

38th RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON



MISSION

The 38th is responsible for worldwide reconnaissance operations in support of Air Force strategic, airlift, and tactical missions.

LINEAGE

38th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 20 Nov 1940

Activated, 15 Jan 1941

Redesignated 38th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) (Twin Engine), 31 Jan 1942

Redesignated 38th Fighter Squadron (Twin Engine), 15 May 1942

Redesignated 38th Fighter Squadron, Twin Engine, 20 Aug 1943

Redesignated 38th Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 5 Sep 1944

Inactivated, 20 Aug 1946

Redesignated 38th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Mapping, 3 Feb 1947

Activated, 15 Mar 1947

Redesignated 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Photo-Mapping, 1 Jul 1949

Inactivated, 14 Oct 1949

Redesignated 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium, Photo, 27 Oct 1950

Activated, 1 Nov 1950

Redesignated 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium, 16 Jun 1952

Redesignated 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, 16 Aug 1966

Inactivated, 1 Apr 1970

Activated, 1 Apr 1979

Redesignated 38th Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 Sep 1991

STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 15 Jan 1941
Columbia Aprt, Portland, OR, 21 May 1941
McCord Field, WA, 14 Dec 1941
Paine Field, WA, 9 Sep 1942-20 Aug 1943
Nuthampstead, England, 16 Sep 1943
Wormingford, England, 16 Apr 1944
Kaufbeuren, Germany, 20 Jul 1945
Giebelstadt, Germany, 4 Apr-20 Aug 1946
Clark Field (later, AFB), Philippine Islands, 15 Mar 1947-6 May 1949
Fairfield-Suisan AFB, CA, 26 May 1949
Topeka (later, Forbes) AFB, KS, 1 Jun-14 Oct 1949
Barksdale AFB, LA, 1 Nov 1950
Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, 6 Jan 1951
Forbes AFB, KS, 9 Oct 1952
Offutt AFB, NE, 16 Aug 1966-1 Apr 1970
Offutt AFB, NE, 1 Apr 1979

DEPLOYED STATIONS

RAF Bassingbourne, England, 15 Jan-28 May 1951
RAF Sculthorpe, England, 5 Apr-15 May 1952
RAF Upper Heyford, England, 15 May-9 Aug 1952
Benguerir AB, French Morocco, 30 May-6 Aug 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

55th Pursuit (later, 55th Fighter) Group, 15 Jan 1941-20 Aug 1946
5th Reconnaissance Group, 15 Mar 1947
311th Air Division, 26 May 1949
55th Strategic Reconnaissance Group, 1 Jun-14 Oct 1949
55th Strategic Reconnaissance Group, 1 Nov 1950
55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 16 Jun 1952-1 Apr 1970
55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Apr 1979
55th Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991

ATTACHMENTS

9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 26 May-1 Jun 1949
91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Nov 1950-6 Jan 1951
55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 6 Jan 1951-15 Jun 1952
3rd Air Division, 15 Jan-28 May 1951
7th Air Division, 5 Apr 1952-9 Aug 1952

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-43, 1941
P-43A
P-38, 1941-1944

P-38E
P-38F
P-38G
P-38H
P-38J
P-47, 1943
P-47C
P-51, 1944-1946
P-51B
P-51C
P-51D
P-51K
P-80, 1946
P-80A
A-26, 1946
B-17, 1947, 1949
FB/RB-17, 1947-1949
RC-45, 1948-1949
C-46, 1948-1949
C-47, 1948-1949
B-29, 1949
RB-50, 1950-1954
RB-50B
RB-50E
RB-47, 1954-1965
ERB-47 (later, EB-47), 1957-1965
EC-135, 1966- 1970
KC-135, 1966-1968
RC-135, 1979
RC-135V
RC-135W

COMMANDERS

1Lt Kermit A. Tyler, 15 Jan 1941
1Lt Loring F. Stetson Jr., 18 Feb 1941
1Lt Leo F. Dusard Jr., 30 Apr 1941
Maj Milton Joel, 3 Oct 1942
Maj Mark K. Shipman, 29 Nov 1943
Cpt Joseph Myers, 10 Feb 1944
Cpt James H. Hancock, 22 Apr 1944
Maj John D. Landers, 3 Jul 1944
Cpt Clayton L. Peterson, 12 Oct 1944
Cpt Donald M. Cummings, 23 May 1945
Maj Clayton L. Peterson, 22 Jun 1945

Cpt Donald M. Cummings, 29 Sep 1945
Maj Clayton L. Peterson, May-20 Aug 1946
None (not manned), 15 Mar-21 Sep 1947
Maj Riley N. Whittington, 22 Sep 1947
Maj John M. Clayton Jr., 9 Dec 1948
2 Lt Jacques K. Tetrick, 1 Jun 1949
Cpt Moxie A. Shirley, 1 Jul 1949
Maj Raymond T. Eakes, 11 Jul 1949
Maj Lee R. Williams Jr, 26 Aug-14 Oct 1949
Cpt Bernard W. Zimmerman, 1 Nov 1950
Maj Lee R. Williams Jr., 5 Nov 1950
LTC Joel Q. Braddock, 18 Nov 1953
LTC Richard M. Ragland, 14 May 1954
Maj Grady T. Stapp, 3 Jun 1954
Maj William L. Reynolds, 10 Jun 1954
Maj Dale Maluy, 15 Jul 1954
LTC Richard M. Ragland, 12 Aug 1954
Maj George M. Broutsas, Jun 1955
Maj Keith Hanna, Jul 1956
LTC George M. Broutsas, Dec 1956
Maj Daniel Emrich, Jan 1957
Maj Elmer Keppler, Apr 1957
LTC Marion E. Minor Jr., Apr 1958
Maj Robert S. Rich, Nov 1958
Maj Alva R. Reid, Apr 1959
Maj Warren R. Aylsworth, Sep 1960
Maj Robert L. Smith, 2 Aug 1961
LTC Douglas E. Hagie, 28 Sep 1962
LTC Vernon N. Luber, Sep 1964
LTC Douglas E. Hagie, Nov 1964
1Lt Bruce, Jul 1965
Maj William Hilton, 16 Aug-Dec 1965
Unkn, Jan-29 Aug 1966
LTC Donald S. White, 29 Aug 1966
LTC J. D. Murfield, 25 Sep 1967
LTC Harry F. Baker, 1 Jun 1968
LTC Billy L. Skipworth, Aug 1969-1 Apr 1970
LTC Robert E. Jaecques, 1 Apr 1979
LTC Howard Hamm Jr., 1 Apr 1981
LTC John B. King, 15 Dec 1981
LTC John R. Denny, 2 Apr 1984
LTC Leo M. Cutliff Jr., 23 Jul 1986
LTC Gary L. Stewart, 1 Dec 1987
LTC Kenneth S. Turner, 8 Jan 1990

LTC Collin F. Flynn, 30 Sep 1991
LTC Joseph W. Siniscalchi, 27 Sep 1993
LTC George W. Ballinger, 7 Jul 1995-unkn
LTC Ronald Machoian, 5 Jul 2005

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II
American Theater

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
ETO, 3-13 Sep 1944
Germany, 19 Feb 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

Jul 1956-Nov 1957
1 Jul 1963-30 Jun 1964
1 Jul 1966-30 Jun 1967
1 Apr 1979-30 Jun 1980
1 Jul 1987-30 Jun 1989
1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1991
1 Jul 1992-30 Jun 1994
1 Jul 1994-31 Jul 1995
1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999
1 Jun 1999-31 May 2001

EMBLEM



38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron emblem: On a white shield bordered red, an Air Force golden yellow lightning bolt in bend sinister, surmounted by a dragon's head issuing from sinister base Air Force blue, tongue, mouth, fire from mouth, nostrils, nose markings and pupils of eyes of the second, talons and iris of eyes Air Force yellow eyeball and teeth white; heavy eyebrows, and facial outlines black, wearing earphones white, with black detail and head strap; carrying in his talons an electronic symbol of three black entwined orbits with three nuclei red, entwined around an electronic testing box white, instruments outlined black. On a blue scroll, DUCIMUS CETERI SEQUUN TUR in white. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The central figure is an upright dragon, breathing fire in defiance of anything that may stand in the way of the accomplishment of the mission. The bolt symbolizes the technological skill surrounding the dragon's mission. The electronics symbol indicates the mission is to provide air intelligence of enemy electronic missions throughout the full range of the usable spectrum. The motto is also indicative of the mission in that the squadron seek out enemy potential so that others may follow a safer path to their objective. (Approved, 24 May 1957)

38th Reconnaissance Squadron emblem: On an Azure disc a Red winged tomahawk outlined in Yellow, the head fastened to the handle by Black thongs. (Approved, 3 Mar 1942 and reinstated, 1994)

MOTTO

DUCIMUS CETERI SEQUUN TUR = We Lead, Others Follow

NICKNAME

FIGHTING HELLCATS

CALL SIGN

Swindle

Hellcat

Program

OPERATIONS

The 38th Reconnaissance Squadron was forged during the turbulent years of World War II. Formed on 15 January 1941 as a pursuit squadron, the Fighting Hellcats carried out bomber escort, strafing, dive-bombing, and photographic reconnaissance missions using P-38s and P-51s from Nuthampstead, England. The squadron received a Distinguished Unit Citation for destroying 37 and damaging 27 enemy aircraft during fighter sweeps from 3-13 September 1944. The 38th Reconnaissance Squadron flew its last combat mission on 21 April 1945 and was deactivated on 20 August 1945.

The Fighting Hellcats were reactivated on 22 September 1947 as the 38th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Mapping. This began the true reconnaissance era for the squadron. Flying B-17, RB-17, RC-45, C-45, and C-47 aircraft, the squadron operated from Clark Field in the Philippine Islands, mapping the Borneo, Celebes Islands, and Formosa until its deactivation on

31 July 1949. The squadron resumed activities on 1 November 1950 as the 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium Range, Photo-mapping from Ramey Air Force Base, Puerto Rico.

1951 On January 4th, elements of the 343d Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron began arriving with RB-29s and immediate action was taken to convert the unit to RB-50s. Two days later, elements of the 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron began arriving at Ramey AFB from Barksdale AFB. On January 8th, air crews and ground support personnel for the 55th Air Refueling Squadron began arriving, joining the advance echelon already in place.

From January 15th to May 17th, the 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron was deployed at Bassingbourne RAF Station, England. All the 55th Wing's tactical units, and later, of the 72d Wing, were frequently deployed away from Ramey AFB. As a matter of fact, a reorganization of the 55th Wing on February 1st resulted in the commander of the 55th Air Base Group becoming the base commander. Previously, the senior officer had usually been the base commander.

1951

The earliest missions that have been revealed to date occurred between 2 April and 30 June 1952 when RB-50E 47-128 of the 38th SRS, 55th SRW and P2V-3W BuNo 124276 of VP-931 flew 11 missions from Shemya AFB to collect photo and signals intelligence over the Kamchatka and Chukotskiy Peninsulas. Three segments of the Peninsula were covered, each usually requiring two to three missions. The first segment ran along the east coast of the Kamchatka Peninsula from southwest of Petropavlovsk northeast to Ulka and on to Apuka. The next covered the coastal areas between Apuka to a point between Anadyr and Beringovskiy and across the Anadyrskiy Gulf to Provideniya on the Chukotskiy Peninsula. The final leg was from Provideniya north-northeast to Uelen, then west past Mys Shimidta to nearly Pevek, returning to friendly territory after crossing the Chukchi Sea south of Wrangel Island.

The second known over flight occurred about six weeks later from Thule AB, Greenland. RB-50E, 47-130 High and Lonesome, of the 38th SRS, 55th SRW at Ramey AFB deployed via Barksdale AFB and Goose AB, arriving at Thule on 4 September. It then flew a single 3,000-mile unrefueled sortie over the Franz Josef Land Archipelago on 17 September 1952. Once again, the goal was to determine if Tu-4s had been deployed to the group of 190 islands or if the Soviets had established early warning radar stations in the area. The mission was unusually hazardous for many reasons. First, it was flown at extremely high latitudes using a special form of polar dead reckoning and celestial navigation known as grid navigation. Second, it involved a 3,000-mile round-trip over the Arctic with no chance of rescue outside of Thule airspace in case of emergency landing or ditching. Finally, it required flight in hostile airspace of unknown threats and in unknown or poorly forecast weather conditions over a relatively unmapped area.

RB-50E 47-132 on the ramp at Forbes AFB, KS, in 1953 when assigned to the 38th SRS, 55th SRW. It is finished in overall aluminum lacquer with insignia red Arctic markings. By this time all unit markings had been removed. Visible just below and aft of the national insignia is one of the trimetrogon camera ports.

Worldwide strategic reconnaissance including in support of crises in Cuba, Oct 1962; Grenada, Oct 1983; Libya, Apr 1986; Panama, Dec 1989; and Southwest Asia, Jan- Feb 1991.

The 38th Reconnaissance Squadron moved to Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska on 16 August 1966, and began operating both KC-135s and EC-135s conducting Strategic Air Command's Looking Glass mission. On 2 April 1970, the 38th transferred this mission to the 2nd Airborne Command and Control Squadron and was deactivated again.

On 1 July 1966, the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing based at Forbes AFB, KS, assumed responsibility for LOOKING GLASS from the 34th Air Refueling Squadron. Detachment 1 of the 55 SRW based at Offutt AFB, NE, conducted flight operations for the Glass. About a month later, the wing headquarters was moved to Offutt. At that time LOOKING GLASS operations were transferred to the 38th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, whose responsibility was to fly the five EC-135C's in support of the SAC ABNCP mission.

On 26 October 1979, the squadron joined the 343rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, flying RC-135 worldwide electronic and scientific reconnaissance missions from locations in Alaska, England, Japan, and Greece.

The 38th crew members earned the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for their support in the Grenada and Lebanon operations. The 38th also provided reconnaissance coverage for the 15 April 1986 retaliatory strike against terrorist training facilities in Libya and for United States operations in Panama. Throughout Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, the Hellcats flew over 900 sorties and 10,000 hours.

On 1 September 1991, the squadron was redesignated as the 38th Reconnaissance Squadron and aligned under the 55th Operations Group.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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

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