

780 RADAR SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

780 Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
Redesignated 780 Radar Squadron (SAGE)
Redesignated 780 Radar Squadron

STATIONS

Fortuna AFS, ND

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



780 Radar Squadron (SAGE) emblem approved, 26 Jul 1965

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

780 Fortuna AFS, ND FPS-3/-20A; TPS-10D; FPS-4; GPS-3; FPS-35; (FPS-64); FPS-6;
FPS-35; FPS-26A Apr-52 01-Jul-79 BUIC-III. FPS-35 antenna blown over in fierce
wind storm, winter 1964; replacement antenna reportedly came from Manassas AFS, VA. GATR
retained after radar site closed until JSS switchover, early 1980's.

History of Fortuna AFS, ND, In April 1952 the 780th AC&W Squadron began operations at this site using AN/FPS-3 search and AN/FPS-4 height-finder radars. During 1957 an AN/GPS-3 search radar made a brief appearance. Reportedly, an AN/TPS-10D was also briefly used. In 1958 the 780th began operating an AN/FPS-20A search radar that replaced the AN/GPS-3. By 1960 a pair of AN/FPS-6, -6A handled height-finder chores. During 1961 Fortuna became part of the SAGE system. In 1963, the AN/FPS-20A was removed, and the makeup of the radars at Fortuna

consisted of an AN/FPS-35 search radar along with AN/FPS-6 and AN/FPS-90 height-finder radars. In 1964 an AN/FPS-26A height-finder radar was installed, and the AN/FPS-6 was retired. In the winter of 1964, a fierce wind storm blew over the AN/FPS-35 sail; the sail was not replaced until the following year (by the one formerly installed at Manassas AFS, VA, reportedly). For the interim, in 1965 an AN/FPS-64 search radar was installed in the former AN/FPS-20A tower; it was removed in 1967 after the AN/FPS-35 was again fully operational. The AN/FPS-90 height-finder radar was removed in 1969. The 780th Radar Squadron (SAGE) was deactivated in September 1979. The GATR site was retained until the JSS switchover, circa 1984.

In Aug 1951. Fortuna Air Force Station was officially opened with 130 authorized personnel. With additional requirements and responsibilities levied under the BIUC (Back up Intercept Control) II system. More than 200 people were assigned to the site when BIUC II phased out at Fortuna. The installation reverted to a Long Range Radar (LRR) in late 1969. Burroughs Corporation together with Systems Development and North East Montana Telephone Company activated BIUC III one of the most advanced air defense systems in being. Manpower increased the number of personnel up to 270. On 1 Jan 1974, BIUC III was deactivated and the unit again reverted to a Long Range Radar Site

The 780th Radar Squadron is under the operational control of the 24th NORAD Region, located at Malmstrom AFB. Mont

Located in the extreme northwest corner of North Dakota, the 780th Radar Squadron is nine miles east of the Montana border and four miles south of the Canadian border.

780th Radar Sq (SAGE): activated 1 Mar 51 at Fortuna AFS, ND, assigned to 545th ACP/ Gp; transferred to 29th AD 6 Feb 52; transferred to Minot ADS 1 Jan 61; redesignated from ACW Sq to 780th Radar Sq (SAGE) 1 Aug 61; transferred to Great Falls ADS 25 Jun 63; transferred to 28th AD 1 Apr 66; reassigned to 24th AD 19 Nov 69; inactivated 1 Mar 70; reactivated (date unknown); inactivated 29 Sep 79.

Emblem approved 26 Jul 1965 for 780 RS (SAGE)

This unit was redesignated twice and the same patch was used for all three organizations since it displayed only a motto, no designation.

780 RS (SAGE) active 1 Aug 1961 - 1 Mar 1970

780 RS active 17 Jan 1974 - 29 Sep 1979

780 ADG active 1 Mar 1970 - 17 Jan 1974 (GWO)

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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