.

The Squadron soon acquired personnel and a few B-29 aircraft. It was selected at once to be assigned the new B-47 type jet aircraft. As the delivery was delayed, the unit operated under a dual mission; although a bonifide combat B-29 squadron, it was taking preparatory steps to become a B-47 unit.

In its beginning, the "366th" was a little more than a paper squadron. It wasn't until June 1952 that the squadron received its first contingent of triple-rated observers. Pilots, radio operators and other crew members, earmarked for retention in the B-29 programs elsewhere, were transferred out with bewildering rapidity. Early in mid-summer of 1952, the first pilots and observers left for Wichita, Kansas to start training in T-33's and B-47's. The training program at Wichita halted when it became impractical to maintain the aircraft needed to sustain so strenuous a training effort. The crews returned to MacDill and continued their combat crew training in the squadron.

In late November and early December of 1952, the Squadron found itself at its lowest ebb. Most of its crew members were at Wichita. One aircraft, a B-29, was assigned to the squadron. Soon the first B-47's began to arrive, along with a few T-33's, by the first of 1953 conditions had improved; the unit had four B-47's, four T-33's and the lone B-29 assigned.

1953 was the Golden year for the "Rock 'Em Sock 'Em" squadron. In January fourteen more B-47 aircraft arrived, the combat crews returned from Wichita, and the squadron was in position to start an unlimited flying training program. This vigorous training continued until late into the summer, interrupted only by the unit's successful deployment to the U.K.

Prior to this deployment some new world records were established for the Atlantic crossing. Lt. Col. James M. Smith, unit commander set his aircraft down in Fairford, England, 2025 miles from

Limestone Air Force Base, Me., in the record time of four hours and forty-five minutes. Accompanying Col. Smith on this flight were Lt. Col. Don Frank Co-pilot and Major Gene Dawson. This record was short lived as Major Herbert H. Howard with his crew of Capt. Charles Allen as Co-Pilot and Major Dale Bozman, observer, roared into Brize-Norton, England, two months later, breaking Col. Smith's record by two minutes. Upon redeployment to the 31st Col. William E. Creer as aircraft commander, Major Glen E. Knox as co-pilot and Capt. George E. Taylor observer, A/IC David L. Peters, Crew Chief, covered a distance of 4,482 miles in eight hours and fifty-three minutes, another new record for the Rock 'Em Sock 'Em to hang up on the wall.

Just before Christmas the unit returned to MacDill for a happy reunion with family and friends. 1953 had been marred only by a fatal flight line accident. Captain William T. Paull, a member of the unit, was accidentally ejected from a taxiing T-33. After a valiant struggle for his life Capt. Paull passed away on 7 Sept. 1953.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Updated:

Sources

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

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

Unit yearbook. *305 Bombardment Wing, M, Can Do! 1954*. Army and Navy Publishing Co., Baton Rouge, LA. 1954.