

## 33 SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

33 Aero Squadron organized, 12 Jun 1917

Demobilized, 14 Apr 1919

Reconstituted and redesignated 33 Pursuit Squadron, 24 Mar 1923

Activated, 25 Jun 1932

Redesignated 33 Pursuit Squadron (Fighter), 6 Dec 1939

Redesignated 33 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor), 12 Mar 1941

Redesignated 33 Fighter Squadron, 15 May 1942

Redesignated 33 Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 3 Feb 1944

Inactivated, 22 Jun 1945

Redesignated as 33 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 3 Mar 1953

Activated, 8 Apr 1953

Inactivated, 25 Jun 1953

Redesignated as 33 Fighter-Day Squadron, 7 May 1956

Activated, 25 Jul 1956

Inactivated, 19 Nov 1956

Redesignated 33 Tactical Reconnaissance Training Squadron, 18 Aug 1969

Activated, 15 Oct 1969

Inactivated, 1 Oct 1982

Redesignated 33 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 7 Sep 1984

Activated, 1 Jan 1985

Redesignated 33 Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991  
Inactivated, 15 Nov 1993  
Redesignated 33 Special Operations Squadron, 29 Apr 2009  
Activated, 29 May 2009

### **STATIONS**

Camp Kelly, TX, 12 Jun-11 Aug 1917  
Etamps, France, 19 Sep 1917  
Clermont-Ferrand, France, c. 25 Sep 1917  
Issoudun, France, Dec 1917  
Bordeaux, France, 6 Jan-18 Mar 1919  
Mitchel Field, NY, 5-14 Apr 1919  
Langley Field, VA, 25 Jun 1932  
Mitchel Field, NY, 14 Nov 1940-27 Jul 1941  
Iceland, 6 Aug 1941-9 Jun 1945  
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 20-22 Jun 1945  
Clovis AFB, NM, 8 Apr-25 Jun 1953  
Myrtle Beach, AFB, SC, 25 Jul-19 Nov 1956  
Shaw AFB, SC, 1 Oct 1969-1 Oct 1982  
Shaw AFB, SC, 1 Jan 1985-15 Nov 1993  
Cannon AFB, NM, 29 May 2009

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Unkn, 12 Jun-Dec 1917  
Third Aviation Instruction Center, Dec 1917-Jan 1919  
Unkn, Jan-14 Apr 1919  
8 Pursuit Group, 25 Jun 1932  
Iceland Base Command, 6 Aug 1941  
342 Composite Group, 11 Sep 1942  
24 Composite Wing, 18 Mar 1944  
Iceland Base Command, 15 Jun 1944-9 Jun 1945  
37 Fighter-Bomber Group, 8 Apr-15 Jun 1953  
342 Fighter-Day Group, 25 Jul-19 Nov 1956  
363 Tactical Reconnaissance (later, 363 Tactical Fighter) Wing, 15 Oct 1969-1 Oct 1982  
363 Tactical Fighter (later, 363 Fighter) Wing, 1 Jan 1985  
363 Operations Group, 1 May 1992-15 Nov 1993  
27 Special Operations Group, 29 May 2009

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

Nieuport 83, 1918  
P-12, 1932-1935  
P-6, 1933-1936  
PB-2, 1936-1939  
P-36, 1939-1940

P-6  
YP-37  
A-17  
A-17A  
P-40, 1940-1944  
P-39, 1942-1943  
P-36A  
P-47, 1944-1945  
RF-4, 1969-1982  
F-16, 1985-1993

### **COMMANDERS**

Sgt N. Y. Donohue, 12 Jun 1917  
Sgt E. P. Rudiseal, 16 Jun 1917  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Norman J. Boots, 1 Jul 1917  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Cecil G. Sellers, By Aug 1917-Unkn  
Unkn, Unkn-9 Dec 1917  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Guilbert, 10 Dec 1917  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lt A. H. Schroedl, 24 Dec 1917  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Alan E. Lockwood, 26 Dec 1917  
Capt Harry S. Gwynne, 22 Feb 1918  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt J. Carrol Cone, 9 Jun 1918  
Maj M. F. Davis, 21 Jul 1918  
Maj Robert L. Walsh, 2 Sep 1918  
Capt Clarence Oliver, 7 Sep 1918  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Samuel W. Rynicker, 5 Dec 1918-Unkn  
Unkn, Unkn-14 Apr 1919  
Capt Charles Douglas 1 Jul 31-2 Jun 32  
Capt Harold H. George, 25 Jun 1932-Unkn  
Maj Newton Longfellow, 18 Feb 1935  
Maj George F. Schulgen, 28 Aug 1935  
Maj Russell L. Maughan, Jul 1937  
Capt Allen R. Springer, 22 Jul 37-5 Apr 38  
Maj Russell L. Maughan, 5 Apr 38-14 Aug 39  
Maj Reuben C. Moffat, Aug 1939  
Capt Romulus W. Puryear, Oct 1940  
Capt J. E. Barr, C. Feb 1941  
Capt Ernest F. Williams, C. Apr 1941  
Capt Romulus W. Puryear, C. 9 Jul 1941  
Maj Ernest F. Williams, Aug 1941  
Maj Thomas A. Holdiman, 10 Aug 1942  
Maj William R. Compton, 14 Nov 1942  
Maj George O. Doherty, 29 Jul 1943  
Maj Eugene W. Byrne, 29 Jan 1944

Maj Mark J. Mourne, 29 Mar 1944  
Maj James M. Hunter, 28 Feb 1945  
Lt Col John H. Walker, 25 May-22 Jun 1945  
Capt Joseph N. O'keefe, 8 Apr-25 Jun 1953  
Unkn, 25 Jul-19 Nov 1956  
Lt Col Vernon L. Allgood, 15 Oct 1969  
Lt Col Charles R. Ritchie, 1 Feb 1970  
Lt Col Paul R. Baker, 20 Nov 1970  
Lt Col Edward H. Cole, 17 Jul 1972  
Lt Col Charles A. Gibbs, 27 Nov 1972 (Temporary), 13 Dec 1972 (Permanent)  
Lt Col Kenneth W. Field, 25 Nov 1974  
Lt Col Thomas F. Nash, 22 Jan 1976  
Lt Col John D. Goode, 30 Mar 1977  
Lt Col Leros E. Hull Jr., 30 Mar 1979  
Lt Col Kenneth E. Mckim, 1 Aug 1980  
Lt Col Glyndon A. Bruhl, 14 Aug 1981  
Lt Col Raymond L. Lennon, 15 Jun 1982  
Unkn, 30 Aug-1 Oct 1982  
Lt Col Terry L. Millard, 1 Jan 1985  
Lt Col Daniel M. Dick, Dec 1986  
Lt Col Charles J. Bonner, Jun 1988  
Lt Col Ronald W. Perkins, Jul 1990  
Lt Col Gary L. North, Jul 1992-10 Mar 1993  
Unkn, 11 Mar-15 Nov 1993

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

World War I Theater of Operations

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Cease Fire Campaign

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1974-1 Jul 1976

2 Jul 1976-30 Jun 1978

1 Oct 1981-[1 Oct 1982]

1 Jan 1988-30 Dec 1989

1 Jan 1992-15 Nov 1993

**EMBLEM**



33 Pursuit Squadron emblem



33 Tactical Reconnaissance Training Squadron



### 33 Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem



33 Special Operations Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, a gryphon clawed foot from sinister Proper, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed “VIGILANTIA FIDA VELOX IUSTITIA” in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed “33D SPECIAL OPERATIONS SQ” in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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. The gryphon is a legendary guardian with the body of a lion (King of Beasts) and the head, wings and claws of an eagle (King of Birds). The gryphon soars effortlessly and gracefully at high altitudes searching for enemies and guarding its lair, using its claws to attack and kill any and all threats. The gryphon’s claws and the motto combine to symbolize the Squadron’s mission—soaring above the battlefield, ever vigilant for threats which are instantly removed upon discovery. (Approved, 22 Sep 1933)

#### **MOTTO**

VIGILANTIA FIDA VELOX IUSTITIA--Always Vigilant, Instant Justice  
FALCONS

#### **OPERATIONS**

Constructed facilities, maintained aircraft, and functioned as a flying training unit, 1917-1918.

Demobilized on 14 April 1919 at Mitchel Field, NY, as the 33 Aero Squadron. Reconstituted in the Regular Army on 24 March 1923 as the 33 Pursuit Squadron, assigned to the 8th Pursuit Group, and allotted to the Sixth Corps Area. Designated Active Associate was the 17th Pursuit Squadron 1923-27. Withdrawn from the Sixth Corps Area on 28 February 1927 and allotted to the Ninth Corps Area. Withdrawn from the Ninth Corps Area on 1 September 1928 and allotted to the Eighth Corps Area. Concurrently, relieved from assignment to the 8th Pursuit Group and assigned to the 17th Pursuit Group.

Organized by June 1929 with Organized Reserve personnel as a RAI unit with headquarters at Kelly Field, TX. Organized Reserve officers assigned to the unit participated in summer training at Kelly Field 1929-31. Activated on 25 June 1932, less Reserve personnel, at Langley Field, VA.

Relieved from assignment to the 17th Pursuit Group on 1 March 1935 and assigned to the 8th Pursuit Group. Redesignated as the 33 Pursuit Squadron (Fighter) on 6 December 1939. Redesignated as the 33 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) on 12 March 1940. Transferred on 14 November 1940 to Mitchel Field, NY. Ordered to Iceland and departed 27 July 1941 on the U.S.S. Wasp. Arrived off Iceland on 6 August 1941, and flying off the Wasp, landed at an airfield near Reykjavik. Assigned on arrival to the Iceland Base. Performed air defense for Iceland, Aug 1941-May 1945.

Not operational, 1953 and 1956.

The initial AF order called for a total of 26 RF-4C aircraft. The first of these took to the air for the first time on May 18, 1964 Initial plans called for the RF-4C to equip fourteen Tactical Air Command squadrons with the first to be activated by early 1965 At it were, the first production aircraft were quickly assigned to the 33 TRTS at Shaw AFB, S Carolina, on September 24, 1964 They remained at Shaw for the following year while minor sensor system problems were overcome, eventually transferring to the first operational RF-4C squadron, the 16th 1 HS I his unit was declared combat ready in August of 1965 under the auspices of the 460th TRW, and on October 30. 1965, nine of its RF-4C's were deployed to Lan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam. One day later, it became the first RF 4 unit to enter combat in SEA.

During 1969-1982, conducted RF-4 aircrew training in tactical reconnaissance tactics and techniques.

1-7 Sep 83 An HC-130 from the 33d Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron participated in a search and rescue mission for Korean Air Lines flight 007. The HC-130 was closely monitored by Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) aircraft. It was later determined that a USSR fighter aircraft shot down the airliner near Sakhalin Island. A total of 269 persons perished, including 35 Americans.

Trained in tactical fighter missions designed to destroy enemy forces, 1985-1993.

The 33 Tactical Fighter Squadron participated In Quick Force 90-2, a multi-service training exercise that ran from April 27 until April 29,1990. The exercise was sponsored by the U.S. Central Command Air Forces and was designed to coordinate various forces In a simulated warfare atmosphere. Quick Force brought together the same forces that were used In Southwest Asia.

Deployed aircrews and aircraft to Southwest Asia (SWA); participated in Operation Southern Watch over southern Iraq in support of United Nations operations, 1992-1993. Lt Col Gary L. North, commander of 33 Fighter Squadron, became the first F-16 pilot to score an aerial victory in SWA, 27 Dec 1992.

Air Force Special Operations Command activated the 33 Special Operations Squadron last Friday at Cannon AFB, N.M. The Clovis News Journal reported that day that the new unit will operate the MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial vehicle, which is already playing an important

role in countering the Taliban in Afghanistan and insurgents in Iraq. "This unit is more than ready to answer our nation's call to duty," said Lt. Col. Michael Bruzzini, the squadron commander, at the activation ceremony. He added, "The MQ-9 is an awesome platform, but it is these individuals that will make our enemies truly fear the Reaper." Bruzzini said the squadron's members spent six months getting ready for the activation, operating out of no less than five locations to learn Reaper tactics, techniques, and procedures and mold themselves into a cohesive fighting force. AFSOC already operates the 3rd SOS, an MQ-1 Predator UAV unit, out of Cannon.

**Starter-Generator Failure Caused Reaper Crash** —A starter-generator failure caused the crash of an MQ-9A Reaper in February in the US Africa Command area of operations. The remotely piloted aircraft belonged to the 432nd Wing at Creech AFB, Nev., but was assigned to the 33 Expeditionary Special Operations Squadron, 435th Air Expeditionary Wing, when it crashed. It took off at 5:30 a.m. Zulu on Feb. 4 and flew normally for about three hours before the generator exhaust fan began to malfunction and the starter-generator failed, according to the report. The crew tried to fly the aircraft back to base and turned off equipment to maximize battery life, but the starter-generator failed again around 9:15 a.m. and could not be restarted. Instead, they programmed the Reaper to return to base. A second crew took control of the RPA around 10:30 a.m. and saw the battery power was very low, according to the report. The crew put the Reaper in a holding pattern, but the battery power was so low the aircraft could have become unstable, so the Joint Forces Air Component commander ordered the crew to fly it into international waters. This is the third time a failed starter-generator caused a Reaper to crash since December 2014. The first two happened just one day apart, the first on Dec. 11, 2014, and the second on Dec. 12, 2014. 2015

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Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.