

★★ HISTORY ★★
of the
306th



INTRODUCTION

The 306th Strategic Wing continues to make a significant contribution to military history. It has done so for over forty years. The 306th won honor and distinction for its combat record as a bombardment group in World War II. Now the 306th helps its NATO partners keep the peace, ironically, in the same theater as those earlier war years. This wing has emerged today as the major element of the Strategic Air Command's European operations.





306TH STRATEGIC WING

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the 306th Strategic Wing is to develop and maintain operational capability to permit the conduct of strategic warfare according to the Emergency War Order (EWO) and under conditions of contingency operations. Also, the 306th Strategic Wing assures the capability to conduct assigned strategic reconnaissance and air refueling as tasked. During peacetime, the 306th SW provides air refueling and reconnaissance support as tasked by higher headquarters. Operational control of the air refueling mission and reconnaissance mission within Europe is vested in the 306th Strategic Wing.

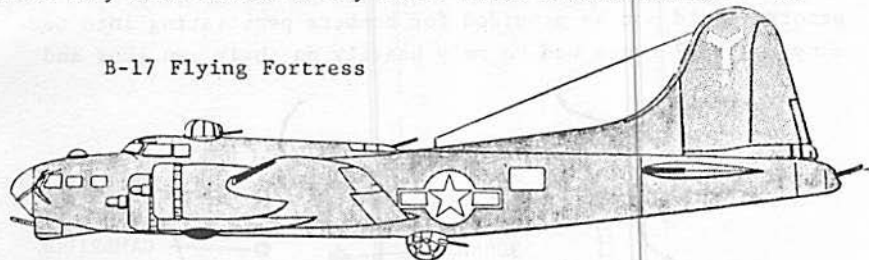
HISTORY OF 306TH STRATEGIC WING

The 306th Bombardment Group (Heavy) was constituted on 28 January 1942, and was activated on 1 March 1942, at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho. After its activation, the 306th immediately began an intensive training program with the B-17 Flying Fortress anticipating combat duty in Europe. By August 1942, the group completed its training and in September was transferred to Thurleigh, England.



It wasn't too long after the Group's arrival in England that they were tasked to fly their first combat missions. On

B-17 Flying Fortress

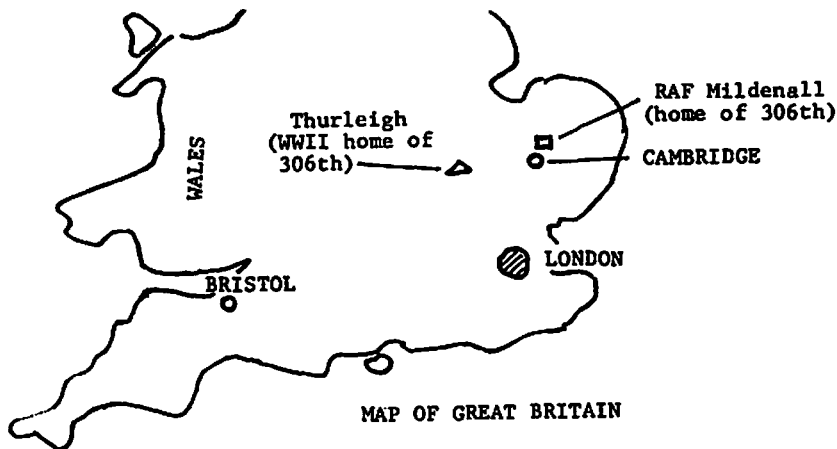


9 October 1942, the B-17 crews of the 306th flew bombing raids against the locomotive works in Lille, France. During these raids the Group lost their first crew and aircraft, B-17F tail number 41-24510. Exactly one month later, on 9 November 1942, on another raid, the Group encountered heavy flak resulting in extensive damage to most of its B-17 aircraft. The Group flew this raid against the U-Boat installation at Sainte Nazaire, France, at 10,000 feet rather than the normal 20,000 feet. Consequently, German flak batteries inflicted heavy damage.

In early 1943, the Allies decided to bring the air war to the front door step of Germany. On 27 January 1943, Colonel Frank Armstrong, 306th commander, led the first B-17 bombing raid on German soil. The Group's objective was the U-Boat construction plant at Wilhelmshaven, Germany. It was also during 1943 that Sgt Maynard "Snuffy" H. Smith, a Group B-17

gunner, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. During a bombing raid on 1 May 1943, Sgt Smith's B-17 was heavily damaged by enemy fire resulting in a fire in the radio compartment and waist sections. Sgt Smith, quick to react, threw exploding ammunition overboard, extinguished the fires, and drove off the German fighters with the aircraft's guns. He also administered first aid to the aircraft's injured tail gunner.

With the crux of the war effort aimed at Germany's heartland, duration of bombing raids became longer and longer. Because of the relatively short range of Allied fighter aircraft, escorts could not be provided for bombers penetrating into Germany and B-17 crews had to rely heavily on their own guns and



defensive maneuvers. Such was the case in two bombing raids against Schweinfurt, Germany. On 17 August 1943, the 306th was part of a 230 aircraft raid on Schweinfurt. During the raid, the assault aircraft encountered numerous German Messerschmitt Me-109 and Fw-190 fighter aircraft. No 306th B-17s were lost during the 17 August raid; however, other units were not as lucky.

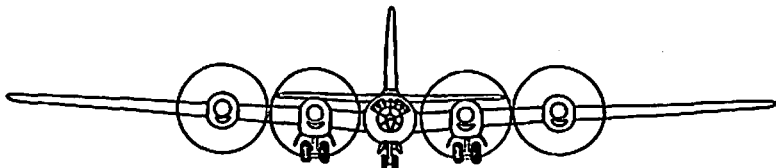
Only 194 of the 230 aircraft returned from the raid. The Group was not as fortunate during the second raid of Schweinfurt on 14 October 1943. Ten of the Group's fifteen B-17s were shot down. This extensive loss left 100 bunks empty at Thurleigh that night. Introduction of the P-51 in the European theater improved fighter escort capabilities but this was offset to a degree by an ever improving German flak defense.

It was in 1944 that the 306th received its two Distinguished Unit Citations. The group participated in a massive air assault on German aircraft plants on 11 January 1944. In operation BIG WEEK, another bombing campaign against German aircraft plants was conducted 20 - 25 February 1944. On one day of BIG WEEK in particular, 22 February, the Group's support fighters encountered severe weather conditions causing the fighters to return home. Without fighter escort, the group continued its raids and inflicted heavy damage to an aircraft factory in Bernberg, Germany.

The Group continued to support ground forces and fly strategic bombing raids in preparation for the Normandy Invasion. One such raid occurred on 6 June 1944, when the Group bombed railroad bridges and coastal guns. Later offensives which involved the Group were the St Lo breakthrough in July 1944; the airborne invasion of Holland in September 1944; and the Battle of the Bulge. During the Battle of the Bulge, the 306th bombed key airfields and marshalling yards from December 1944 to January 1945, and helped stop the German advance. The remaining major operation the 306th participated in was the airborne assault across the Rhine in March, 1945.

At the close of World War II, the 306th's mission changed drastically from strategic and tactical bombing to aerial photography. This change was short lived as the Group was inactivated on 25 December 1946. The 306th was reactivated on 1 July 1947, as the 306th Bombardment Group (Very Heavy) at Andrews Field, Maryland, and was assigned to the Strategic Air Command. The next few years

were years of change for the 306th. It was redesignated again in August 1948, and moved to MacDill AFB, Florida, as the 306th Bombardment Group (Medium) and equipped with B-29 aircraft. On 1 September 1950, the 306th Bombardment Wing was activated and started their transition to the all jet B-47 Medium range strategic



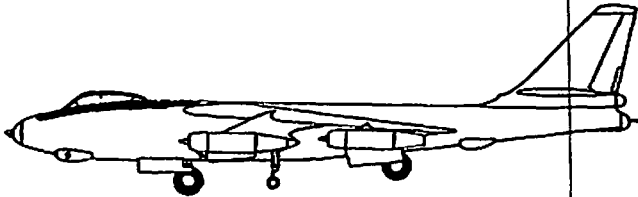
B-29 Superfortress

bomber. The 306th Bombardment Group (Medium) then became subordinate to the wing at that time until the Group inactivated on 16 June 1952 at MacDill AFB. On 19 November 1951, Colonel N. W. McCoy, 306th Commander, flew the unit's first B-47 to MacDill AFB. By the close of 1951, the Wing was using the B-47s and KC-97s on operational type training missions leading to combat ready status. The first in flight refueling operations commenced in May 1952.

In January 1953, the Wing received its full allotment of B-47s and thus became the first SAC wing fully equipped with B-47s and KC-97s. The Wing received its full assignment in the SAC war plan in April 1953, and from then until early 1963 maintained its proficiency by constant training in strategic bombardment and aerial refueling operations.

In 1954, the 306th Bombardment Wing was the first SAC jet bomber unit to deploy to an overseas training base. They deployed to Great Britain with 45 B-47s and 22 tanker aircraft. It was during this deployment that the wing established 14 new trans-Atlantic

speed runs. During these years the wing deployed overseas several times, operating from the United Kingdom from Jun to Sep 1953 and from North Africa from Jan to Feb 1955, Oct 1955 to Jan 1957, and in Oct 1957. The 306th was rewarded for its efforts on 10 March 1958, when it was given the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Later that year, the wing received another accolade - the Fairchild Trophy, during SAC's tenth annual Bombing-Navigation Competition.

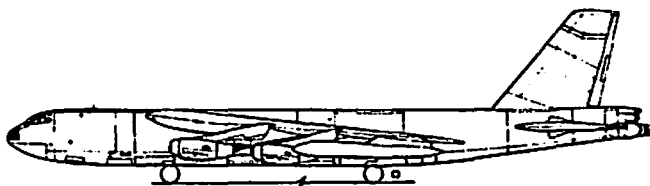


Boeing B-47 Stratojet

During the Cuban Crisis in 1962, the Wing operated from Hunter AFB, Georgia, since MacDill AFB served as the base for shorter range fighter and reconnaissance aircraft. At other times the 306th Wing maintained B-47s on airborne alert as required by higher echelons.

Late in Nov 1962, SAC planning called for inactivation of the 306th Wing by April 1963. Phase down began almost at once, and by 15 February 1963 the wing was no longer capable of fulfilling its part of the SAC war plan. A month later all B-47s were transferred. Plans changed regarding the inactivation of the wing and on 1 April 1963, the wing and some of its components moved, without personnel or equipment, to McCoy AFB, Florida, absorbing resources of the discontinued 4047th Strategic Wing. The 306th Wing and its 367th Bombardment Squadron were redesignated as "Heavy" units at this time, for the 367th gained B-52s. The 306th Air Refueling Squadron, which had left the Wing in July 1962, rejoined the Wing at McCoy AFB with KC-135 tankers.

From 1 April 1963 to the autumn of 1973, the 306th Wing trained to maintain proficiency in strategic bombardment and aerial refueling operations. The U.S. was engaged in combat in Southeast Asia, and several times during this decade the 306th Wing and its components were called upon to furnish aircraft and personnel to the B-52 Arc Light and KC-135 Young Tiger task force organizations in the Pacific area (Anderson AFB, Guam; and Kadena AB, Okinawa) and Southeast Asia (U-Tapao RTAFB, Thailand) which carried out combat operations. In none of these instances, did the 306th Wing or its components deploy as units; rather, the planes were sent on loan and the people on temporary duty, with the vastly reduced 306th Wing and Wing components remaining at McCoy AFB. The first of these "TDY deployments" came from September 1966 to March 1967; the second from September 1968 to March 1969; the third from October 1969 to April 1970 and the fourth from February 1972 to October 1973. During the last of these periods, personnel returned to McCoy AFB periodically for



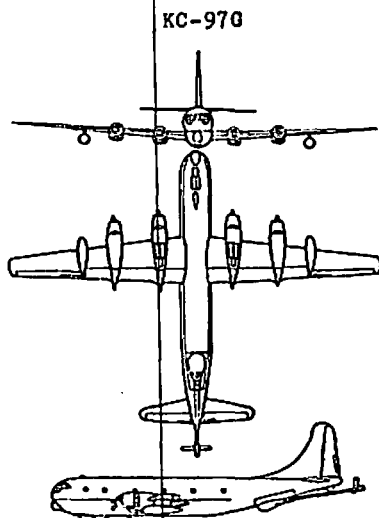
Boeing B-52G Stratofortress

rest and relaxation, then returned to the Pacific and SEA bases. Only a few KC-135s and crews were on loan or TDY during the final period, but practically all the B-52s, B-52 crews, and support personnel were involved. By 31 August 1973 the last of the Wing's KC-135s had been transferred elsewhere, and by 30 October 1973 the last of the B-52 aircrews had returned to McCoy AFB. Within the next few weeks, the crews went to other SAC wings.

From about 1 November 1973 to 1 July 1974, the 306th Wing was engaged primarily in phasing out its operations and in closing McCoy AFB. The 367th Bombardment Squadron became non-operational about 1 November 1973. On 15 December 1973 the Wing's four maintenance squadrons, the 306th Combat Support Group and the 306th Transportation Squadron also became non-operational, and the 306th Wing assumed direct control over units of the non-operational 306th CSG. The 306th Civil Engineering Squadron and 306th Supply Squadron became non-operational on 1 February 1974 and on 15 May 1974, the 306th Security Police Squadron became non-operational. From then until 1 July 1974 only the wing headquarters remained operational, and its size gradually diminished. Finally, on 1 July 1974, the wing and its components inactivated, and the 4041st Air Base Squadron completed the closure of McCoy AFB.

During its 24 years of active existence, the 306th Bombardment Wing earned three Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards. The citation for the first of these awards follows:

The 306th Bombardment Wing, Medium, distinguished itself by meritorious service from 22 January 1953 to 8 December 1956. During this period, the 306th Bombardment Wing, Medium, the first jet bombardment wing in the Strategic Air Command, developed and pioneered the concept of jet bombardment operations. As the first B-47 wing, the successful execution of its assigned mission required the development of



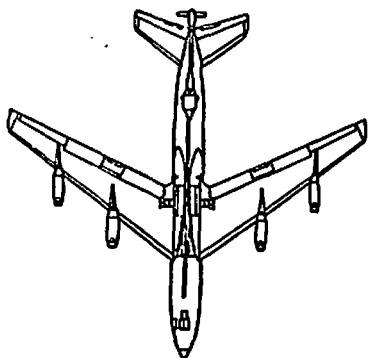
an entirely new operational concept; organization, equipping and establishing a suitable training program; and deployment to overseas areas. The initiative, resourcefulness and devotion to duty displayed by the personnel of the 306th Bombardment Wing reflects great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

The second and third AFOUAs were earned by the wing based largely on the outstanding support the wing provided SAC's combat forces in the Pacific and Southeast Asia areas by loaning aircraft and combat ready personnel to the organizations charged with strategic bombardment and aerial refueling operations.

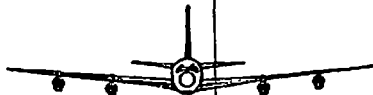
It wasn't until 1976 that the 306th was again activated as the unit we know it today. Effective 15 August 1976, the Wing, now designated the 306th Strategic Wing (SW), activated at Ramstein AB, Germany. Along with the activation of the Wing Headquarters at Ramstein AB, a detachment (Det 2) was also activated at Zaragoza AB, Spain, on the same date. On 1 October 1976, the 306th SW assumed operational control for SAC resources in the European Theater from the 98th Strategic Wing (SW). The 98th SW was headquartered at Torrejon AB, Spain, and was SAC's predecessor unit to the 306th SW in the European Theater. The 98th inactivated at Torrejon AB, Spain, on 31 December 1976. With the assumption of operational control on 1 October 1976, the 306th SW gained two detachments from the 98th SW, one at RAF Mildenhall, England, and one at Hellenikon AB, Greece. These two detachments were Detachment 1 and Detachment 3, respectively.

With the phasedown of SAC operations at Torrejon AB, two key events occurred during November, 1976. The first KC-135 tanker aircraft to land at Zaragoza AB was the first key event during the late part of 1976. That tanker was tail number 80113, TDY to the 306th SW from K. I. Sawyer AFB, Michigan,

and commanded by Captain Charles Vanorek. After participating in an exercise in Turkey, that aircraft along with four others recovered at Zaragoza AB on 24 November 1976. The first KC-135 (#80113) landed at Zaragoza AB, Spain on 24 November 1976. The first KC-135 (#80113) landed at Zaragoza AB at 1156 hours Zulu time. These first five KC-135 tanker aircraft established Det 2's aircraft capability for the first time since its activation on 15 August 1976. The last SAC KC-135 tanker aircraft departed Torrejon AB on 26 November 1976. The tanker, number 8039, lifted off that base's runway at 1052 hours local time. This air refueling accomplished en route. This marked the end of KC-135 tanker operations at Torrejon AB, Spain.



KC-135



The year of 1977 proved to be a very busy one for the 306th Strategic Wing. Less than one half year after its activation in Europe, the 306th Strategic Wing experienced their first Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI). The inspection was conducted by the SAC Inspector General from 17 January to 29 January 1977 and included all the Wing's detachments. The 306th Strategic Wing received an overall rating of satisfactory from the SAC IG.

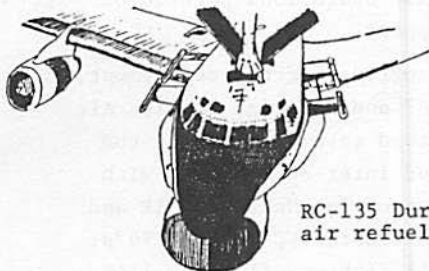
The 306th Strategic Wing also received the General Paul T. Cullen Reconnaissance Trophy for 1976. On 8 March 1977, the then Commander-in-Chief of SAC, General Russell E. Dougherty, announced the selection of the 306th Strategic Wing and its detachments as the recipient of the renowned award. General Dougherty stated that the 306th SW personnel could be justly proud of winning the prestigious award, as could all the SAC reconnaissance units who supported the 306th SW and its detachments through TDY crews, supporting elements, and resources. General Dougherty further stated, "Please convey my sincere congratulations to all personnel of the Wing and its detachments who, through their professionalism and dedication to duty, made this accomplishment possible."

The 306th SW's tanker fleet was heavily tasked during 1977. The European Tanker Task Force (ETTF) supported numerous tactical deployments from the CONUS to the European Theater and back again. In addition to the air refueling support given for the tactical deployments, several exercises within the theater were also supported. Two of the many tactical movements supported by the Wing's tankers were Operation Ready Switch and Ready Eagle. Operation Ready Switch was the large scale F-4 fighter aircraft movement from England to CONUS. The 306th SW tankers, flying from Detachment 1, provided air refueling support for this operation which was in three phases. The first phase occurred on 10 March 1977, the second phase on 5 April 1977, and the third phase on 22 April 1977. The Wing's tankers also provided the essential air refueling support for Ready Eagle. The Ready Eagle operation was the deployment of the F-15 fighter aircraft from the CONUS to Germany and occurred on 27 April 1977.

The month of April also saw the 306th SW's Detachment 3 at Hellenikon AB, Greece, accomplish a major milestone in its history. On 29 April 1977, Detachment 3 flew its 1,000th

consecutive SAC RC-135 aircraft sortie. Colonel Harlan A. Hain, the then Detachment 3 Commander, participated on the flight.

On 29 May 1977, RAF Mildenhall had an open house day for the public. The "Open Day 77" provided the base visitors with close looks at a variety of USAF aircraft which included SAC's KC-135 and SR-71. The open house was linked with England's Silver Jubilee celebration of that country's reigning monarch - Queen Elizabeth II. An estimated 100,000 people attended the event.



RC-135 During
air refueling

The British people, well known for their enthusiastic interest in aircraft, showed that interest with the TDY SAC aircrews who provided the answers to their many questions that day.

During the summer months, the 306th SW and its detachments continued to be heavily tasked, primarily with providing air refueling support for tactical deployments and exercises. Exercises such as Oksboel 77 (15 Aug - 2 Sep 77), National Week (16 - 22 Sep 77), Cold Fire/Carbon Edge (12 - 23 Sep 77), and Display Determination (20 - 27 Sep 77) were all supported. The 306th SW and its detachments provided air refueling for tactical aircraft engaged in all these exercises. The Wing also provided reconnaissance support for the Cold Fire/Carbon Edge exercises.

It was on 10 November 1977 that the 306th Strategic Wing received approval of its new emblem from the USAF Military Personnel Center (MPC). The 306th SW had submitted a design for a new emblem in March 1977. The design was made by Captain Russell A. Rinklin, Jr., then the Chief of the Wing's Safety Division. Due to color limitations and format restrictions, the emblem remained basically the same from the original design by Captain Rinklin.

The 306th Strategic Wing participated in still another major exercise during the last quarter of 1977. Termed Midlink 77, it was an annual JCS directed and coordinated CENTO sponsored naval and air live field training exercise. Midlink 77 was conducted from 6 November to 21 November 1977 in Iran and the Indian Ocean. This exercise consisted of two phases, the bilateral training program and the maritime operations. The 306th SW participated in the maritime operations portion of the exercise with KC-135 tanker support.

The 306th SW flew 56 KC-135 sorties for the deployment, employment, and redeployment of USAF and Imperial Iranian Air Force (IIAF) fighters. It established several firsts: the first time USAF KC-135s demonstrated inter-operability with IIAF tanker forces by using IIAF support at Mehrabad IAP and flying missions in conjunction with Iranian KC-707s/KC-747s; the first time KC-135s refueled IIAF fighters flown by IIAF pilots; and the first time jumbo jets (KC-747s) were certified to air refuel USAF fighters. Under the direction of the 306th Strategic Wing, KC-135 tanker aircraft flew from four different bases to support this one exercise completing the mission with 100 percent effectiveness.

The year of 1977 was a very busy one for the 306th SW and its detachments. This was particularly true for the Wing's European Tanker Task Force which flew missions extending from the Arctic Circle to the Indian Ocean. Even though the various missions involved refueling 14 different types of receivers from three countries, the Wing maintained a perfect safety record. An impressive 66 million pounds of fuel were provided to receivers from SAC, TAC, MAC, USAFE, ADCOM, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, British Royal Air Force, and the Imperial Iranian Air Force during 1977. Also, the 306th SW's European Tanker Task Force aircraft overflew sixteen different countries during the year. Three new air refueling areas were established in Europe, primarily through the efforts of the

34th Strategic Squadron



306th SW. In the numerous Trans-Atlantic fighter deployments, more than 100 successful rendezvous and mid-ocean hand-offs were made between SAC tanker aircraft. Overall, the 306th SW compiled a 98 percent mission effectiveness rate for all KC-135 sorties launched in 1977.

The year of 1977 had been one in which the 306th SW had accomplished several world wide air refueling achievements. As a result, on 31 March 1978, the CINCSAC General Ellis announced the 306th SW as the recipient of the General Carl A. Spaatz Memorial Air Refueling Trophy for 1977. In a

message to the 306th SW Commander, the CINCSAC pointed out that the Wing had distinguished itself by its superior contributions to the Strategic Air Command's world wide air refueling mission. He further stated, "The dedication and excellent performance of your personnel has dramatically demonstrated our air refueling support within the European Theater. I congratulate you and all members of your command for your superior accomplishments." The Wing also received words of praise and congratulations from the CINC/USAFE, General Evans, for its noteworthy efforts. A renowned writer, author, and past member of the original Question Mark flight which the trophy commemorated, retired Lt General Ira C. Eaker, also sent words of praise and admiration to the 306th SW. Mr. Eaker said, "If and when occasion presents itself, will you please say that one of the participants in the Question Mark flight and in the inaugural service in connection with the establishment of the General Carl A. Spaatz Memorial Air Refueling Trophy, notes with pleasure and commends the great success of

the 306th Strategic Wing has had in their mission so vital to the security of our country."

As during the previous year, the 306th Strategic Wing continued to be heavily tasked during 1978. The Wing's European Tanker Task Force (ETTF) supported numerous tactical fighter deployments to and from the European Theater. In fact, these deployments and redeployments became so frequent that they almost became a routine matter for the 306th SW.

Throughout the year the Wing's tanker force provided air refueling support to numerous different aircraft in the European Theater. Some of this Support was rendered in a big way for major USAFE/NATO exercises. Exercises such as Artic Express (21-22 Feb and 12 Mar 78), Busy Observer (10 Apr 78), Busy Brewer (1 Nov, 6 Dec 78), Dawn Patrol (16-30 May 78), Oksboel, (15-31 Aug 78), Northern Wedding (4-15 Sep 78), Cold Fire (18-27 Sep 78), Display Determination (28 Sep-6 Oct 78), and Midlink 78 (17 Nov-15 Dec 78) were all supported. Both tanker and reconnaissance aircraft support were provided by the 306th SW for the Cold Fire exercise. A new concept, the 922d Strategic Squadron Tanker Task Force, was utilized by the 306th SW for its support of the Display Determination exercise. This was the first time that tanker aircraft were used from Hellenikon AB, Greece, in support of a major exercise.

As part of a general reorganization of SAC units within the European Theater, the 306th SW underwent major organizational

922d Strategic Squadron



changes. On 1 July 1978, 7th Air Division was activated at Ramstein AB, Germany. On that same date, the 306th SW's Headquarters moved without personnel or equipment from Ramstein AB to RAF Mildenhall, England. This resulted in the previous Detachment 1 of the 306th SW at RAF Mildenhall, being inactivated on 30 Jun 78. Effective 1 July 1978, the 306th SW became subordinate to 7th AD instead of directly to Hq SAC which previously was the case. With the Wing's headquarters moved to RAF Mildenhall and Detachment 1 inactivated, the Wing's Detachment 3 at Hellenikon AB, Greece, was inactivated effective 30 Jun 78. Then, on 1 Jul 78, the 922d Strategic Squadron was activated at Hellenikon AB. In essence, the 922d SS replaced the former Detachment 3 designation. Throughout July, the 306th SW's Detachment 2 at Zaragoza AB, Spain, remained active until 31 Jul 78 when it was inactivated. On 1 Aug 78, the 34th Strategic Squadron was activated at Zaragoza AB. Like the 922d SS, the 34th SS replaced the Detachment 2 designation. With these organizational changes, the 7th AD, 306th SW, 34th SS, and 922d SS formed a new Air Division-Wing-Squadron structure for SAC in Europe.

Since its activation in 1976, the 306th Strategic Wing and its assigned units experienced their second Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) during 1978. The inspection was conducted by the SAC Inspector General from 5 July through 21 July 1978. The SAC IG not only checked the Wing's headquarters at RAF Mildenhall, but also the 922d SS at Hellenikon AB and the then Det 2, 306th SW at Zaragoza AB. Detachment 2 was later inactivated on 31 Jul 78 and the 34th SS activated on 1 Aug 78 at Zaragoza AB. Of the areas rated, the 306th SW received six outstandings, 23 excellents, 37 satisfactories, and no unsatisfactories from the SAC IG.

While the 306th SW and its squadrons continued to support numerous KC-135 flying requirements, one exercise supported was unlike most others. Termed "Busy Kingdom", it was a flying exercise using RAF Fairford, England, as its base of operations.

This base had been approved by the British Ministry of Defense for additional basing of SAC KC-135 tanker aircraft. The idea of the exercise was to "test" the facilities and capabilities of the base for the planned tanker beddown. The first two KC-135 aircraft arrived at RAF Fairford on 7 September 1978, followed on 12 September by an additional three tanker aircraft. From 14-27 September 1978, the five KC-135s flew a total of 34 sorties to refuel four EC-135s, three RC-135s, three F-111s, and 16 B-52 aircraft, 35 F-4Js and 22 MK6 (RAF Lightning aircraft) of the Royal Air Force. In all, the Fairford tankers offloaded over one million pounds of fuel to receiver aircraft during the exercise.

On 19 Oct 78, the 922d SS at Hellenikon AB, Greece accomplished a major milestone in its history when it flew the 1,500th mission since SAC operations began at Hellenikon AB in 1974. Colonel Walter E. Savage, the 922d SS Commander, participated on this milestone flight.

1978 proved to be a very active year for the 306th Strategic Wing. The Wing's European Tanker Task Force (ETTF) flew over 2,500 sorties to provide 83,791,800 pounds of fuel to 11,418 airborne receiver aircraft from numerous different commands and countries. In all, 15 different types of receiver aircraft were refueled during 1978 while the Wing's tanker aircraft over flew 15 different countries. The 306th SW also launched almost 600 reconnaissance sorties in the European Theater during 1978.

1979 marked the first full year that the 306th had been headquartered at RAF Mildenhall since moving from Ramstein AB, Germany in July 1978. As such, the year began with the formal authorization of a Senior Enlisted Advisor and CMSgt Cornell Wedor was assigned to that position on 1 January. Several key personnel changes also occurred during the course of the year. On 11 May, Colonel Eugene Rafter assumed duties as Deputy Commander

A FOOTNOTE TO AEROSPACE HISTORY
27 April 1822

Sir

Monticello April 27-22

Your letter of the 15th is received, but Age has long since obliged me to withhold my mind from Speculations of the difficulty of those of your letter, that there are means of artificial buoyancy by which man may be supported in the Air, the Balloon has proved, and that means of directing it may be discovered is against no law of Nature and is therefore possible as in the case of Birds, but to do this by macanacal means alone in a medium so rare and unassisting as air must have the aid of some principal not yet generally known. However I can really give no opinion understandingly on the subject and with more good will than Confidence wish you success.

WM D B Lee

(signed)
Th Jefferson

-Extracted from TIG Brief, 12 May 1978-

for Operations. Command of the 306th also changed on 24 August when Colonel Richard Giordano replaced Colonel Caleb G. Pendley at a formal ceremony officiated by the new 7AD Commander, Brig Gen Robert D. Beckel. In November, Hq SAC informed Colonel Giordano that the 306th Commander's authorized grade had been increased to

a brigadier general (07) position. The last significant change occurred on 6 September when Colonel Royce L. Mathews replaced Colonel Donald Griffin as Commander of the 34th Strategic Squadron at Zaragoza AB, Spain.

The 306th received several distinguished visitors during 1979. The wing's diversified mission, locations and importance within the European Theater generally accounted for the majority of visits which occurred. Among the more important were General John W. Pauly, Commander-in-Chief, United States Air Force Europe; General Richard M. Ellis, Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Air Command; Vice Admiral William J. Small, Commander, Sixth Fleet; The Honorable Gerald P. Dinneen, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence; The Honorable Antonia Handler Chayes, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Installations and the Honorable Terrence Todman, U.S. Ambassador to Spain.

The 306th SW did not undergo a formal Operational Readiness Inspection during 1979; however, Hq 7AD did conduct two Staff Assistant Visits. The first occurred in June when Brig Gen Jerome Barnes, Commander, 7AD visited the Wing and second in December when Brig Gen Robert D. Beckel, besides reviewing management procedures, tested the 306th SW's aircraft generation capabilities. Both visits received high marks from 7AD. Hq 306th SW conducted two Staff Assistance Visits as well during the year. In January, Colonel Pendley visited both the 34th Strategic Squadron and the 922d Strategic Squadron. Colonel Giordano visited the 34th SS again in November.

One member of the 306th SW received special recognition during the year. On 5 July, Hq SAC informed the wing that MSgt Leonard M. Goldstein, assigned to the Logistics Division, had been selected as the SAC Outstanding Transportation NCO for 1979.

The 306th SW also experienced several problems during 1979, many of which remained unresolved when the year ended. Topping the list were insufficient officer authorizations to support rapidly increasing mission requirements. Throughout the year, the 306th had to rely upon rated officers assigned TDY to the 306th from various SAC CONUS organizations, particularly during periods of increased mission activity. Another problem dwelt with extremely limited facilities which the commander deemed inadequate to meet the Wing's needs. That situation had been precipitated by Hq SAC's decision to locate Air Force Satellite Communications equipment and operations within the "SAC Compound" at RAF Mildenhall. The last major problem concerned limited billeting available to crew members assigned TDY to Hq 306th SW and the waiver of two officers to one room which this necessitated.

Increased tanker support within the European Theater characterized the activities of the 306th during the last half of the year. The 306th also had the added responsibility of scheduling all aircraft and crew sorties for the 11th Strategic Group following the start of flying operations at RAF Fairford on 17 September. Scheduling problems and limited flight operations flown from RAF Fairford not only increased the overall workload within the 306th Operations Division but also further drained already limited personnel resources. Colonel Giordano stated that this hectic six month period "tested the mettle of the 306th to the limit" and in terms of personnel accomplishments, he described the work accomplished by the members of the 306th as "amazing, simply amazing."

Operationally, the 306th's multi-faceted KC-135 refueling and RC-135 reconnaissance accomplishments during 1979 reflect intense effort during a period which witnessed near record breaking endeavors. The 306th, prior to the start of operational flying at the 11th Strategic Group, had been more commonly referred to as the European Tanker

Task force (ETTF). Nevertheless, 306SW tankers continued to provide the "lions share" of aerial refuelings throughout the European Theater as the 1970s came to an end. Statistically, the 306th flew 2,449 tanker sorties, logged 9,987 flying hours and offloaded 3,496,300 pounds of fuel to 9,084 airborne aircraft from numerous commands and countries during the year. The 306th also launched over 500 reconnaissance sorties in the European Theater during 1979. The tanker figures include support for 21 major tactical aircraft movements deploying to and from the CONUS, eight large scale USAFE/NATO exercises and 17 special support missions. In addition to those, the 306th also flew tanker sorties supporting 46 Coronet East missions and routinely provided refueling support to USAFE based fighter aircraft flying training missions. Perhaps the most significant achievement to consider was the fact that the 306th did not lose a single sortie tasked by higher headquarters for operational reasons.

In June 1980, Gen Richard H. Ellis, Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Air Command said "Our nation is no longer an island, entire of itself, but rather a part of an intricate network of global interdependencies". The 306th Strategic Wing (306SE) European Theater aerial refueling and strategic reconnaissance support of USAFE and NATO operation underscored this during 1980.

Throughout the year, the 306th received several distinguished visitors. Its diversified mission, location of the headquarters and both strategic squadrons and importance within the European Theater generally accounted for the majority. Among the more important were: Air Commodore John M. Price, Director of Operations, RAF Strike Command; Sir John Aiken, Director General of Intelligence, Ministry of Defense, United Kingdom; Gen Lew Allen, Jr., Chief of Staff, USAF; Gen Charles A. Gabriel, CINCUSAFE and Gen Richard H. Ellis, CINCSAC and the entire SAC senior staff. In fact, General Ellis and his staff visited the 306th SW twice during the year to discuss Wing initiatives, problems and plan future operations. On 31 July during one of the visits, General

Ellis personally dedicated a special "Aircrew" briefing room to the crews that deploy TDY to RAF Mildenhall in support of the 306th mission.

One key personnel change occurred in 1980 when Colonel Kent Montavon assumed command of the 922d Strategic Squadron (922SS), Hellenikon AB, Greece on 18 June. Hq 306SW also gained a much needed Executive Officer/Headquarter Squadron Commander for the first time when Capt Rudolph Gieschen, Jr. arrived in February. The Wing's fully justified requirement to increase rated officer authorizations within the Operations and Reconnaissance Divisions also became a reality. For over two years, continuous TDY augmentation within both those divisions had been necessary to cope with mission requirements. By December, the 306th finally received confirmation from Hq SAC that the additional authorizations had been funded.

The 306SW, like all SAC organizations, received its fair share of inspections. Hq 7AD conducted staff assistance visits at Hq 306SW in May, the 34th Strategic Squadron (34SS) in June and the 922d SS in January and July. Shortly afterwards in September, the SAC Inspector General conducted an Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI)/Management Effectiveness Inspection (MEI) of the entire 306th SW. Although more than two years had elapsed since their previous inspection, the Wing received an overall rating of Satisfactory with several areas rated excellent and outstanding. The 922d SS fared best by receiving a rating of Excellent for their efforts. Just one month later, the 922d SS received a Satisfactory rating following a Hq SAC Maintenance Standardization and Evaluation Team (MSET) Inspection. The Inspection marked the first time that the squadron had undergone an MSET because it was previously exempted.

One member of the 306SW received special recognition during the year. On 12 Nov 80, Hq SAC informed the Wing that MSgt Theodore L. Onyshczak, 306SW Chief of Budget, had been selected as the SAC Budget Airman of the Year for FY 80.

Throughout the year, the 306th undertook several initiatives which involved development or refinement of procedures each with the primary goal of reducing fuel consumption and airframe hours. The tasks were difficult at best and offered little flexibility since every mission flown by the wing was higher headquarters directed. The first occurred in the Spring of 1980 and resulted in both fuel savings and minimum planning for aircrews. Through a coordinated effort with Twenty First Air Force, MAC and Air Force Global Weather Central, computerized flight plans were developed for KC-135 aircraft. The flight plans permitted inertial navigation equipped (INS) redeploying tankers to use the North Atlantic Track System (NATS) thus reducing mission planning time and, since the aircraft operated at higher altitudes while crossing the Atlantic, improved fuel economy.

The second major initiative involved the use of forward operating locations (FOLs). Headquarters 306SW had recognized the need to use FOLs as a primary means of reducing fuel usage and flying hours and at the same time, expanding the operational capability of tankers operating from RAF Mildenhall and Zaragoza AB, For example, Hq 306SW used Keflavik, Iceland for E-3A operations; Aviano AB, Italy for participation in exercise Display Determination and Lajes AB, Azores as a tanker task force location for aircraft movements such as Proud Phantom. The 34th SS used FOLs to a much greater extent by positioning tankers into locations such as Sigonella, Italy, Hellenikon AB, Greece and Incirlik CDI, Turkey while supporting Cross Switch and Quantum Jump operations. The benefits reaped by increasing the use of FOLs by the 34th alone saved the wing in excess of \$100,000 during 1980.

The last effort occurred in August when the 306th used very high frequency (VHF) equipped tankers during the redeployment phase of Crested Cap 80. The VHF radios permitted the KC-135s to overfly Ireland and Shannon Oceanic Control areas during that

and later redeployments. The radios were also used in conjunction with the NATS routes and produced a savings of approximately 7,000 pounds of fuel per aircraft. During Crested Cap, Hq 306SW not only reduced its tanker requirements by 25 percent but also achieved a significant savings in fuel, flying time and wear and tear on aircraft.

Two other wing efforts resulted in organizational changes. On 1 May, the 306SW Logistics Division was redesignated the 306SW Resource Management Division. At the same time, the 306SW Chief of Maintenance assumed responsibility for Special Avionics Maintenance personnel that deployed from Offutt AFB, Nebraska to support Combat Sent operations. In the past those personnel had been administratively assigned to the 513TAW.

In September 1980, the 306th received a letter of congratulations from General Ellis publically acknowledging the 306SW's participation during the April 1980 attempt to rescue the U.S. hostages held captive in Iran. Prior to the attempt to secure their release, very few people in SAC knew of the plans and within the 306SW, only the commander and selected individuals in Operations with an absolute need to know had been aware of the Wing's role. Nicknamed EC-79, most details regarding the attempt and the forward operating location known as site Alpha remain classified.

Operationally, 1980 represented a year of change in terms of aerial refueling support provided by the wing. Statistically, the 306th flew 2,173 tanker sorties, logged 6,687 KC-135 flying hours and offloaded 73,459,000 pounds of fuel to 6,607 airborne receiver aircraft from numerous commands and countries during the year. The most significant differences involved special support missions specifically, E-3A, C-5A, B-52 and SR-71 requirements. In 1980 for instance the 306th flew 365 sorties while supporting 41 individual or continuing series of special missions compared to 17 during 1979.

The 1980 tanker figures also include 31 major tactical aircraft movements during which the wing flew 180 sorties and 12 large scale USAFE/NATO exercises supported by 285 sorties.

The 306SW also launched over 500 reconnaissance sorties during 1980 all in direct support of Hq SAC, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and NSA tasking. A new milestone occurred in April when the 922d SS completed the 2,000th RC-135 mission from Hellenikon AB, Greece. In addition, the 922d also increased their maintenance capabilities that same month following the official opening of their new LN-20 Stellar Inertial Navigation System repair facility. In December, during the partial closure of the RAF Mildenhall runway, Hq 306SW successfully completed Block III RC-135W operational tests and evaluations (OT&E) flights from RAF Lakenheath. This new aircraft was expected to further increase reconnaissance program objectives during the coming year.

One key personnel change occurred in October 1981 when Col Richard J. Beringson assumed command of the 922d Strategic Squadron. Several noteworthy activities occurred during 1981. In March, the 306th celebrated SAC's 35th Anniversary during a wing dining out at the Officers Open Mess.

In June 1982, Col Richard W. Hedge replaced Col Richard Giordano as commander of the 306th Strategic Wing. Colonel Hedge remains in command of the 306th today.



CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDITS

(BATTLE HONORS)

WORLD WAR II

<u>CAMPAIGN</u>	<u>AUTHORITY</u>
Air Offensive, Europe	War Department General Order 85, 10 Oct 1945
Air Offensive, Normandy	War Department General Order 102, 9 Nov 1945
Air Offensive, Northern France	War Department General Order 103, 13 Nov 1945
Air Offensive, Ardennes-Alsace	War Department General Order 114, 7 Dec 1945
Air Offensive, Central Europe	War Department General Order 116, 11 Dec 1945
Air Offensive, Rhineland	War Department General Order 118, 12 Dec 1945

ROSTER OF ASSIGNED STATIONS306th Bombardment Group

Gowen Field, Idaho	1 March 1942
Wendover Field, Utah	c. 6 April - 1 Aug 1942
Thurleigh, England	September 1942
Giebelstadt, Germany	December 1945
Istres, France	February 1946
Furstenfeldbruck, Germany	16 August 1946
Lechfeld, Germany	13 Sep - 25 Dec 1946
Andrews Field, Maryland	1 July 1947
MacDill AFB, Florida*	Aug 1948 - 16 Jun 1952

306th Bombardment Wing

MacDill AFB, Florida*	1 September 1950
(Deployed at Fairford RAF Station, England, 11 Jun - 7 Sep 1953; Ben Guerir AB, Morocco, 5 Jan - 21 Feb 1955; 23 Oct 1956 - 9 Jan 1957 and 9 -15 Oct 1957; Hunter AFB, Ga, 20 Oct - 6 Dec 1962)	
McCoy AFB, Florida	1 Apr 1963 - 1 Jul 1974

306th Strategic Wing

Ramstein AB, Germany	15 Aug 1976 - 30 Jun 1978
(Det 1, 306 SW at RAF Mildenhall, England; Det 2, 306 SW at Zaragoza AB, Spain; and Det 3, 306 SW at Hellenikon AB, Greece)	
RAF Mildenhall, England	1 Jul 1978 - Present
(34th Strategic Sq at Zaragoza AB, Spain; 922nd Strategic Sq at Hellenikon AB, Greece)	

* Both the 306th Bombardment Group and 306th Bombardment Wing were individual units located together at the same base (MacDill AFB) with the Group subordinate to the Wing.

306th STRATEGIC WINGASSIGNED AIRCRAFT

<u>Aircraft</u>	<u>Assigned</u>
B-17	1942 - 1946
B-29	1950 - 1951
B-50	1951
B-47	1951 - 1963
KC-97	1951 - 1962
B-52	1963 - 1973
KC-135	1963 - 1973
KC-135*/RC-135**	1976 - Present

*Aircraft and crews are provided on a rotational TDY basis from stateside (CONUS) SAC, AF Reserve, and Air National Guard units.

**Aircraft and crews are provided on a rotational TDY basis from the 55th SRW (SAC), Offutt AFB, Nebraska.

306TH COMMANDERS306th Bombardment Group

	<u>Assumed Command</u>
Col Charles B. Overacker Jr	c.16 March 1942
Col Frank A. Armstrong Jr	3 January 1943
Col Claude E. Putnam	17 February 1943
Col George L. Robinson	c.20 June 1943
Col James S. Sutton	September 1944
Col Hudson H. Upham	c.16 April 1945
Col Robert F. Harris	May 1946
Lt Col Earl W. Kesling	June 1946 - unk
Lt Col Charles R. Heffner	13 August 1948
Lt Col Loran D. Briggs	c.1 November 1948
Col John A. Hilger	1 September 1949
Col Michael N. W. McCoy *	March 1950 - 16 June 1952

306th Bombardment Wing

Col Thayer S. Olds	1 September 1950
Col Michael N. W. McCoy *	10 February 1951
Col Hewitt T. Wheless (later Brig Gen)	10 November 1953
Col Richard N. Ellis	12 March 1954 (temp)
	17 March 1954 (perm)
Col Kenneth O. Sanborn	12 April 1954
Col Paul S. Emrick	31 July 1954
Col Robert L. Snider	17 February 1956
Col Robert J. Mason	20 May 1956
Col Robert J. Nolan	1 March 1958
Col Calvin W. Fite Jr	6 April 1959 (temp)
	1 June 1959 (perm)
Col Stanley I. Hand	16 July 1960
Col William G. Walker Jr	1 April 1963
Col Sherman W. Wilkins	8 June 1963
Col Stanley I. Hand	19 July 1963
Col Earl L. Johnson	27 Nov 1964 - Sep 1966;
	unk Sep 66 - c. Mar 1967

Col Gail D. Roberts	1 July 1967
Col Salvador E. Felices	1 June 1968 - c. Oct 1968
Col James S. Howard	Oct 1968 (temp)
Col Jon E. White	c. December 1968 (temp)
Col Salvador E. Felices	4 April 1969
Col Howard P. McClain	12 April 1969 - c. Oct 69
Col Walter A. Carter Jr	Oct 1969 (temp)
Col Howard P. McClain	c. April 1970
Col William A. Temple	4 May 1970
Col Glen L. Pugmire	16 August 1971
Col Robert N. Saye Jr	9 February 1972 (temp)
Col Grady L. Friday Jr	17 March 1972 (temp)
Col Glen L. Pugmire	10 May 1972
Col Grady L. Friday Jr	19 June 1972
Col John J. Murphy	10 July 1972
Col Grady L. Friday Jr	9 May 1973
Col Roy L. Harris Jr	29 September 1973
Col George A. Patterson	1 Jan - 1 July 1974
<u>306th Strategic Wing</u>	
Col Doyle F. Reynolds	15 Aug 1976 - 30 June 1978
Col Caleb G. Pendley	1 July 1978 - 23 Aug 1979
Col Richard Giordano	24 Aug 1979 - June 1982
Col Richard W. Hedge	June 1982 - present

* Col Michael N. W. McCoy was commander of the 306th Bombardment Group, then assumed command of the 306th Bombardment Wing on 10 February 1951. From 10 Feb 1951 to 16 June 1952, Colonel McCoy was commander of both the Group and Wing until inactivation of the 306th Bombardment Group on 16 June 1952. Both the 306th Bombardment Group and 306th Bomb Wing were individual units located together at the same base (McDill AFB) with the Group subordinate to the Wing.

