97th FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON

LINEAGE
97th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 13 Jan 1942
Activated, 9 Feb 1942
Redesignated 97th Pursuit Squadron (I) (Twin Engine), 22 Apr 1942
Redesignated 97th Fighter Squadron (Twin Engine), 15 May 1942
Redesignated 97th Fighter Squadron, Two Engine, 28 Feb 1944
Inactivated, 9 Sep 1945
Activated, 12 Apr 1947
Redesignated 97th Fighter Squadron, Single Engine, 15 Aug 1947
Inactivated, 2 Oct 1949
Redesignated 97th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 13 Nov 1950
Activated, 1 Dec 1950
Inactivated, 8 Jan 1958
Redesignated 97th Flying Training Squadron, 22 Jun 1972
Activated, 1 Feb 1973
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1993
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Apr 1998

STATIONS
Harding Field, LA, 9 Feb 1942
Muroc, CA, 17 Apr 1942
Long Beach, CA, 22 May-16 Sep 1942
Eglington, Northern Ireland, 5 Oct 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 24 Dec 1942
Telergma, Algeria, 1 Jan 1943
Berteaux, Algeria, 28 Mar 1943
Souk-el-Arba, Algeria, 13 Jun 1943
Grombalia, Tunisia, 4 Aug 1943 (operated from Gerbini, Sicily, 6-18 Sep 1943)
San Pacrazio, Italy, 3 Oct 1943
Lecce, Italy, 10 Oct 1943
Vicenzo Airfield, Italy, 11 Jan 1944
Lesina, Italy, c. 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945
Grenier Field (later, AFB), NH, 12 Apr 1947-2 Oct 1949
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Dec 1950
New Castle County Aprt, DE, 18 Aug 1955-8 Jan 1958
Williams AB, AZ, 1 Feb 1973-1 Apr 1993
Sheppard AFB, TX, 1 Apr 1998

**DEPLOYED STATIONS**
Ladd AFB, AK, 4 Apr-29 Jun 1948

**ASSIGNMENTS**
82nd Pursuit (later, 82nd Fighter) Group, 9 Feb 1942-9 Sep 1945
82nd Fighter Group, 12 Apr 1947-2 Oct 1949
Eastern Air Defense Force, 1 Dec 1950
4706th Defense (later, 4706th Air Defense) Wing, 6 Feb 1952
82nd Fighter Group, 18 Aug 1955-8 Jan 1958
82nd Flying Training Wing, 1 Feb 1973
82nd Operations Group, 15 Dec 1991-1 Apr 1993
340th Flying Training Group, 1 Apr 1998

**ATTACHMENTS**
56th Fighter Interceptor Wing, 1 Dec 1950-20 May 1951
142nd Fighter Interceptor Wing, 20 May 1951-6 Feb 1952

**WEAPON SYSTEMS**
P-38, 1942-1945
P (later, F)-51, 1947-1949
F-86, 1951-1955
F-94, 1955-1957
T-38, 1973-1993
T-37, 1998
T-38, 1998
AT-38, 1998

**ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS**

**ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES**

**UNIT COLORS**

**COMMANDERS**
Unkn, 9 Feb-16 Apr 1942
Maj Ernest C. Young, 17 Apr 1942
Maj William W. Wittliff, 13 Jan 1943
Cpt Richard G. McAuliffe, c. 28 Mar 1943
Maj William W. Wittliff, c. 28 Apr 1943
Maj William B. Peterson, 2 May 1943
Maj William W. Wittliff, 16 Jul 1943
Maj Harry L. Smith Jr., 26 Aug 1943
Maj Charles R. Spencer, 19 Jan 1944
Cpt John S. Litchfield, 30 Jan 1944
Maj Claude E. Ford, 1 Apr 1944
LTC Paul J. Greene, 12 Aug 1944
LTC Thomas C. Kelly, Oct 1944
LTC Joseph L. Dickman, Apr 1945
Maj Robert C. Booth, 23 Jun-29 Aug 1945
Unkn, 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945
None (not manned), 12 Apr-13 Jun 1947
Maj Julius D. Shivers, 14 Jun 1947
Maj Donald V. Miller, 10 Mar-2 Oct 1949
None (not manned), 1-5 Dec 1950
LTC Frank Q. O'Conner, 6 Dec 1950
LTC Walter E. Modesitt, 29 Jan 1952
Maj Stevens H. Turner, c. Aug 1952
Maj Ernest P. Stuyvesant, c. 18 Aug 1955
LTC Willis J. Gary, 3 Jul 1956-c. 8 Oct 1957
None (not manned), 8 Oct 1957-8 Jan 1958
LTC William P. Smith, 1 Feb 1973
LTC John R. Hullender, 14 Jun 1976
LTC Joseph L. Higgins, 9 Jun 1978
LTC Howard T. Hanson, 4 Jan 1980
LTC Lonny R. Alexander, 20 Oct 1980
LTC James T. Thomes, 14 Dec 1981
LTC John R. Rademacher, 30 Jun 1982
LTC Gary A. Swigart, 23 Jun 1983
LTC Percy D. Leonard Jr., 15 Jun 1984
LTC Johnny Engleman, 18 Nov 1985
LTC David S. Taylor, 16 Sep 1986
LTC Russell L. Allen, 12 Nov 1987
LTC Dennis L. Austin, 31 Oct 1989
LTC Douglas W. Knutsen, 17 Jun 1991
LTC Terrence P. Long, 2 Dec 1992-1 Apr 1993
LTC William T. Cahoon, 16 Jun 1998
LTC Wolfgang C. Asmus, Feb 2000
LTC Douglas H. Standifer, 18 Feb 2005
LTC Bo McGowan, 23 Mar 2007

**HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

None

**Campaign Streamers**
World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**
None

**Decorations**
Distinguished Unit Citations
Italy, 25 Aug 1943
Italy, 2 Sep 1943
Ploesti, Romania, 10 Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Jan 1978-30 Apr 1979
1 May 1983-30 Apr 1985
1 Jun 1988-31 May 1990
1 Apr 1991-31 Mar 1993

**EMBLEM**
On a blue rectangle, long axis vertical, the face of a stylized yellow Devil-Cat (Gerenvetso-Satana) affronte, trimmed red and black, tusks white, eyes green. (Approved, 30 Oct 1942)

**EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE**
The Devil Cat, neither cat nor wolf, has roamed the steppes of Asiatic Russia for generations. Its awesome appearance is but mildly indicative of the beast's true ferocity, of its almost diabolical wildness and daring. In all of central and northern Asia there is no animal real or legendary which excites a greater respect or fear among the hardened and barbaric peoples of this vast hinterland. The Devil-Cat portray, the endurance, courage resourcefulness, and ferocity which the 97th Fighter Squadron desires to emulate.

The 97 FTS emblem, originally adopted by the 97th Fighter Squadron, one of the three original squadrons of the 82d Fighter Group, is the stylized face of a Devil-Cat, trimmed in red and black with white tusks and green eyes on a blue background. The Devil Cat, neither cat nor wolf, has roamed the steppes of Asiatic Russia for generations. Its awesome appearance is but mildly
indicative of the beast's true ferocity, of its almost diabolical wiliness and daring. In all of central and northern Asia thee is no animal real or legendary which excites a greater respect or fear among that hardened and barbaric peoples of this vast hinterland. Devil Cat portrays the endurance, courage, resourcefulness and ferocity which the 97 FTS desires to emulate.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 97th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was a component of the Eastern Air Defense Force. It arrived at Wright-Patterson on January 8, 1951, as part of the Air Defense Command's program to provide aerial defense for all industrial areas of the United States. The squadron was equipped with F-86D and was placed under the operational control of the 56th Fighter Wing at Selfridge AFB, Michigan. This marked the first time in the long history of Wright-Patterson that an Air Force fighter squadron had been based here.

The 97th moved its aircraft into new operations facilities constructed for them at the north end of Area C in December 1952 (location of the WPAFB Aero Club and Bldgs. 151 and 152.) The squadron maintained a 24-hour state of alert readiness. Four aircraft loaded with live ammunition, and their crews, were stationed near the end of the Patterson flightline, ready to scramble within five minutes.

The 97th Pursuit Squadron (S.E.) was constituted 13 January 1942 and activated 9 February 1942 at Baton Rouge, La., and assigned to the 82nd Pursuit Group. On 22 April 1942, the Squadron was redesignated as the 97th Pursuit Squadron (T.E.). Several days later (2 May 42) the 97th was transferred to Muroc Lake, Calif. There the Squadron was redesignated as the 97th Fighter Squadron (T.E.) and transferred to Long Beach, Calif., on 20 May 1942.

The 97th was assigned to March Field, Calif., on 13 July 1942, as a permanent station. The Squadron remained at Long Beach, however, on TDY. With eight months of training and organizing behind them, the personnel of the 97th were ready and waiting for P.O.E. orders. On 10 September 1942 orders were received directing the 97th to the New York Port of Embarkation. Members of the 97th set foot on England 2 October 1942. Shortly after arriving the P-38 pilots of the 97th flew their first combat mission.

Duty in England was short. After three months the Unit was shipped to North Africa, arriving there 17 January 1943. Nine months of African duty passed before the next transfer, which was to Italy.

The 97th arrived in Italy 2 October 1943 and remained there until the Squadron was ordered inactivated. This was completed 9 September 1945 at Lesina, Italy. On 10 June 1946, the 97th was assigned to Strategic Air Command in an inactive status. Then on 12 April 1947, the 97th
was organized and activated at Grenier Field, Manchester, New Hampshire and assigned to the 82nd Fighter Group. The Squadron was renamed the 97th Fighter Squadron (S.E.) and reorganized accordingly on 15 August 1947.

Nearly two years passed. During this time the 97th had been: Attached to the 307th Bomb Wing, effective 1 August 1948. Assigned to 15th Air Force, effective 16 Dec 1948. Relieved from assignment to 82nd Fighter Group, 15th AF SAC and assigned to 82nd Fighter Group, 1st AF ConAC, effective 22 August 1949.

Finally on 2 September 1949, the 97th was again inactivated at Grenier AFB, with no change in assignment. On 10 November 1950, the 97th was redesignated as the 97th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron and assigned to ConAC. Activated again (around 1 December 1950) the 97th organized at its assigned station, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. This time the Squadron was under command of Eastern Air Defense Force and ConAC.

On 1 January 1951, the 97th was reassigned to Air Defense Command and the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Wing. The first of the Squadron's new F-86E aircraft arrived in January 1951. Then on 20 May 1951, the 97th was attached to the 142nd Fighter-Interceptor Wing. The 142nd has been redesignated as the 4706th Defense Wing. On 18 August 1955 the Air Defense Command for historical purposes redesignated its squadrons. This paper move changed the 332nd FIS at New Castle Co. Airport to the 97th FIS. The new 97th FIS was equipped with F-94C.

The 97th FIS with its sister squadron, the 96th FIS, also housed at New Castle, was placed under the 82nd Fighter Group, with headquarters at New Castle. The 97th FIS was in constant combat from 6 January 1943 to 6 May 1945, moving from North Africa into the heart of Germany on all types of aerial strikes and support missions. The squadron received official Battle Credit for the ROME-ARNO CAMPAIGN AND THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN. Presidential Unit Citations were received for outstanding performance duty in action against the enemy over Italy on 25 August 1943 and 2 Sept. 1943; also for action over the Ploesti, Rumania oilfields on 10 June 1944.

Members of the 97th FIS and those of the 96th FIS flying for the 82nd Ftr Grp won the converted 26th Air Division (Defense) Rocketry Meet held at Suffolk Co. AFB in July 1956.

The squadron also occupied Buildings 1445-1451 in the Sherwood Area as well as portions of Building 206 (base operations) and Building 146 (the air cargo terminal).

97th F-I Squadron: assigned 1 Jan 51 at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, as the 23rd F-I Wing, flying F-86E acft; transferred to 142nd F-I Wing on 20 May 51; F-86A acft 31 Dec 51; transferred to 4706th Defense Wing 6 Feb 52; cony to F-86E acft during Jan/Feb 52; cony to F-86D acft in Mar 53; transferred to 82nd Fighter Group (AD) and changed to F-94C acft and moved to New Castle Cty Aprt, DE 18 Aug 55; IAW Project Arrow; inactivated Nov 57.

This, again, was another of the "on paper" moves, "Less Personnel and Equipment" that made (makes) little sense to the casual observer. But it was a part of a program titled "Project Arrow"
that was intended to reunite WWII and/or earlier squadrons with their original parent WWII group or wing that was implemented on August 18, 1955. The 97th FIS had been previously stationed at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH and had flown successively F-86As, E and Ds. On August 18, 1955 their designation was transferred to New Castle County Airport. Coinciding with this move was the reactivation of the squadron's original parent Group. Inactivated at the end of WWII, the 82nd Fighter Group had been reactivated in 1948 with Mustangs, only to be inactivated a year later. On August 18, 1955 the 82nd reactivated as the 82nd Fighter Group (Air Defense), under the command of Colonel Clay D. Albright.

The 82nd FG (AD), along with the 96th and 97th FIS's was again inactivated, officially, on January 8, 1958. However, both squadrons had dispatched their Starfires to Davis-Monthan AFB for salvage in December 1957.

97 FIS
F94
515577
15694
15680

58th Air Division
While Wright-Patterson received its first fighter squadron in 1951 it became further involved in air defense with establishment in September 1955 of the 58th Air Division (Air Defense Command). Air defense consisted of four functions: detection, identification, interception, and destruction. The 58th Air Division, upon receipt of ground observation and radar information, transmitted "scramble" messages to interceptor squadrons. Air National Guard components, and Nav units, as well as target information to Army anti-aircraft artillery organizations. Furthermore, the 58th served as control center for air defense forces in 11 states of the Eastern Air Defense Region: Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

The 58th Air Division activated at Wright-Patterson on September 8, 1955, with an authorized personnel strength of 75 officers, 24 airmen, and 14 civilians. Buildings 1419, 1420, and 1421 in the Sherwood Forest barracks section of Area A were renovated to serve as headquarters for the new division. The 58th remained at Wright-Patterson for three years. On August 11, 1958, both the 58th Air Division and its associated 4717th Ground Observer Squadron inactivated.

The 97th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was a component of the Eastern Air Defense Force, headquartered at Stewart Air Force Base, New York. It arrived at Wright-Patterson on January 8, 1951, as part of Air Defense Command's program to provide aerial defense for all industrial areas of the United States. The squadron's specific mission was to provide air defense for heavily populated and industrial areas of the greater Miami Valley, including Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Its arrival marked the first time in the long history of Wright-Patterson that an Air Force fighter squadron had been based there. The 97th moved its aircraft into new alert operations facilities (Building 153) constructed for them at the north end of Area C in December 1952. The squadron, equipped with F-86D Sabre all-weather jet aircraft, operated under control of the 56th Fighter Wing at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan. The unit maintained 24-hour
alert readiness. Four aircraft, loaded with live ammunition, and their crews were stationed near the end of the Patterson Field flightline, ready to scramble within five minutes. The squadron also occupied Buildings 1445 thru 1451 in the Sherwood Forest housing area, as well as portions of Building 206 (base operations) and Building 146 (the air freight terminal).

97th Flying Training Squadron
Lineage and Honors
Lineage:
Constituted 97th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) on 13 Jan 1942; activated on 9 Feb 1942; redesignated: 97th Pursuit Squadron (1) (Twin Engine) on 22 Apr 1942; 97th Fighter Squadron (Twin Engine) on 15 May 1942; 97th Fighter Squadron, Two Engine on 28 Feb 1944; inactivated on 9 Sep 1945; activated on 12 Apr 1947; redesignated 97th Fighter Squadron, Single Engine on 15 Aug 1947; inactivated on 2 Oct 1949; redesignated 97th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron on 13 Nov 1950; activated on 1 Dec 1950; inactivated on 8 Jan 1958; redesignated 97th Flying Training Squadron on 22 Jun 1972; activated on 1 Feb 1973; inactivated on 1 Apr 1993; activated in the reserve on 1 Apr 1998.
Assignments:
Stations:
Harding Field, LA, 9 Feb 1942; Muroc, CA, 17 Apr 1942; Long Beach, CA, 22 May-16 Sep 1942; Eglington, Northern Ireland, 5 Oct 1942; Tafaraouii, Algeria, 24 Dec 1942; Telergma, Algeria, 1 Jan 1943; Berteaux, Algeria, 28 Mar 1943; Souk-el-Arba, Algeria, 13 Jun 1943; Grombalia, Tunisia, 4 Aug 1943 (operated from Gerbini, Sicily, 6-18 Sep 1943); San Pancrazio, Italy, 3 Oct 1943; Lecce, Italy, 10 Oct 1943; Vicenzo Airfield, Italy, 11 Jan 1944; Lesina, Italy, c. 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945. Grenier Field, NH, 12 Apr 1947-2 Oct 1949; Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Dec 1950; New Castle County Airport, DE, 18 Aug 1955-8 Jan 1958; Williams AB, AZ, 1 Feb 1973-1 Apr 1993; Sheppard AFB, TX, 1 Apr 1998 - Present.
Commanders:
Name Date Assigned Name Date Assigned
Unknown 9 Feb - 16 Apr 1942 Maj Ernest P. Stuyvesant ca. 18 Aug 1955
Maj Ernest C. Young 17 Apr 1942 Lt Col Willis J. Gary 3 Jul 1956
Maj William W. Wittliff 13 Jan 1943 none (not manned) 8 Oct 1957-8 Jan 1958
Capt Richard G. McAuliffe ca. 28 Mar 1943 Lt Col William P. Smith, 1 Feb 1973
Maj William W. Wittliff ca. 28 Apr 1943 Lt Col Richard L. Russell 25 Nov 1974
Maj William B. Peterson 2 May 1943 Lt Col John R. Hullender 14 Jun 1976
Maj Harry L. Smith Jr. 26 Aug 1943 Lt Col Howard T. Hanson 4 Jan 1980
Capt John S. Litchfield 30 Jan 1944 Lt Col James T. Thomes 14 Dec 1981
Maj Claude E. Ford 1 Apr 1944 Lt Col John R. Rademacher 30 Jun 1982
Lt Col Paul J. Greene 12 Aug 1944 Lt Col Gary A. Swigart 23 Jun 1983
Lt Col Thomas C. Kelly Oct 1944 Lt Col Percy D. Leonard Jr. 15 Jun 1984
Lt Col Joseph L. Dickman Apr 1945 Lt Col Johnny Engleman 18 Nov 1985
Maj Robert C. Booth 23 Jun 1945 Lt Col David S. Taylor 16 Sep 1986
Unknown 30 Aug-9 Sep 1945 Lt Col Russell L. Allen 12 Nov 1987
None (not manned) 12 Apr-13 Jun 1947 Lt Col Dennis L. Austin 31 Oct 1989
Maj Donald V. Miller 10 Mar 1949 Lt Col Terrence P. Long 2 Dec 1992
None (not manned) 1-5 Dec 1950 Unknown 1 Apr 92 - Jun 1998
Lt Col Frank Q. O’Conner 6 Dec 1950 Lt Col William T. Cahoon 16 Jun 1998
Lt Col Walter E. Modesitt 29 Jan 1952 Lt Col Wolfgang C. Asmus ca. Feb 2000
Lt Col George V. Lane ca. Jul 1954 Lt Col Bo McGowan 23 Mar 2007
Aircraft:
Operations:
Campaign Streamers:
World War II
Air Offensive, Europe; Tunisia; Sicily; Naples-Foggia; Rome-Arno; Normandy; Northern France; Southern France; North Apennines; Rhineland; Central Europe; Po Valley; Air Combat, EAME Theater
Decorations:
Distinguished Unit Citations:
Italy, 25 Aug 1943; Italy, 2 Sep 1943; Ploesti, Romania, 10 Jun 1944
Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards:
1 Jan 1978-30 Apr 1979; 1 May 1983-30 Apr 1985
Emblem:
Approved on 30 Oct 1942.
Description:
On a blue rectangle, long axis vertical, the face of a stylized yellow Devil-Cat (Gerenvetso-Satana) affronte, trimmed red and black, tusks white, eyes green.
Significance:
The 97 FTS emblem, originally adopted by the 97th Fighter Squadron, one of the three original squadrons of the 82d Fighter Group, is the stylized face of a Devil-Cat, trimmed in red and black with white tusks and green eyes on a blue background. The Devil Cat, neither cat nor wolf, has roamed the steppes of Asiatic Russia for generations. It’s awesome appearance is but mildly indicative of the beast’s true ferocity, of its almost diabolical wiliness and daring. In all of central and northern Asia thee is no animal real or legendary which excites a greater respect or fear among that hardened and barbaric peoples of this vast hinterland. Devil Cat portrays the endurance, courage, resourcefulness and ferocity which the 97 FTS desires to emulate.
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Air Force Order of Battle
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Updated:

Sources
AFHRA
Unit History. 26th Air Division, Defense. 1956.