

81st Tactical Fighter Wing



"Mission Completed"

Inactivation Ceremony

May 21, 1993

RAF Bentwaters & RAF Woodbridge
United Kingdom
1951 — 1993

During today's 81st Tactical Fighter Wing Inactivation Ceremony, Col. Roger R. Radcliff, 81st TFW commander, will present Maj. Gen. Charles D. Link, 3rd Air Force commander, with the wing's colors.



81st Tactical Fighter Wing Insignia

The fabled fiery dragon symbolizes the wing's fighter role, as this creature has been used since medieval days with the thought of intimidating enemies. The dragon's breath of fire renders all opposition useless. The stylized boll weevil represents the wing's enemy.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 81ST TACTICAL FIGHTER WING (USAFE)
APO AE 09497-5000

Dear Friends of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing

On behalf of Maj. Gen. Charles D. Link, 3rd Air Force commander, and the men and women of RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge, I welcome you to this historic event.

Today, we officially commemorate the inactivation of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing. On July 1, 1993, the wing will end a 42-year history of excellence in service by the United States at the Twin Bases. However, the friendship that we have shared with our British hosts will continue for many years to come. We have built many close ties with the people of Suffolk, and have shared much through the years. We have been together from the Cold War to the Gulf War, and the completion of the 81st TFW's mission gives testimony to how successful we, as a team, have been.

As members of the 81st, we have had the privilege of sharing in a proud heritage. It's a legacy that spans six decades, several campaigns, and numerous countries. Since 1951 when the 81st Fighter-Interceptor Wing began operations at RAF Bentwaters in response to the threat of Soviet expansion, we have been an integral part of the NATO alliance, and of East Anglia. Since then, the personnel of the 81st have served with distinction and style in Suffolk. We have valiantly participated in nearly every major world event, when and where needed. Undeniably, our greatest achievement has been our role in the thawing of East and West relations, and the ending of the Cold War.

I'd like to thank the servicemembers, spouses, and civilian employees of today's 81st Tactical Fighter Wing. Without your professionalism and dedication, we could not have completed our mission in the manner that we have. I'm proud of your great performance. I know that you will take with you many fond memories of your service here at RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge.

On behalf of all those who have served here in Suffolk over the past 42 years, I'd like to thank our British neighbors for their hospitality and kindness. It has been an honor and pleasure to have served you and the United States of America in Suffolk, England.

Sincerely,

ROGER R. RADCLIFF, Colonel, USAF
81st Tactical Fighter Wing Commander

Major General Charles D. Link

Major General Charles D. Link is commander, 3rd Air Force, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, with headquarters at Royal Air Force Station Mildenhall, England.

General Link was born Sept. 15, 1939, in Cleveland. He graduated from Brooklyn (Ohio) High School and earned a bachelor of science degree in social studies from Troy State University in 1975. He completed Air Command and Staff College in 1975, and National War College in 1984.

After graduating from high school, General Link enlisted in the Air Force and served as a jet engine and aircraft mechanic until he attended the last Air Force Officer Candidate School class, 63-D. Upon completion, he was commissioned in June 1963. He then served as an aircraft maintenance officer until entering pilot training in January 1967 at Williams Air Force Base, Ariz. After receiving pilot wings, General Link attended F-4 training at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., then OV-10 forward air controller training at Hurlburt Field, Fla. In March 1969 he was assigned as a forward air controller for the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division, Tay Ninh, South Vietnam.

In August 1970 General Link was assigned to the 23rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, Spangdahlem Air Base, West Germany, where he served as flight commander, wing chief of standardization and evaluation, and squadron operations officer. After completing Air Command and Staff College in September 1975, General Link was assigned to the Directorate of Plans, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., as an international politico-military affairs officer.

From June 1980 to August 1983, he was assigned to Osan Air Base, South Korea. He served successively as director of combat operations, 603rd Tactical Air Control Center, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, 314th Air Division; deputy commander of operations, 51st Composite Wing; and commander of the 51st Combat Support Group. General Link entered National War College in 1983 and, upon graduation, returned to Osan as commander, 51st Tactical Fighter Wing.

In September 1985 he was assigned to Air Force headquarters as assistant director of Joint



Maj. Gen. Charles D. Link
3rd Air Force commander

and National Security Council matters, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations. In April 1986 he became director. The general was assistant deputy director for politico-military affairs, J-5, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., from July 1987 until July 1988, when he became deputy director. He was assigned as commandant of the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., in July 1989, and became commandant, Air War College, and vice commander, Air University, in April 1990. He assumed his present command in July 1991.

The general is a command pilot with more than 2,000 flying hours in the F-4, OV-10 and A-10. His military awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, and Air Medal with 11 oak leaf clusters.

He was promoted to major general July 1, 1990 with same date of rank.

General Link is married to the former Elisabeth Kloth of Aachen, Germany. They have four children: Mary, Frank, Ruth and Michael.

Colonel Roger R. Radcliff

Colonel Roger R. Radcliff is commander of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Bentwaters, England. The wing flies the A-10A Thunderbolt II aircraft which provides close air support for NATO ground forces.

Colonel Radcliff was born in Neodesha, Kan., January 8, 1948. He graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in June 1970 with a bachelor of science degree in political science. In 1975, he earned a master of arts degree in management from Central Michigan University. Further, he completed Air Command and Staff College in residence in 1980 and National War College in 1988.

Colonel Radcliff entered pilot training at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, in July 1970 and earned his pilot wings in July 1971. After instructor pilot training, Colonel Radcliff was assigned in December 1971 to the 47th Flying Training Wing, Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, as a T-37 instructor pilot. In September 1974, he was assigned to the Directorate of Plans, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., in the Middle East Plans Division as an action officer. Then in October 1975, the colonel reported to the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, as an F-111F pilot. In June 1977, he was assigned to the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, when the F-111F aircraft moved to that location.

Colonel Radcliff attended Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., from August 1979 to June 1980. He then returned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., where he was an action officer in the Europe-NATO Division in the Plans Directorate. From September 1981 to August 1982, he was assigned as an issues and policy analyst in the Secretary of the Air Force Staff Group, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. Colonel Radcliff then reported in November 1982 to the 51st Tactical Fighter Wing, Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, as an A-10A pilot and chief of the Range Management Division. In November 1983, he transferred to the 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing, England Air Force Base, La., as squadron operations officer and then commander of the 75th Tactical Fighter Squadron. The colonel reported



Col. Roger R. Radcliff
81st TFW commander

in August 1987 as a student to the National War College, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. After graduation in June 1988, he was assigned as chief of the NATO Policy Branch, Joint Staff, Washington, D.C. In August 1990, he became vice commander of the 10th Tactical Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Alconbury, England. In December 1990, Colonel Radcliff deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Desert Shield. During Operation Desert Storm, he served as the vice commander/deputy commander for operations of the 4410th Operational Support Wing at King Khalid Military City. Colonel Radcliff assumed his present position in July 1991.

Colonel Radcliff is a command pilot with more than 3,500 flying hours in the T-37, F-111F and A-10A.

His military decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, and the Air Medal.

He was promoted to colonel on June 1, 1988.

Colonel Radcliff is married to the former Suzanne Stadler of Ft. Worth, Texas, and they have two sons, Robert and Michael.

A Brief History of the 81st TFW

The history of the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing and its antecedents would fill volumes; however, this brief narrative will chronicle the wing's major accomplishments in both war and peace.

To meet the War Department's need for additional Army Air Corps fighter groups in the air war over Europe, Africa, and the Far East, the Army Air Force constituted the 81st Pursuit Group (Interceptor) on Jan. 13, 1942. The Group later activated on Feb. 8, 1942 at Morris Field, N.C.

After a series of temporary moves to various stateside locations for the purpose of equipping and training the unit's pilots, the group's advanced echelon departed for Europe in September 1942. Arriving in Atchem, England, for more combat training, group members found themselves flying the P-400 (export models of the P-39 Aircobra that the British did not want) instead of the coveted Mustang or Spitfire.

Nonetheless, after qualifying in the P-400, Group ground elements found themselves fighting on the beaches of North Africa along with regular Army troops during Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa.

While the bulk of casualties came from bowel infirmities, ground and aircrews alike breathed a sigh of relief when the Group's aircraft arrived at Port Lyautey, French Morocco.

While in Africa, the Group moved to Tunisia and experienced aerial combat for the first time. During the morning of Jan. 22, 1943, 10 nervous pilots of the 92nd Fighter Squadron flew their P-400s in the Ousseltia Valley to support an Allied ground assault.

During the Group's first contact, the pilots destroyed 20 machine gun positions, three trucks, three tanks, and devastated German troop concentrations. During the remainder of the Tunisian campaign, the Group flew protective cover for bomber and reconnaissance missions.

Between February and December 1943, group personnel hopped throughout North Africa as Axis and Allied battles forced a game of "musical bases." Sicily also became a stopping point for the 91st and 93rd Fighter Squadrons as Allied advances into Sicily and Sardinia required heavy air support. But the biggest change came in February 1944 as the Group prepared to move to the Far East. Elements began leaving for Kwangshan, China via India throughout early spring 1944, and found gifts of sort waiting for them.

While in China, pilots began flying the faster and heavier-armed P-40 "Warhawk" and later P-47 "Thunderbolt" fighters. By May 1944, Group pilots and ground members alike were heavily involved fighting Japanese forces, striking Japanese airfields, locomotive and railroad bridges, and the famous Peking-Hankow railway line.

Fungwanshan, China, became the Group's next home as offensive measures required their deployments to forward areas. Target strategy merged from railways and airfields to fortified Japanese installations, vital communications lines, and equipment dumps.

While the Group remained at Fungwanshan, the 91st Fighter Squadron operated from Hsian and the 92nd from Anhang. Since the 93rd was still stationed in India, the Group began a rotation program. Pilots from the 93rd went to the forward locations and pilots from the 91st and 92nd were sent to India for a little rest and recuperation.

The last few months of the war were some of the Group's hardest. Move after move to forward areas were necessitated by constantly shifting front lines and supply scarcities.

Nonetheless, September 1945 came as a huge relief with the unconditional surrender of Japanese forces. After a few more moves throughout China, the Group inactivated on Dec. 27, 1945, ending its short period of occupation duty.

Inactivation status, however, proved to be only temporary. The Group activated less than a year later on Oct. 15, 1946 at Wheeler Field, Hawaii. Equipped with the new P-51 "Mustangs," the Group's main mission was to provide daylight air security of the Hawaiian Islands.

In early 1948, the Mustangs were replaced by P-47s once more. Furthermore on May 1, 1948, the Group was assigned to the newly activated 81st Fighter Wing as part of a major Air Force reorganization effort.

With the lessons of World War II still fresh, the Department of Defense, formerly the War Department, began taking a long, hard look at the requirements of both national and international security.

This new reorganization called for more than 100 combat wings, fully capable of independently deploying to any location in the world. Peace, nonetheless, remained short-lived.

With Prime Minister Churchill announcing the beginning of the "Cold

War" between NATO and the Soviet Union in early 1950, the 81st Fighter Wing became an extension of America's foreign policy.

After rotating to Kirtland AFB, N.M., in June 1949, the wing received F-80 and later F-86 jet aircraft, becoming one of the new jet-age units. However, after a few stateside moves, Headquarters USAF ordered the wing to RAF Bentwaters, United Kingdom.

As part of President Truman's "containment" policy, 81st fighter pilots began air defense training with a mission of providing aerial defense for the English mainland. The wing also maintained a secondary mission: to destroy the resources, forces, and installations of enemy forces invading a recovering western Europe.

Royal Air Force Station Bentwaters, a base constructed for American forces during mid-1942, was placed in standby status in 1943 when the U.S. Army Air Force shifted its bombing campaign.

Britain's Ministry of Defence closed the base but maintained the runway in the event emergency landings were required. Considered a sleepy hollow by the local inhabitants, wing personnel began arriving in 1951 to find somewhat of a spartan atmosphere.

Facilities were few, housing was non-existent, and, as one sergeant questioned, "We're going back? Do they have hamburgers?" exemplified some of the mixed feelings of American service personnel. Nonetheless, 81st personnel quickly settled into their new home, establishing excellent relations with their Suffolk hosts.

During the wing's early days in England, RAF Bentwaters was home to the 81st Fighter-Interceptor Wing, the 81st Fighter-Interceptor Group, and the 91st Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. The 92nd and 116th Fighter Interceptor Squadrons, meanwhile, remained at RAF Shepherds Grove, located some 40 miles northwest of RAF Bentwaters.

On Nov. 1, 1952, the Air National Guard resumed control of the 116th, which was replaced by the 78th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. The 81st Fighter-Interceptor Wing and its subordinate units became the 81st Fighter-Bomber Wing on April 1, 1954 and started replacing the F-86 aircraft with the F-84 "Thunderstreak."

By January 1955, the conversion was complete and the wing received a newer, offensive mission. The defense of the United Kingdom became the wing's secondary role while fighter-bomber opera-

tions in support of NATO became the wing's primary mission.

During the mid-1950s, the 81st operated from several bases in East Anglia. In March 1955, the 92nd moved from RAF Shepherds Grove to RAF Sculthorpe, only to return to RAF Shepherds Grove in May 1957.

The 91st remained at RAF Bentwaters during this period while the 78th moved to RAF Manston. The wing also began its transition to the F 101 "Voodoo" fighter while more than 40 of the wing's F-84 fighters were transferred to the German Air Force.

The wing also consolidated its mission after acquiring RAF Woodbridge. By September 1958, the 91st and 92nd Fighter Squadrons were flying daily sorties from Bentwaters while RAF Woodbridge became home for the 78th.

Royal Air Force Station Woodbridge, also built during the early days of World War II, contained one of three massive recovery runways in the United Kingdom.

Three hundred yards wide and nearly two miles long, the Woodbridge runway actually served as three runways with lights controlling the use of each section. However, on any given day, numerous crews landed stricken aircraft on the runway, some successfully and some not so successfully.

During one nighttime incident, a British ground crew member walked out to service a recently-landed medium bomber. Upon reaching the wing he noticed, to his horror, that the aircraft was not an Allied aircraft but a German bomber. With nothing but a wrench he apprehended the crew, but not before opening a hatch at which time the pilot fell out. Thinking they were in Holland, the German crew landed, confidently awaiting a German transport truck.

For the wing, the 1950s and 1960s proved to be landmark decades. As the Cold War continued to reach its sinewy tentacles throughout the world, wing crews found themselves pulling alert for the 1956 Hungarian Crisis and second Arab-Israeli War, the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the 1967 Six-Day Arab-Israeli War, and dozens of other global events had American involvement been needed.

The 1970s also brought additional responsibilities as anti-shipping missions and other duties were given to the wing, now equipped with the F-4C and F-4D "Phantom II" fighters. Pilots also began training with U.S. Army ground controllers in central Europe, beginning the backdrop for the wing's future as a close air support unit for NATO.

It bears mention that the wing contin-

ued to support NATO and meet its operational commitment even with a number of its pilots on rotational duty throughout Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. The biggest change, however, was yet to come.

In September 1977, the defense secretary directed the development of a U.K.-based A-10 "Thunderbolt II" super wing. This wing would consist of 108 aircraft which could deploy to and operate from forward locations on the European continent.

One month later, Headquarters USAFE selected the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing as the wing to receive the new A-10 aircraft. Four locations were then chosen to serve as forward operating locations — Det. 1 at Sembach AB, Det. 2 at Leipheim, Det. 3 at Ahlhorn, and Det. 4 at Norvenich. Three were German bases and Sembach was already a main operating base for U.S. F-111 aircraft.

With the change of weapon system also came two more squadrons. The 509th arrived on Oct. 1, 1979 and the 511th on Jan. 1, 1980, which made six operational fighter squadrons operating from the east Suffolk Twin Base community.

Because of its large size, the 81st racked up thousands of flying hours and sorties. One highlight was in fiscal year 1982 when the wing flew 53,391 hours to set a peacetime tactical air forces record for hours flown by a wing. Again in 1986, another record was set as wing aircrews and maintainers launched 105 of 118 assigned aircraft.

The wing lost two of its A-10 squadrons in 1988 as the 509th and 511th Fighter Squadrons moved to RAF Alconbury. In turn, the 10th Tactical Fighter Wing's 527th Aggressor Squadron moved to Bentwaters, with the move being completed by mid-1988.

The 527th's mission, somewhat unique, was to train U.S. and allied aircrews in Dissimilar Air Combat Training. While at Alconbury, the squadron flew the sleek, small F-5, but transitioned to the newer F-16 fighter while at Bentwaters.

The Aggressor's stay, nonetheless, proved to be a short one as Headquarters USAFE inactivated the squadron in 1990 due to Congressional force withdrawal mandates.

August 1990 brought dark clouds over the horizon as Iraqi forces invaded the tiny country of Kuwait. Between August and December 1990 more than 300 of the wing's personnel had deployed to various locations throughout the Middle East in response to President George Bush's "make or break" decision to oust the Iraqi oppressors. With the cessation of

ground operations on Feb. 28, 1991, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein embarked on another operation, this time to punish Kurdish reprisals begun during the war.

With only an hour's notice, elements of the 92nd Tactical Fighter Squadron departed for Incirlik AB, Turkey, to participate in the Kurdish relief effort within Northern Iraq.

Flying their first C-130 escort and low-level reconnaissance missions just 12 hours after arrival, the wing's pilots began an intense period of air operations over hostile territory, often encountering Iraqi ground forces and small arms fire.

However, the A-10 presence provided the confidence the coalition needed to secure a security zone above the 36th parallel, not to mention the praise and admiration of a thankful people. In the eyes of one Kurdish leader, the A-10s were friends whose daily overflights meant security from death.

With personnel at Incirlik, the wing also deployed elements of the 510th Tactical Fighter Squadron to Dhahran AB, Saudi Arabia, in May of 1991. As part of the Desert Storm Residual Force, the 510th and its replacement, the 91st Tactical Fighter Squadron, began flying close air support and combat air patrol sorties in the skies above Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Often obscured by smoke from the infamous Kuwait oil fires, the desert terrain also offered unique challenges to the wing's pilots. Accustomed to the terrain of Central Europe and England, the featureless landscapes of the Saudi Arabian and Kuwait deserts proved to be no "milk run."

After thousands of sorties and flying hours over Turkey, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, the final elements of the 81st TFW returned to the United Kingdom on Dec. 8, 1992 to begin drawdown finalization actions.

The 92nd Tactical Fighter Squadron's last aircraft touched down on the afternoon of Dec. 8, marking the last deployment — and wartime operation — of 81st TFW aircraft prior to the wing's inactivation on July 1, 1993.

It is a fitting conclusion for the wing to end on such a positive note. The wing's A-10s ensured the safety for hundreds of thousands of people while in the Middle East. The most notable aspect of the American presence, however, cannot be measured by the number of sorties flown or awards won. The most valuable — and lasting — legacy has been and will continue to be the harmony the Twin Bases have had with their gracious hosts, the good people of Suffolk.

Commanders

81st Fighter Group

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Unknown | February to May 1942 |
| Capt. Harry E. Hammond | May 5, 1942 |
| Capt. John D. Sureau | May 10, 1942 |
| Lt. Col. Paul M. Jacobs | May 22, 1942 |
| Lt. Col. Kenneth S. Wade | July 1942 |
| Col. Philip B. Klein | May 1943 |
| Lt. Col. Michael J. Gordon | July 2, 1943 |
| Maj. Frederick S. Hanson | July 15, 1943 |
| Col. Philip B. Klein | Aug. 26, 1943 |
| Lt. Col. Fred G. Hook, Jr. | Sept. 27, 1944 |
| Col. Oliver G. Cellini | Oct. 24, 1944 |
| Col. Oswald W. Lunde | 1946 |
| Col. Gladwyn E. Pinkston | 1948 |

81st Tactical Fighter Wing

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Col. Thomas W. Blackburn | May 1, 1948 |
| Col. Gladwyn E. Pinkston | April 18, 1950 |
| Col. Harold N. Holt | June 2, 1954 |
| Col. Ivan McElroy | June 10, 1955 |
| Col. Lester L. Krause Jr. | June 18, 1957 |
| Col. Harry L. Crouch Jr. | July 8, 1957 |
| Col. James R. DuBose Jr. | May 6, 1960 |
| Col. Eugene L. Strickland | July 9, 1960 |
| Col. William C. Clark | July 9, 1962 |
| Col. Robin Olds | Aug. 9, 1963 |
| Col. Dewitt R. Searles | July 26, 1965 |
| Col. Ramon R. Melton | July 28, 1967 |
| Col. George S. Dorman | July 5, 1968 |
| Col. Devol Brett | Sept. 25, 1968 |
| Col. David J. Schmerbeck | Aug. 29, 1969 |
| Col. John C. Bartholf | March 6, 1970 |
| Col. James W. Enos | Sept. 4, 1970 |
| Col. Dwaine L. Weatherwax | June 22, 1971 |
| Col. Charles E. Word | Aug. 26, 1972 |
| Col. John R. Paulk | April 19, 1974 |
| Col. Clyde H. Garner | May 14, 1975 |
| Col. Gerald D. Larson | Feb. 11, 1976 |
| Col. Rudolph F. Wacker | May 6, 1977 |
| Col. Gordon E. Williams | Aug. 7, 1979 |
| Col. Richard M. Pascoe | April 24, 1981 |
| Col. Dale C. Tabor | Aug. 20, 1982 |
| Col. Lester P. Brown Jr. | March 20, 1984 |
| Col. William A. Studer | March 26, 1986 |
| Col. Harold H. Rhoden | July 30, 1987 |
| Col. Tad J. Oelstrom | Aug. 5, 1988 |
| Col. Roger E. Carleton | July 13, 1990 |
| Col. Roger R. Radcliff | July 12, 1991 to July 1, 1993 |



Col. Robin Olds



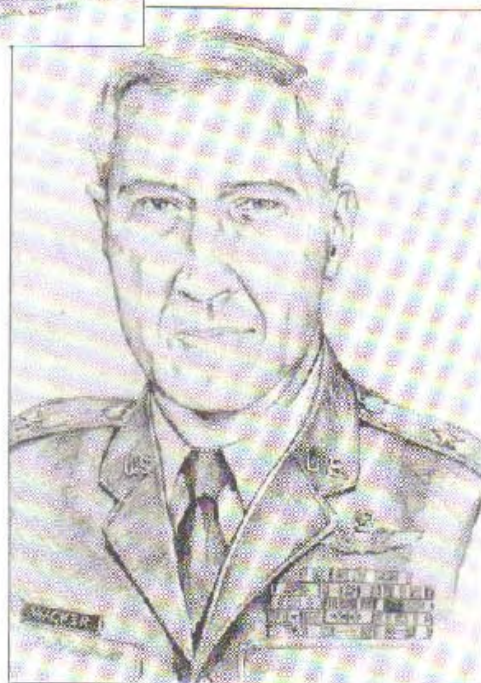
Col. Devol Brett



Col. Ivan McElroy



Col. William A. Studer



Col. Rudolph F. Wacker

81st Tactical Fighter Wing Inactivation Ceremony

Schedule of Events

PRESIDING OFFICER

MAJOR GENERAL CHARLES D. LINK

THIRD AIR FORCE COMMANDER

ARRIVAL OF REVIEWING PARTY

ADJUTANT'S CALL

SOUND OFF

PRESENTATION OF COMMAND

** (RUFFLES AND FLOURISHES)*

INSPECTION OF TROOPS

PRESENTATION OF COLORS

** (NATIONAL ANTHEMS)*

PRESENTATION OF AWARD

SQUADRON INACTIVATIONS

WING INACTIVATION

REMARKS

DISMISSAL

** Guests are requested to rise and render appropriate honors*

Ceremony Participants

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID E. CLARY

COMMANDER OF TROOPS

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID A. FOARD

GROUP COMMANDER

LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEONARD R. DEROCHE

GROUP COMMANDER

SECOND LIEUTENANT STEVEN B. LATHAM

WING ADJUTANT

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT BEN D. BRUCE

NARRATOR

***THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE
81ST TACTICAL FIGHTER WING***

Lineage

81st Fighter Group

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Constituted: | 81st Pursuit Group, Jan. 13, 1942 |
| Activated: | Morris Field, N.C., Feb. 9, 1942 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Fighter Group, May 20, 1942 |
| Inactivated: | China, Dec. 27, 1945 |
| Activated: | Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii, Oct. 15, 1946 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Fighter-Interceptor Group, Jan. 20, 1950 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Fighter-Bomber Group, April 1, 1954 |
| Inactivated: | RAF Bentwaters, England, Feb. 8, 1955 |

81st Tactical Fighter Wing

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Constituted: | 81st Fighter Wing, April 15, 1948 * |
| Activated: | Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii, May 1, 1948 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Fighter-Interceptor Wing, Jan. 20, 1950 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Fighter-Bomber Wing, April 1, 1954 |
| Redesignated: | 81st Tactical Fighter Wing, July 8, 1958 |

* The Air Force temporarily bestowed the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing with the 81st Fighter Group's lineage in November 1954 as part of an Air Force-wide restructuring program. In essence, the 81st TFW and 81st FG are two separate units.

Tactical Component Squadrons

81st Tactical Fighter Wing

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 81st Interceptor Control Squadron | Feb. 9, 1942 to June 22, 1942 |
| 91st Fighter Squadron | Feb. 9, 1942 to Dec. 27, 1945 |
| | Oct. 15, 1946 to Feb. 8, 1955 |
| 92nd Fighter Squadron | Feb. 9, 1942 to Dec. 27, 1945 |
| | Oct. 15, 1946 to Feb. 8, 1955 |
| 93rd Fighter Squadron | Feb. 9, 1942 to Dec. 27, 1945 |
| | Oct. 15, 1946 to Feb. 8, 1955 |
| 116th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron | Feb. 10, 1951 to Nov. 1, 1952 |
| 78th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron | Nov. 1, 1952 to Feb. 8, 1955 |
| 78th Tactical Fighter Squadron | Feb. 8, 1955 to May 15, 1992 |
| 91st Tactical Fighter Squadron | Feb. 8, 1955 to Aug. 14, 1992 |
| 92nd Tactical Fighter Squadron | Feb. 8, 1955 to July 1, 1993 |
| 509th Tactical Fighter Squadron | Oct. 1, 1979 to June 15, 1988 |
| 510th Tactical Fighter Squadron | Oct. 1, 1978 to Nov. 13, 1992 |
| 511th Tactical Fighter Squadron | Jan. 1, 1980 to Sept. 15, 1988 |
| 527th Aggressor Squadron | July 1, 1988 to Sept. 30, 1990 |

Stations

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Morris Field, N.C. | Feb. 9, 1942 |
| Dale Mabry Field, Fla. | May 1, 1942 |
| Muroc, Calif. | June 28 to Oct. 4, 1942 |
| Mediouna, French Morocco | Jan. 5, 1943 |
| Thelepte, Tunisia | Jan. 22, 1943 |
| Le Kouif Airfield, Algeria | Feb. 17, 1943 |
| Youks-les-Bains, Algeria | Feb. 22, 1943 |
| Le Kouif Airfield, Algeria | Feb. 24, 1943 |
| Thelepte, Tunisia | March 1943 |
| Algeria | April 3, 1943 |
| Monastar, Tunisia | May 26, 1943 |
| Sidi Ahmed, Tunisia | Aug. 10, 1943 |
| Castelvetrano, Sicily | Oct. 12, 1943 |
| Montecorvino Airfield, Italy | February 1944 |

Stations

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Karachi, India | March 2, 1944 |
| Kwanghan, China | May 12, 1944 |
| Funghwanham, China | February 1945 |
| Huhsien, China | August to December 1945 |
| Wheeler Field, Hawaii | Oct. 15, 1946 to May 21, 1949 |
| Kirtland AFB, N.M. | June 17, 1949 |
| Moses Lake (later Larson) AFB, Wash. | May 1, 1950 to Aug. 21, 1951 |
| Bentwaters RAF Station (later RAF Bentwaters), England | Sept. 6, 1951 |
| RAF Bentwaters and RAF Woodbridge, England | July 8, 1958 |

Campaign Participation Credits

81st Fighter Group

Air Combat, European-African-Middle Eastern Theater

Algeria-French Morocco (with arrowheads)

Tunisia

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Anzio

Rome-Arno

China Defensive

Awards

81st Tactical Fighter Wing

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

March 28, 1959 to June 30, 1961

July 1, 1961 to Jan. 30, 1963

June 1, 1966 to May 31, 1968

July 1, 1968 to June 30, 1970

July 1, 1976 to June 30, 1978

July 1, 1979 to June 30, 1981

July 1, 1981 to June 30, 1983

June 1, 1989 to May 30, 1991

June 1, 1991 to June 30, 1993

Aircraft Flown

81st Tactical Fighter Wing

1942 to 1944

1943

1944

1944 to 1945

1946 to 1948

1948 to 1949

1949

1949 to 1955

1953 to 1955

1954 to 1959

1958 to 1966

1965 to 1969

1969 to 1979

1979 to 1993

1988 to 1990

P-39 Airacobra

P-38 Lightning

P-40 Warhawk

P-47 Thunderbolt

P-51 Mustang

P-47N Thunderbolt

F-80 Shooting Star

F-86A Sabrejet

F-86F Sabrejet

F-84F Thunderstreak

F-101A Voodoo

F-4C Phantom

F-4D Phantom

A-10 Thunderbolt II

F-16C Fighting Falcon

Unit inactivations

The following 81st Tactical Fighter Wing organizations will also be inactivating today.

81st Mission Support Squadron

Lt. Col. John W. Merriken
Commander

MSgt. Edward M. Perez
First Sergeant

The 81st Mission Support Squadron activated on Sept. 7, 1986, provided support to commanders, 5,000 Air Force members and their dependents, and 350 civilian employees at two main operating bases in England and four forward operating locations in Germany, and were responsible for administrative and people programs.

81st Security Police Squadron

Maj. Brandt D. Laird
Commander

SMSgt. Booker T. Johnson
First Sergeant

The men and women of the 81st Security Police Squadron activated May 1, 1948, provided security and law enforcement for a weapons storage area, two munitions storage areas and 10,000 Air Force people, their dependents and civilians at two geographically separated bases and administered required combat arms training for assigned military personnel.

81st Morale, Welfare, Recreation and Services Squadron

Maj. John B. Olson
Commander

MSgt. James H. Blackstock
First Sergeant

The 81st Morale, Welfare, Recreation and Services Squadron was activated Sept. 3, 1992 and provided recreational support for over 10,000 military and dependent people assigned to the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing. The 81st MWRS managed over a dozen facilities on the bases including the officer and enlisted open messes, sports and fitness centers, library and community center.

81st Civil Engineering Squadron

Capt. Gregory P. Long
Commander

MSgt. Anthony DiGiorgio
First Sergeant

The 81st Civil Engineering Squadron activated May 1, 1948, provided and maintained airfield facilities, utilities, living quarters, and essential community services required to support the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing team at two main operating bases and provided crash and rescue support for four squadrons of A-10 aircraft.

81st Communications Squadron

Lt. Col. David E. Clary
Commander

MSgt. Ronn A. Greengas
First Sergeant

The 81st Communications Squadron activated May 1, 1991 and consisted of 250 people providing all communications, computer, visual information and air traffic control services supporting the 81st Tactical Fighter Wing at two main bases, an operating location at RAF Martlesham Heath and four forward operating locations in Germany.

81st Comptroller Squadron

Lt. Col. Philip L. Cunningham
Commander

SMSgt. Michael A. Creenan
First Sergeant

The 81st Comptroller Squadron activated Aug. 1, 1985 and provided financial services to host and tenant units; collected, disbursed and accounted for appropriated funds; advised commanders and trained resource managers; prepared and executed budgets; conducted economic and cost analyses; and administered the internal review program, management information systems, and responses to audits.

81st Transportation Squadron

Maj. Joy Shasteen
Commander

MSgt. David C. Woodlee
First Sergeant

The 81st Transportation Squadron activated May 1, 1948, provided air and surface transport, managed and maintained a vehicle fleet of over 1,000 units supporting bases in England and four forward operating locations in Germany, directly supported mobility operations and managed the second largest school bus program in the United Kingdom.

81st Supply Squadron

Maj. Douglas Mac Eachen
Commander

MSgt. Henry V. Van Wormer
First Sergeant

The 81st Supply Squadron activated May 1, 1948, provided supplies, equipment and fuel support for an A-10 fighter wing and a special operations wing at two geographically separated main operating bases in England and four forward operating locations in Germany, and managed assets valued at over \$430 million.

81st Equipment Maintenance Squadron

Maj. Mary C. Garcia
Commander

SMSgt. Bob L. Handley
First Sergeant

The 81st Equipment Maintenance Squadron, which activated in November 1954, was the largest and most diverse aircraft maintenance squadron in the U.S. Air Forces in Europe, and earned eight Outstanding Unit Awards, two USAFE Unit Maintenance Effectiveness Awards and the USAFE Daedalian Maintenance Award.



An 81st TFW crew chief gives an A-10 pilot a final salute before launching the aircraft.



Two 81st maintainers make repairs to an F-86 Sabrejet in 1952.



RAF Bentwaters hosts an open house on Armed Forces Day 1954.



The last two air shows at RAF Bentwaters — Air Friendship '91 and '92 — drew crowds of more than 40,000 each.



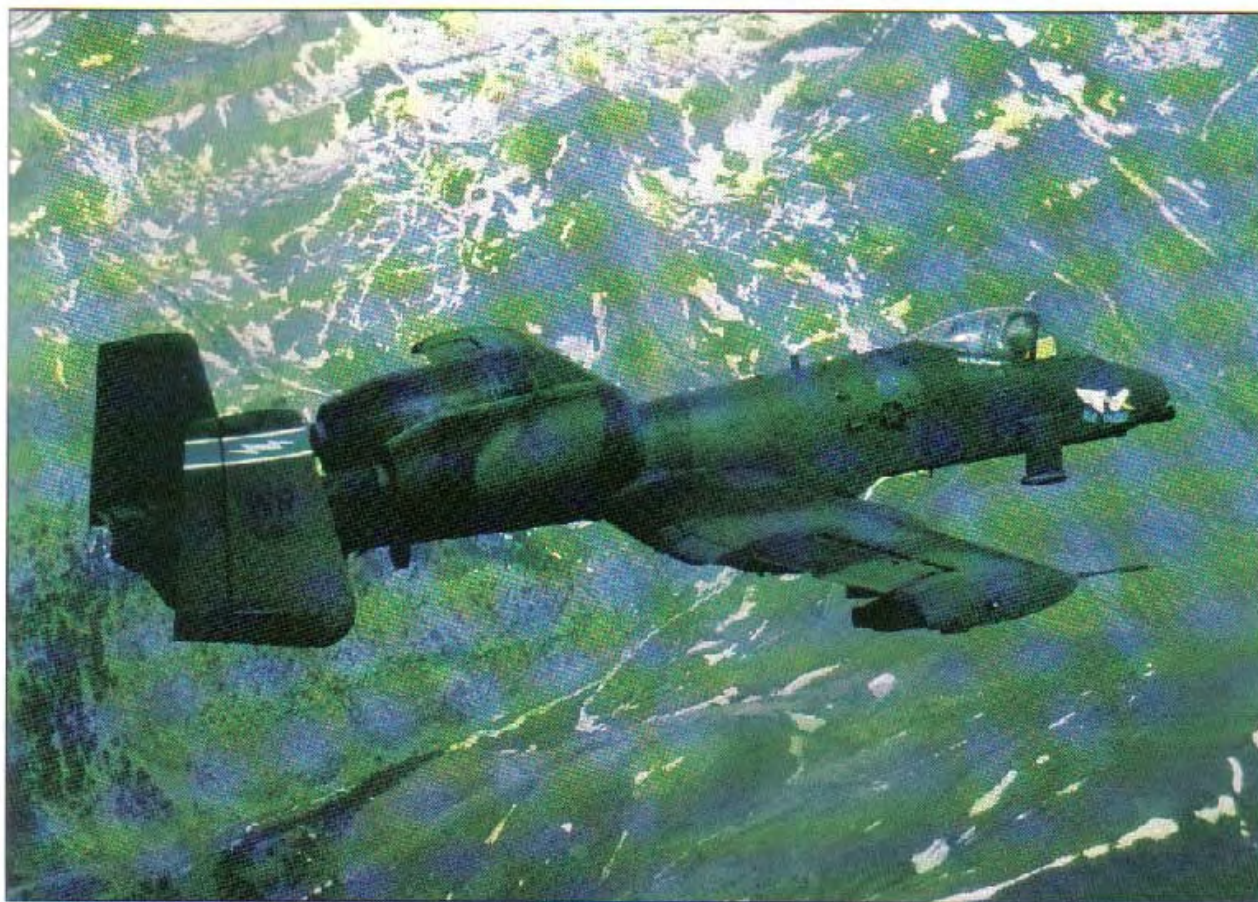
An RAF Woodbridge dormitory in the 1990s.



RAF Woodbridge's airmen billets in 1955.



Flying the P-51 Mustang, the 78th Fighter Squadron "Bushmasters" was the first land-based squadron to fly over Tokyo during World War II.



A 91st Tactical Fighter Squadron "Streak" flies over the mountains of Southern Bavaria.



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