

561st JOINT TACTICS SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

561st Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 19 Dec 1942
Activated, 24 Dec 1942
Redesignated 561st Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 20 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 28 Aug 1945
Redesignated 561st Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 5 May 1947
Activated in the Reserve, 12 Jun 1947
Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949
Redesignated 561st Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 5 Nov 1953
Activated, 23 Nov 1953
Inactivated, 10 Dec 1957
Redesignated 561st Tactical Fighter Squadron and activated, 1 May 1962
Organized, 1 Oct 1962
Redesignated 561st Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Inactivated, 30 Jun 1992
Activated, 1 Feb 1993
Organized, 1 Oct 1962
Redesignated 561st Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Inactivated, 30 Jun 1992
Activated, 1 Feb 1993
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1996

Redesignated 561st Joint Tactics Squadron, 1 May 2007
Activated, 22 May 2007

STATIONS

Gowen Field, ID, 24 Dec 1942
Wendover Field, UT, c. 1 Feb 1943
Sioux City AAB, IA, 1 May–7 Jun 1943
Knettishall, England, Jun 1943–c. 6 Aug 1945
Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, c. 13–28 Aug 1945
Orchard Place Aprt, IL, 12 Jun 1947
General Billy Mitchell Field, WI, 2 Sep 1948–27 Jun 1949
Clovis AFB, NM, 23 Nov 1953–28 Nov 1954
Hahn AB, Germany, 12 Dec 1954
Etain/Rouvres AB, France, 1 Dec 1955–10 Dec 1957
McConnell AFB, KS, 1 Oct 1962
George AFB, CA, 1 Jul 1973–30 Jun 1992
Nellis AFB, NV, 1 Feb 1993
Nellis AFB, NV, 1 Feb 1993–1 Oct 1996
Nellis AFB, NV, 22 May 2007

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Yokota AB, Japan, 6 Mar–8 Jul 1965
George AFB, CA, 16–26 May 1966, 23 Sep–17 Oct 1966, 17 Feb–9 Mar 1967, 4–18 Aug 1967,
23 Jan–8 Feb 1968, 18 Jun–3 Jul 1968, 15–27 Nov 1968, 6–21 May 1969, and 12 Nov–2
Dec 1969
Shaikh Isa, Bahrain, 16 Aug 1990–Mar 1991

ASSIGNMENTS

388th Bombardment Group, 24 Dec 1942–28 Aug 1945
338th Bombardment Group, 12 Jun 1947–27 Jun 1949
388th Fighter Bomber Group, 23 Nov 1953–10 Dec 1957
Tactical Air Command, 1 May 1962
388th Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1962
23rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Feb 1964
832nd Air Division, 1 Jul 1972
35th Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Jul 1973
37th Tactical Fighter Wing, 30 Mar 1981
35th Tactical Fighter (later, 35th Fighter) Wing, 5 Oct 1989–30 Jun 1992
57th Operations Group, 1 Feb 1993
57th Operations Group, 1 Feb 1993–1 Oct 1996
USAF Warfare Center, 22 May 2007

ATTACHMENTS

388th Fighter Bomber Wing, 1 Jul–10 Dec 1957

41st Air Division, 6 Mar–8 Jul 1965

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, 1–14 Jul 1973

35th Tactical Fighter Wing, Provisional, 16 Aug 1990–Mar 1991

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B–17, 1943–1945

B-17F

B-17G

Unkn, 1947–1949

F–86, 1954–1956

F-86F

F–100, 1957

F-100C

F-100D

F–105, 1964–1980

F-105G

F–4, 1981–1992

F-4E

F–4, 1993

COMMANDERS

Unkn, 24 Dec 1942

1Lt William L. Chamberlin, 1 Feb 1943-unkn

Maj Richard Bynum, Oct 1944-unkn

LTC James F. Pierce, Dec 1944

LTC Andrew Chaffin, 16 Apr 1945-unkn

Maj Garland I. Phillips, Jun 1945-unkn

Unkn, 12 Jun 1947-27 Jun 1949

1Lt William M. Blackwell, 23 Nov 1953

Maj Sam Malone, 8 Feb 1954

LTC Benjamin F. Long, 10 Aug 1954

Maj Howard F. Poulin, 15 Feb 1956-10 Dec 1957

None (not manned), 1 May-30 Sep 1962

Unkn, (minimally manned), 1 Oct 1962-Oct 1963

LTC Howard F. Hendricks, Nov 1963

LTC James M. Morris, Jun 1964

LTC Elvis H. Walker, Nov 1964

Maj Joseph W. Brand, Dec 1965

LTC Lawrence E. McKenney, 19 Apr 1966

LTC Harry D. Sultzer Jr., 14 Oct 1968

LTC Nevin G. Christensen, 10 Feb 1969

LTC Edward T. Rock, 15 Dec 1970

LTC Richard E. Moser, 16 Apr 1972

LTC Donald R. Yates, Aug 1973

LTC John T. Halley, 20 Jun 1975
LTC Anton M. Taylor, 20 Jun 1977
LTC Leonard C. Ekman, 14 Apr 1978
LTC John D. Logeman Jr., 1 Oct 1978
LTC Grover E. Musselwhite, 4 Dec 1979
LTC Gordon J. Jenkins, 4 Aug 1981
LTC Jeffrey R. Grime, 4 Aug 1983
LTC William A. Payne, 3 Jul 1984
LTC Robin A. DeTurk, 3 Jul 1986
LTC Allen J. Thrush, 2 Oct 1987
LTC Kent E. Harrison, 4 Oct 1988
LTC George W. Walton, 6 Aug 1990-30 Jun 1992
LTC Daniel W. Costantini, 1 Feb 1993
LTC James R. Uken, 10 Feb 1995-1 Oct 1996

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Germany, 17 Aug 1943; for three missions (Hannover, Germany, 26 Jul 1943; Brux, Czechoslovakia, 12 May 1944; and from England to Russia, 21 Jun 1944)

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device

6 Apr 1972–27 Jan 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jun 1970–15 Jun 1971

2 Feb 1976–31 Mar 1977

1 Jun 1985–31 May 1987

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966–28 Jan 1973

EMBLEM



561st Bombardment Squadron emblem





Or, a sword palewise point to chief Argent hilt Sable surmounted by the silhouette of a Trojan soldier's helm of the last; all within a diminished bordure of the like. (Approved, 13 Oct 1993; replaced emblem approved, 31 Jan 1955)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

WILD WEASELS

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 17 Jul 1943–21 Apr 1945. Stood alert in Korea, Mar–Jul 1965. Replacement training, Jan 1966–1 Jul 1970. Portion of squadron flew combat from Korat RTAFB, Thailand, Apr–Sep 1972. Wild Weasel training, Sep 1973–30 Jun 1992. Combat in Southwest Asia, Jan–Feb 1991.

Members of the 561st Fighter Squadron deployed to Operation PROVIDE COMFORT (southern Turkey). 27 Dec 1993

Members of the 561st Fighter Squadron rotated home from a 90-day deployment to Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. 2 Jan 1994

The 561st Fighter Squadron's last six Wild Weasel aircraft and associated troops returned from Saudi Arabia. Elements of the 561 st had been deployed continuously for 1,572 days, since the early days of Desert Shield. 12 Dec 1994

The Center inactivated the last Wild Weasel unit in the Air Force, the 561st Fighter Squadron. Its F-4s would become drone targets. 26 Mar 1996

On 19 Sep 1951, Strategic Air Command's 561st Fighter-Escort Squadron, based in England, arrived at Wheelus for training. The 561st maintained an average of approximately 30 flying hours per day with its F-84 aircraft. This unit was replaced on 20 Oct 1951 by its sister unit the 559th Fighter-Escort Squadron.

561st Bomb Squadron was one of four bomb squadrons of the 388th. The 561st was led by Lt. Col. William Chamberlin. He was killed in combat in May 1944. Chamberlin was the highest ranking 388th officer killed in combat.

F-86 attrition

52-5247 - Crashed, engine failure, 2nm E of Verdun, France, 23 JULY 55, 1 fatality.

52-5261 - Crashed, hydraulic system failure, 2.5nm NNE of Dover AFB, Delaware, 27 NOV 54, no fatalities.

52-5270 - Crashed, mid-air collision, 15nm WNW of Hahn AB, West Germany, 26 FEB 55, no fatalities, ejected.

53-1081 - Crashed, bad weather letdown, 0.5nm E of Combres, France, 11 DEC 55, 1 fatality.

53-1135 - Crashed, bad weather letdown into city of Bitburg, West Germany, 15 JAN 55, 1 fatality.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 10 Nov 2010

Updated: 13 Feb 2019

Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

History. *Wheelus Field; The Story of the US Air Force in Libya. The Early days 1944-1952.* R. L. Swetzer. Historical Division Office of Information USAFE. 15 Jan 1965