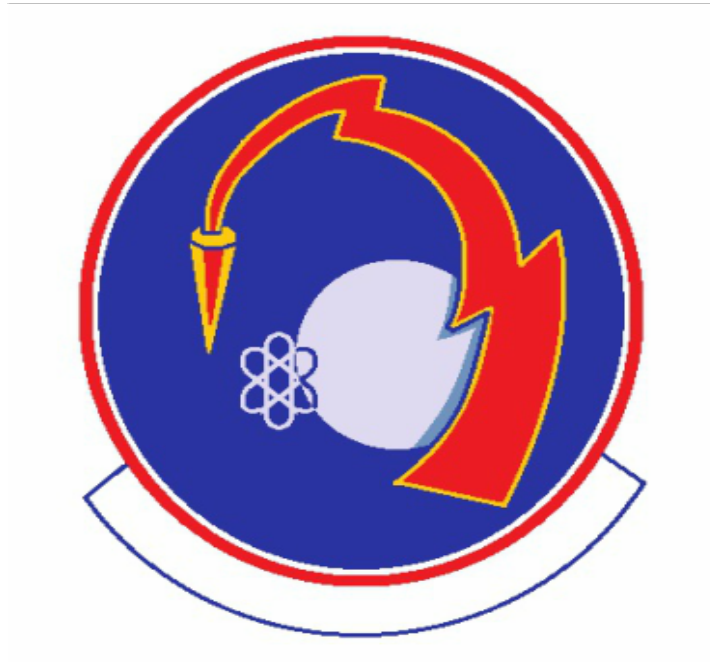


851 STRATEGIC MISSILE SQUADRON (ICBM-Titan)



MISSION

LINEAGE

78 Bombardment Squadron (Light) constituted, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 15 Jan 1941
Redesignated 78 Bombardment Squadron (Medium), 30 Dec 1941
Redesignated 7 Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy), 29 Nov 1942
Redesignated 851 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 27 Sep 1943
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 851 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Titan), and activated, 25 Aug 1960
Organized, 1 Feb 1961
Inactivated, 25 Mar 1965

STATIONS

Savannah, GA, 15 Jan 1941
Manchester, NH, 20 Jun 1941
Langley Field, VA, 9 Apr 1942
Jacksonville, FL, 16 May 1942 (operated from Edinburgh Field, Trinidad, 20 Apr 1943-20 Jul 1943)
Mountain Home AAFld, ID, 27 Sep 1943-9 Apr 1944
Eye, England, 28 Apr 1944-26 Aug 1945
Drew Field, FL, 3 Sep 1945-7 Nov 1945
Beale AFB, CA, 1 Feb 1961

ASSIGNMENTS

45 Bombardment Group, 15 Jan 1941
26 Antisubmarine Wing, 8 Dec 1942
490 Bombardment Group, 1 Oct 1943-7 Nov 1945
Strategic Air Command, 25 Aug 1960
4126 Strategic Wing, 1 Feb 1961
456 Strategic Aerospace Wing, 1 Feb 1963

ATTACHMENTS

25 Antisubmarine Wing, c. 16 Dec 1942
25 Bombardment Group, 20 Apr-20 Jul 1943

WEAPON SYSTEMS

A-20
DB-7
B-18
B-24, 1944
B-17, 1944-1945
Titan I, 1962

COMMANDERS

Col William Reynolds

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater
Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



851st Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Titan): On an Air Force blue disc, fimbriated white, within a red border, a white globe shaded light bluish-gray, surmounted in dexter base by an atomic symbol of three orbits counterchanged; in dexter a red and AF golden yellow nose cone pointing downward leaving a lightning like trail arched to base and surmounting the globe in sinister, red, bordered AF golden yellow. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. Against a deep blue background, the psychological and physical capabilities of this unit are symbolized by a nose cone (red and yellow to represent heat), traveling on its parabolic curve through space. A single bolt of lightning throwing its shadow over a small globe indicates the Titan's tremendous range, lightning speed, terrific power, and trajectory of flight and electronics. The atom symbolizes the primary mission of Titan as a nuclear vehicle. (Approved, 22 Mar 1962)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine, 9 Feb 1942-17 Jul 1943; combat in ETO, 31 May 19-20 Apr 1945.

SAC Missile Operations

Turnover to SAC 8 Sep 1962

Operational 8 Sep 1962

First ICBM off alert 4 Jan 1965

Last ICBM off alert 22 Jan 1965

Last ICBM shipped 10 Feb 1965

In March 1943, after many months patrolling off the Florida coast without even an estimate of a German submarine within hundreds of miles, the Squadron departed Jacksonville, Florida, for detached service to Trinidad, at the time an element of the 26th Antisubmarine Wing based in Miami. The unit had 10 B-18s, and upon arrival at Edinburgh Field, was immediately attached to the 25th Bomb Group, Trinidad Detachment, Antilles Air Command for tactical duties. The 7th

ASRON shared the ramp at Edinburgh at the time with the 10th Bomb Squadron and a Navy blimp unit.

Because there had been considerable activity in the Trinidad area, all of the crews of the Squadron had looked forward to the deployment but, as luck would have it, almost concurrent with their arrival on Trinidad, the German subs abandoned the area. It was hard to build up even a suspicion of a German sub in our area. As a result, anti-submarine sweeps were curtailed and tactical flying was confined to convoy and single-ship coverage/escort.

The Squadron's last full month in Trinidad, June 1943, a memorable record was established. The Engineering Department kept the 10 B-18s (which included mostly B-18C's, but at least one B-18B) flying practically all of the time and combat crews amassed 1,141 flying hours.

Tactical flying was divided primarily between sweeps and convoy coverages. several aircraft were detached for several days each to St. Lucia and Barbados to provide coverage as needed there. Barbados was considered a prize assignment, as the USAAF had no base there, but had arranged to use Sewell Field. The crews lived at former peace-time luxury hotels while there.

The unit also supplemented the continuing St. Lucia-based patrols over Vichy French Martinique, out of Beane Field. "Instructions were to stay outside the 3-mile limit, unless it was necessary to make a low sweep to observe shipping. Most pilots found it necessary to buzz at least one of the French warships there on each patrol!

The Squadron departed the Caribbean area on 20 July 1943 with but two minor accidents throughout the entire stay in Trinidad. One involved a taxiing accident, and the other when half the gear on a B-18 folded up as one aircraft landed. Both were repaired and returned to service.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 29 Jul 2020

Updated: 8 Dec 2022

Sources

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

Ballistic Missiles. Jacob Neufeld. Office of Air Force History. Washington D.C. 1990.