

HISTORY OF THE  
401ST FIGHTER WING  
1943 - 1992



AVIANO AB, ITALY

**A History of the 401st Fighter Wing**

**1943-1992**

**by**

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**Wing Historian**

**Office of History  
401st Fighter Wing  
United States Air Forces in Europe**

**1 October 1992**

## FORWARD

This purpose of this pamphlet is to acquaint newcomers and visitors to Aviano Air Base, Italy, with key facts concerning the proud heritage of the 401st Fighter Wing (FW). During wartime and peacetime, the wing's assigned personnel have successfully met all challenges encountered and have consistently set the standard for superior accomplishment. As sweeping historical changes throughout the world alter not only the size but the role and mission of the U.S. military, we will face the steadily increasing demands engendered by our role as guardians of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Southern Region. I ask for your support in meeting and upholding the tradition of excellence established by our predecessors which has made the 401 FW such an effective organization.



TIMOTHY A. KINNAN, COL, USAF  
Wing Commander

## PREFACE

This pamphlet outlines the impressive history of the 401st Fighter Wing from its inception in the early 1940s, its heroic participation in World War II and its tremendous contributions to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Southern Region during its tenure at Torrejon Air Base, Spain. This edition concentrates on the early history of the wing, with emphasis on significant historical events, including its past commanders, assignments, and major accomplishments. It also presents a brief history of the wing's new home, Aviano Air Base, Italy. This unclassified version of the wing's history is intended to serve as a ready reference for frequently needed information and to increase the knowledge of assigned personnel concerning the wing's origin, mission, and accomplishments.

This publication provides only a brief overview of the 401st Fighter Wing's complex diversified mission and its most memorable historical events. Authorized personnel requiring more in-depth information are invited to research the extensive history collection located in the 401st Fighter Wing History Office. For more information called TSgt Joyce Devaux, 401 FW/HO at 632-7609.



JOYCE L. DEVAUX, TSgt, USAF  
Chief, 401 FW History Office

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401ST FIGHTER WING

Mission

When the 401st Fighter Wing moved from Torrejon to Aviano, it assumed the unique mission responsibilities of the 40th Support Wing as it adapted the objective wing organizational structure to comply with new Air Force directives. A Regional Support Group consolidated the management of war readiness materiel required to support war plans, deploying forces, and collocated operating bases. The wing conducted peacetime operations in support of Headquarters United States Air Forces in Europe. Its mission involved maintaining active airfields and facilities to support deployed weapons systems and their associated equipment; to effectively employ these systems in wartime and/or contingency operations; and to ensure a state of readiness for the reception, beddown, and support of wartime additive forces.

The 401st Fighter Wing also manages and supports four geographically separated units. Three in Italy; the 7401st Munitions Support Squadron (MUNSS) at Rimini Air Base (Southeast of Bologna), the 7402 MUNSS at Ghedi Air Base (near Verona), and the 401st Munitions Maintenance Squadron (Theater) at Camp Darby (near Pisa), plus the 7061 MUNSS at Araxos Air Base, Greece (near Patra). In addition, it provides oversight to numerous units throughout Northern Italy, to include associate organizations, collocated operating bases, and detachments.

## CHRONOLOGY

20 Mar 43 The War Department constituted the 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy), placing it on the Army Air Forces list for future activation.

1 Apr 43 The 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) activated at Ephrata Army Air Base, Washington, along with the 612th, 613th, 614th, and 615th Bombardment Squadrons.

15 Jun 43 The group moved to Geiger Field, Washington for initial B-17 training.

8 Jul 43 The 401st group moved to Great Falls Army Air Base, Montana, for additional training.

19 Oct 43 The group departed Great Falls for deployment to Europe.

3 Nov 43 The group's support personnel arrived in England aboard the Queen Mary, joining the air echelon.

26 Nov 43 The group flew its first combat mission - a bombing attack at Bremen, Germany.

11 Jan 44 The 401st earned its first Distinguished Unit Citation, for a highly successful raid on aircraft factories in Oschersleben, Germany, in spite of intense enemy resistance.

20 Feb 44 The group earned its second Distinguished Unit Citation, for an attack on the Erla Maschinewerk near Leipzig, Germany.

6 Jun 44 The group's participation in the D-Day invasion of Normandy involved bombing gun emplacements less than 1,000 yards from a landing zone, five minutes prior to the landing of troops.

Jul 44 The 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) aided in the St. Lo breakthrough by bombing tactical targets.

Aug 44 The group bombed target near Brest, France, to assist in the city's liberation from the Nazis.

16 Dec 44 - Jan 45 German troops launched a large counteroffensive the Battle of the Bulge - forcing the 401st group to attack tactical targets along battle lines in support of Allied defenses.

20 Apr 45 The 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) flew its last combat mission of the war, bombing a railroad marshalling yard near Brandenburg.

30 May 45 The group departed England enroute to the United States, with ground personnel sailing aboard the Queen Elizabeth.

28 Aug 45 The 401st group inactivated at Sioux Falls Army Air Base, South Dakota, following a brief period of B-29 training.

26 Jun 47 Redesignated the 401st Bombardment Group (Very Heavy), the unit reactivated at Brooks Field, Texas, as a component of the Air Reserve forces.

27 Jun 49 The unit moved to Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, redesignated the 401st Bombardment Group (Medium).

1 May 51 The group was recalled to active service and assigned to the Strategic Air Command.

25 Jun 51 The 401st inactivated at Biggs Air Force Base.

23 Mar 53 The Defense Department reconstituted the 401st Bombardment Group making it available for reactivation.

8 Feb 54 The 401st Fighter-Bomber Group activated at Alexandria (later England) Air Force Base, Louisiana, as part of the Tactical Air Command. The 612th, 613th and 614th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons also activated as part of the group.

10 Jan - 10 Feb 55 The group participated in the filming of "The McConnell Story," flying "Thunderstreaks" painted to resemble MIG-15 aircraft.

30 Jun 56 The group's first F-86 "Sabres" arrived to replace its F-84F aircraft.

30 Jun 57 The group converted from the F-86 to the F-100D "Supersabre".

25 Sep 57 The 401st Fighter-Bomber Group inactivated and the 401st Fighter-Bomber Wing activated, absorbing the group's assets. The 615th Fighter-Bomber Squadron reactivated and joined the 612th, 613th and 614th squadrons as part of the new wing.

Mar 58 Wing F-100 aircraft set two speed records from Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, to Chaumont Air Base, France.

1 Jul 58 The wing was redesignated the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing.

19 Oct 62 The wing deployed to Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis, remaining on alert until 5 December 1962.

Feb 64 The wing became involved in the Vietnam conflict, using Clark Air Base in the Philippines as a rotational base, while conducting combat operations from South Vietnam, Thailand, and Taiwan.

27 Jul 64 The 401st Tactical Fighter Wing received its first Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its contributions to national and international military operations during the period 1 January through 31 December 1963.

3 Nov 65 The 612th Tactical Fighter Squadron was reassigned to Misawa Air Base, Japan.

19 Nov 65 The wing gained operational control of the 531st Tactical Fighter Squadron.

5 Dec 65 The wing gained operational control of the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

10 Dec 65 The 531st Tactical Fighter Squadron was relieved of attached status and rejoined its parent organization, the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing at Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam.

7 Feb 66 The wing lost operational control of the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron, which rejoined its parent wing, the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, at Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam.

27 Apr 66 The wing's 614th and 615th squadrons were reassigned to the 834th Air Division. The remainder of the wing transferred to Torrejon Air Base, Spain. The 307th and 353d Tactical Fighter Squadrons, together with the 613th, formed the wing's flying components.

9 Jan 70 The wing began replacing its F-100D fleet with newer F-4E aircraft.

15 Jul 71 The 612th and 614th Tactical Fighter Squadrons rejoined the wing, replacing the 307th and 353d squadrons.

1 Jul 73 The wing gave up its F-4E aircraft, for older F-4Cs, when the Air Force decided that F-4 units should have only one type of aircraft in their inventories.

25 Aug 78 The wing received its first F-4D aircraft as it converted from the F-4C.

5 Feb 83 The 401st Tactical Fighter Wing received its first four F-16 "Fighting Falcons".

1 Jan 85 The 401st F-16s reached operational capability.

30 Oct 85 The wing received its second Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, for its efficiency during the transition to the F-16 aircraft.

Oct 87 -  
Sep 88 The wing converted from the A and B model of the F-16 to the newer C and D models.

- 5 Jan 88 The Agreement on Defense Cooperation between the United States and the Spanish Government required the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing to leave Spain by 4 May 1992.
- Aug 90 - The wing and its assigned squadrons supported Operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM from several locations.
- 9 Feb 91
- 1 Mar 91 Two 614th pilots, Major Jeffrey Tice and Captain Mike Roberts, returned home after spending 45 days as prisoners of war in Iraq.
- 27 Sep 91 The 401st received a third Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for superior performance, 1 April 1989 - 30 March 1991.
- 1 Oct 91 The 401st Tactical Fighter Wing became the 401st Fighter Wing as part of an Air Force-wide reorganization.
- 28 Jun 91 The 613th Fighter Squadron inactivated in preparation for the wing to relocate to Aviano Air Base, Italy.
- 25 Sep 91 The 612th Fighter Squadron inactivated.
- 30 Dec 91 The wing's last flying squadron, the 614th, inactivated.
- 4 May 92 The 401st Fighter Wing inactivated at Torrejon. then reactivated at Aviano Air Base, Italy, assuming the assets of the 40th Support Wing, which inactivated.

#### HISTORY OF THE 401ST FIGHTER WING

The 401st Fighter Wing traces its illustrious beginnings to the 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) of World War II fame. The War Department constituted the 401st Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 20 March 1943 and activated it at Ephrata Army Air Base in the state of Washington, on 1 April 1943. Four flying squadrons, the 612th, 613th, 614th, and 615th Bombardment Squadrons were simultaneously activated and assigned to the group.

The group stayed at Ephrata Army Air Base long enough to receive personnel and equipment, then moved to Geiger Field, Washington, on 15 June 1943, to begin initial B-17 flight training. After three weeks, the group relocated to Great Falls Army Air Base, Montana, to complete its training. Following this final phase of B-17G aircrew training, which lasted until 19 October, the group began deployment to Deenethorpe, England, to join the war effort. The ground forces made the journey aboard the Queen Mary, while the aircraft followed a route to Newfoundland, then across the Atlantic to Scotland before reaching their final destination. The unit reached full operational strength on 19 November 1943. The 401st entered the war on 26 November 1943 and conducted its first bombing mission against Bremen, Germany. Poor weather conditions prevented visual targeting and forced aircrews to use radar bombing techniques to penetrate the heavy cloud cover, but the group lost no aircraft on this mission. Later attacks centered on factories, oil refineries, power plants, V-1 and V-2 sites, marshalling yards and port facilities throughout Europe. The group participated in attacks on many strategic targets in France, Holland, Luxembourg, and Germany, but the majority of its early missions focused on oil reserves in order to deny fuel to the Nazi occupation forces.

The group earned two Distinguished Unit Citations during its early combat missions. The first was for a daring but highly successful 11 January 1944 attack on aircraft production facilities in Oschersleben, Germany. Because the target was so near to Berlin, the Germans had large numbers of flak batteries and other defenses in the area. In addition to the heavy anti-aircraft fire, Nazi fighters attacked the bombers for over three hours. On 20 February 1944, the group earned its second award by successfully bombing, and thereby closing, the Erla Maschinenwerk aircraft assembly facilities near Leipzig.

The group continued to bomb industrial targets near Berlin throughout the early months of 1944, which helped to impair the Nazi warfighting capability. Later it switched to such tactical targets as coastal defense guns and transportation centers in preparation for the Normandy invasion. Five minutes before the D-Day landing, the 401st bombed gun emplacements less than 1,000 yards from the beach at one of the landing zones. Following the 6 June 1944 invasion, the group supported ground forces during the St. Lo breakthrough, the Siege of Brest, the Battle of the Bulge, and the assault on the Rhine. The group flew its last combat mission of the war on 20 April 1945 bombing a marshalling yard in Brandenburg.

Following the victory in Europe, the group departed England on 20 May 1945, enroute to the United States. With the war against Japan still in progress, the 401st began training for conversion to B-29 bombers at Sioux Falls Army Air Base in South Dakota. Japan surrendered before the group had completed the conversion; demobilization after V-J day resulted in its inactivation on 28 August 1945.

After remaining on the inactive list for almost two years, the group was redesignated the 401st Bombardment Group, (Very Heavy) and activated as part of the Air Reserve forces. While in Reserve status, the 401st operated from Brooks Air Force Base, Texas, until June 1949. Redesignated the 401st Bombardment Group (Medium), it moved to Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, during this post-war period, the group flew a variety of aircraft, including AT-6 and AT-11 trainers and B-26, B-29 and B-50 bombers. The 401st remained a part of the reserves until it rejoined the active force on 1 May 1951, as part of the Strategic Air Command. However, less than two months later, on 25 June 1951, it again inactivated.

The group remained inactive for two and half years. Redesignated the 401st Fighter-Bomber Group on 8 February 1954, it reactivated at Alexandria (later England) Air Force Base, Louisiana. A component of Ninth Air Force, it was attached to the 366th Fighter-Bomber Wing. Three former squadrons--the 612th, 613th, and 614th--were redesignated fighter-bomber squadrons and activated with it, while the 615th remained on the inactive rolls. This new assignment to the Tactical Air Command brought a new mission and a new aircraft. The group conducted tactical operations in the F-86 "Sabre" jet fighter. One year later, older F-84F "Thunderstreak" aircraft replaced the F-86s.

While at Alexandria, the 613th and 614th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons participated in the filming of Warner Brothers' "The McConnell Story." From 10 January to 10 February 1955, the two squadrons flew 125 sorties during the aerial combat sequences of the film, using eight unit F-84 aircraft painted to resemble enemy MIG-15 aircraft flown in the Korean conflict.

The group gained F-86s in June 1956, when the Sabres replaced the F-84Fs, which transferred to the Air National Guard. On 30 June 1957, the 401st transitioned to "Supersabres," receiving a total of 57 F-100D aircraft. Soon after, on 25 September 1957, the group was inactivated and replaced by the 401st Fighter-Bomber Wing, which absorbed the assets of the group. The 615th Fighter-Bomber Squadron reactivated, assigned to the new wing. Though the 401st Fighter-Bomber Wing was constituted on 23 March 1953, part of an Air Force reorganization which replaced combat groups with wings, it remained on the inactive list until 25 September 1957.

This reorganization left most units without a World War II heritage, so the Air Force enacted a program to "temporarily bestow" the history and honors of World War II groups on the like-numbered wings which replaced them. Under this plan, the two units remained separate entities, with the wing keeping the history of the inactive group alive by having partial claim to its World War II honors so long as the group remained on the inactive list.

About nine months after its initial activation, on 1 July 1958, the 401st Fighter-Bomber Wing became the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing. Participating in various exercises, the wing set several deployment records, flying from Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, to Chaumont Air Base, France. An early deployment in March 1958 accomplished the trip non-stop for the first time and a later deployment made the trip in a record seven hours and thirteen minutes.

The wing responded to the Cuban Missile Crisis in late 1962 by deploying to Homestead Air Force Base in Florida. Beginning 19 October, the wing remained on alert, ready to respond to any emergency tasking caused by the blockade of Cuba, until resolution of the crisis on 5 December 1962.

During 1963, the 401st participated in numerous exercises and deployments, including various NATO exercises, overseas rotations and firepower demonstrations. The exceptional skill with which it met this heavy tasking earned the wing an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

The wing became involved in the Vietnam conflict, in 1964. Although the unit as a whole remained at England Air Force Base, its squadrons rotated to Clark Air Base in the Philippines, from which one squadron operated at all times. Squadrons flew combat missions from such deployed locations as Da Nang and Bien Hoa Air Bases in South Vietnam, Takhli Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand, and Tainan Air Base, Taiwan.

On 3 November 1965, the 612th Tactical Fighter Squadron left the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing for a new assignment at Misawa Air Base, Japan. The 401st gained two additional squadrons, but these units were attached rather than assigned. The wing took operational control of the 531st Tactical Fighter Squadron on 19 November 1965, and the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron on 5 December 1965. The 531st served less than a month with the 401st before returning to its parent organization, the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, at Bien Hoa Air Base on 10 December 1965. Additional organizational changes occurred in 1966, when the 614th and 615th squadrons transferred to the 834th Air Division on 27 April. A few months earlier, the 90th was relieved of its attachment to the 401st. These actions prepared the wing for a change of station. On 27 April 1966, the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing was reassigned to Torrejon Air Base, Spain, a part of Sixteenth Air Force. Its non-flying components and the 613th Tactical Fighter Squadron accompanied the wing to Torrejon, where it gained the 307th and 353d Tactical Fighter Squadrons, returning to full operational strength.

At Torrejon, the wing continued to fly the F-100D "Supersabre." Major operations consisted of maintaining combat readiness, rotating units to other bases in Europe or the Middle East and participating in various United States Air Force, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Spanish Air Defense exercises. In addition, the 401st served as the host United States organization at the Spanish base, supporting Air Force tenants.

Wing operations remained relatively unchanged until 9 January 1970, when the wing replaced its aging F-100 fleet with F-4E "Phantom II" fighters, completing the conversion in 1971. The 612th and 614th Tactical Fighter Squadrons rejoined the wing, returning from combat assignments at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam, on 15 July 1971, replacing the 307th and 353rd squadrons, which departed on the same date.

In 1973, the Air Force decided F-4 units should have only one variation of the Phantom in their inventories. While the 401st had only F-4Es, other wings possessed a mixture of F-4 models. The 401st F-4Es moved to various other units and were replaced by F-4Cs. Although this resulted in a partial loss of the wing's combat capability, the exchange helped other units gain full contingents of the more advanced F-4E. In 1978, the wing upgraded to F-4D aircraft.

The wing began a new chapter in its history on 5 February 1983, transitioning to the new F-16 "Fighting Falcon" aircraft. Again, this transition took place gradually, with the wing reaching full operational capability on 1 January 1985. The wing's exceptional performance during this transition earned it a second Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. With the upgrade to one of the world's most advanced and versatile fighters, the 401st enjoyed capabilities unprecedented in its history, making it a vital link in defense of the United States and its allies.

The Air Force decided in 1984 to consolidate the lineage and honors of inactive groups with their like-numbered wings. This meant that the 401st Bombardment Group and the 401st Tactical Fighter Wing shared a common heritage. Instead of enjoying "temporary bestowal" of World War II honors, the wing now claimed the group's history as its own.

In late 1987, the 401st underwent another aircraft conversion, this time to the C and D models of the F-16. By September 1988, the wing had completed the transition and resumed normal operations.

The governments of Spain and the United States announced on 15 January 1988, that an Agreement on Defense Cooperation negotiated between the two nations, required the 401st to leave Spain by 4 May 1992. An intense search to find an alternate location for the wing was interrupted by a crisis in the Persian Gulf Region: Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait in August 1990.

The United States, together with a coalition of allies, conducted Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM, from 7 August 1990 to 28 February 1991. The 401st provided logistical support to deployed forces at numerous locations in the Gulf region. The 614th was the first American force to deploy to Doha, Qatar, where squadron members worked alongside Qatari, British, Canadian, and French troops. The squadron's pilots flew 1,303 sorties and dropped 3.7 million pounds of bombs on Iraq's Republican Guard, and Iraqi refineries and weapons factories.

The 612th supported NATO's Joint Task Force "Proven Force" at Incirlik, Turkey, as part of the 7440th Composite Wing which consisted of 100 fighters, interceptors, tankers, and other aircraft. The unit launched 1,093 combat missions and dropped 3.9 million pounds of bombs while maintaining the lowest abort rate of any unit involved in the Gulf Crisis.

Back at Torrejon, wing organizations supported 10,000 Military Airlift Command sorties carrying 85,000 troops and 130,000 tons of cargo through the base to and from the Middle East. They also supported Spanish, Italian, Greek, Portuguese, German, and Czechoslovakian forces which formed the allied response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

During the war, the wing lost four aircraft but not one life. Two 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron pilots, Major Jeffrey Tice and Captain Mike Roberts, withstood 45 days as prisoners of war in Iraq. However, they returned with honor on 5 March 1991. The wing earned a third Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its superior accomplishments 1 April 1989 to 31 March 1991.

With the end of the Gulf crisis, as well as the declining tensions with the Soviet Union, the Air Force began streamlining its operations. This resulted in the unit's redesignation as the 401st Fighter Wing on 1 October 1991. Headquarters, United States Air Forces in Europe announced in late 1991 that the 401st would relocate to Aviano Air Base, Italy, to maintain a presence in the Europe's Southern Region. The wing's aircraft were redistributed worldwide and the 613th Tactical Fighter Squadron, the first squadron to inactivate, departed Torrejon on 28 June 1991. The 612th followed on 25 September 1991 and the 614th on 30 December 1991. A 4 May 1992 ceremony inactivated the 401st Fighter Wing at Torrejon Air Base and transferred its flag to Aviano, Italy.

## 401ST FIGHTER WING

### Emblem

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Our emblem is symbolic of our wing's primary mission. The light blue background represents the sky, our primary theater of operations. The four lances denote the weapons stacked ready for instant use as needed. A black and white checkerboard battlefield, crossing the lances in a horizontal position, indicates our wing is willing to go into battle anywhere in the sky. The colors of the squadrons, attached to the wing, form a banner which sweeps across the entire emblem, indicating support to the overall mission.

**APPROVED:** 9 September 1958

**MOTTO:** CAELUM ARENA NOSTRA -- The Sky is Our Arena.



401ST FIGHTER WING

## Commanders

NAMEDATE

Colonel Neil B. Harding	circa 1 April 1943
Colonel Harold W. Bowman	June 1943
Colonel William T. Seawell	December 1944
Colonel Harry G. Libbey	26 June 1947
Lieutenant Colonel James L. Fletcher	circa October 1948
Unknown	27 June 1949
Lieutenant Colonel William N. Hensle	1 May 1951
Colonel Walter G. Benz	8 February 1954
Lieutenant Colonel Ralph F. Newman	1 March 1956
Colonel Chester L. Van Etten	2 June 1956
Brigadier General Ivan W. McElroy	1 April 1959
Colonel Albert W. Schinz	10 June 1960
Colonel Niven K. Cranfill	11 March 1962
Colonel Richard V. Travis	15 March 1962
Colonel William P. McBride	22 September 1964
Colonel Harold G. Shook	14 June 1965
Colonel Clayton M. Isaacson	7 May 1966
Brigadier General Sanford K. Moats	20 April 1967
Colonel Herndon F. Williams	2 November 1968
Colonel James M. Hoag, Jr.	8 January 1970
Colonel Wilbur L. Creech	17 November 1970
Colonel Tony M. Greget	19 July 1971
Colonel Richard G. Collins	6 September 1972
Colonel Charles L. Donnelly, Jr.	1 November 1973
Colonel Benjamin R. Battle	17 July 1975
Colonel Anthony T. Sheehan	14 July 1977
Colonel Kenneth W. North	12 June 1979
Colonel Wilfred L. Goodson	8 May 1981
Brigadier General Albert L. Logan	25 January 1982
Colonel John C. Fryer, Jr.	29 June 1984
Colonel Walter C. Hersman	4 October 1985
Colonel Lawrence P. Farrell, Jr.	17 August 1987
Colonel Patrick W. O'Brien	10 August 1988
Colonel James I. Mathers	20 March 1989
Colonel Jerry L. Nelson	16 July 1991
Colonel James D. Kula (Temporary)	4 May 1992
Colonel Timothy A. Kinnan	30 June 1992

401ST FIGHTER WING

## Awards and Citations

Campaign Credits

Air Offensive, Europe	- 26 November 1943 - 5 June 1944
Air Combat	- 26 November 1943 - 2 September 1945
Normandy	- 6 June 1944 - 24 July 1944
Northern France	- 25 July 1944 - 14 September 1944
Rhineland	- 15 September 1944 - 21 March 1945
Central Europe	- 22 March 1945 - 11 May 1945
Ardennes-Alsace	- 16 December 1944 - 25 January 1945

Distinguished Unit Citations

11 January 1944

20 February 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 January - 31 December 1963

1 July 1983 - 31 June 1985

1 April 1989 - 31 March 1991

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401ST FIGHTER WING

## Assigned Components

Currently Assigned Support Units:

401st Support Group	4 May 1992- Present
401st Mission Support Squadron	
401st Security Police Squadron	
401st Civil Engineering Squadron	
401st MWR/Services Squadron	
401st Logistics Group	4 May 1992- Present
401st Maintenance Squadron	
401st Transportation Squadron	
401st Supply Squadron	
401st Logistics Support Squadron	
401st Contracting Squadron	
401st Regional Support Group	4 May 1992- Present
401st Munitions Maintenance Squadron	
401st Consolidated Equipment Maintenance Squadron	
401st Resource Management Squadron	
401st Medical Contingency Squadron	
7040th Mobility Support Flight	
401st Medical Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
401st Communications Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
Detachment 1, Aviano AB, Italy	
OL-AA, Mount Corna, Italy	
401st Operations Support Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
401st Comptroller Squadron	1 July 1985- Present
7401st Munitions Support Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
Rimini AB, Italy	
7402d Munitions Support Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
Ghedi AB, Italy	
7061st Munitions Support Squadron	4 May 1992- Present
Araxos AB, Greece	

Previously Assigned Units:

401st Air Base Group	1 April 1959- 1 July 1964
401st Combat Support Group	27 April 1966- 4 May 1992
401st Armanent and Electronics Maintenance Squadron (later 401st Avionics Maintenance Squadron; 401st Component Repair Squadron)	25 September 1957- 4 May 1992
401st Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance (later 401st Field Maintenance Squadron; 401st Equipment Maintenance Squadron)	25 September 1957- 4 May 1992
401st Munitions Maintenance Squadron	15 May 1963- 30 June 1979
401st Organizational Maintenance Squadron (later 401st Aircraft Generation)	1 October 1962- 1 May 1966 and 1 February 1972- 4 May 1992
401st Supply Squadron	1 October 1962- 1 July 1964 and 27 April 1966- 4 May 1992
401st Tactical Hospital (later 401st USAF Hospital; 401st Tactical Hospital)	8 August 1959- 1 July 1964 and 27 April 1966- 4 May 1992
7009th Explosive Ordnance Flight	1 February 1972- 14 September 1988
607th USAF Contingency Hospital	15 October 1984- 4 May 1992
4586th Student Squadron	1 January 1966- 27 April 1966
7401st Comptroller Services Squadron (test)	1 April 1977- 31 December 1977
7401st Comptroller Squadron	1 April 1981- 1 July 1985
Detachment 1, Headquarters, 401 TFW (Aviano Air Base, Italy)	15 September 1960- 1 May 1963
Detachment 1, Headquarters, 401 TFW (Takhli Air Base, Thailand)	4 May 1964- 11 June 1964
Detachment 1, Headquarters, 401 TFW (Takhli Air Base, Thailand)	14 December 1964- 14 December 1965

Detachment 1, Headquarters, 401 TFW Decimomannu Air Base, Italy)	20 July 1970- 15 July 1973
Detachment 2, Headquarters, 401 TFW Moron Air Base, Spain)	1 August 1976- Present
Operating Location "A", Headquarters, 401 TFW, Moron Air Base, Spain)	1 January 1976- 1 August 1976
Operating Location "A", Headquarters, 401 TFW Langley Air Force Base, Virginia	9 March 1982- September 1983
612th, 613th, 614th, & 615th Bombardment Squadrons (Heavy)	1 April 1943- 28 August 1945
612th, 613th, 614th, & 615th Bombardment Squadrons (Very Heavy)	26 June 1947- 27 June 1949
612th, 613th, 614th & 615th Bombardment Squadrons (Medium)	28 June 1949- 25 June 1951
612th, 613th & 614th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons	8 February 1954- 1 July 1958
615th Fighter-Bomber Squadron	25 September 1957- 1 July 1958
612th Tactical Fighter Squadron	1 July 1958- 3 November 1965
613th Tactical Fighter Squadron	1 July 1958- 28 June 1991
614th & 615th Tactical Fighter Squadrons	1 July 1958- 27 April 1966
612th Tactical Fighter Squadron	15 July 1971- 25 September 1991
614th Tactical Fighter Squadron	15 July 1971- 30 December 1991
531st Tactical Fighter Squadron	19 November - 10 December 1965
90th Tactical Fighter Squadron	5 December 1965- 7 February 1966
307th Tactical Fighter Squadron	27 April 1966- 15 July 1971
353rd Tactical Fighter Squadron	27 April 1966- 15 July 1971

401ST FIGHTER WINGAssignments401st Bombardment Group

Ephrata Army Air Base, Washington	1 April 1943
Geiger Field, Washington	15 July 1943
Great Falls Army Air Base, Montana*	8 July 1943
Deenethorpe, England	19 November 1943
Sioux Falls Army Air Base, South Dakota	30 May 1945
Brooks Field, Texas	26 June 1947
Biggs Air Force Base (AFB), Texas	27 June 1948

401st Fighter-Bomber Group

Alexandria (later England) AFB, Louisiana	8 February 1954
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401st Tactical Fighter Wing

England AFB, Louisiana	1 July 1958
Torrejon Air Base, Spain	27 April 1966

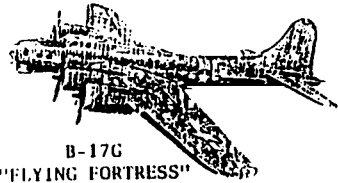
401st Fighter Wing

Aviano Air Base, Italy	4 May 1992
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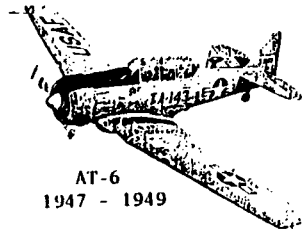
\*When the 401st deployed from Great Falls Army Air Base to Deenethorpe, England, the group separated into air and ground echelons, with each contingent making brief stops during the trip to Europe. The ground force stopped at Camp Shanks, New York, from 22-26 October 1943, then upon arrival in England, on 4 November, went directly to Deenethorpe. The air echelon, stayed at Scott Field, Illinois, from 16-22 October, then spent 7-19 November at Polebrook and Bassingbourne, England, before rejoining the unit at Deenethorpe on 19 November.

101ST FIGHTER WING

## ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT



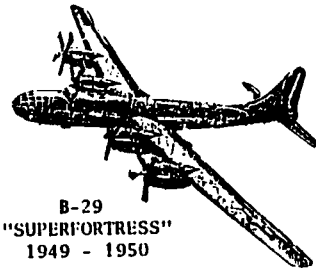
B-17G  
"FLYING FORTRESS"  
1943 - 1945



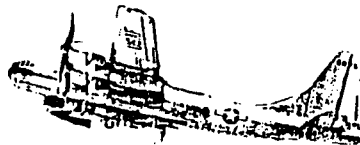
AT-6  
1947 - 1949



AT-11  
1947 - 1949

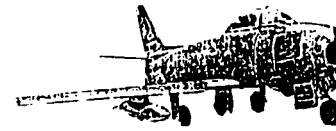


B-29  
"SUPERFORTRESS"  
1949 - 1950



B-50  
1950 - 1951

## ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT



F-86F  
"SABRE"  
1954 - 1955  
1956 - 1957



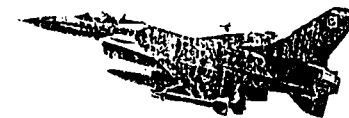
F-84F  
"THUNDERSTREAK"  
1955 - 1956



F-100D  
"SUPERSABRE"  
1957 - 1971



F-4  
"PHANTOM II"  
1970 - 1983  
E Model - 1970-1973  
C Model - 1973-1979  
D Model - 1978-1983



F-16  
"FIGHTING FALCON"  
1983 - 1992  
A & B Model - 1983-1988  
C & D Model - 1987-1992

7401ST MUNITIONS SUPPORT SQUADRON

This US custodial unit became operational in July 1966. Originally designated Detachment 2700 of USAFE's 7232d Munition Maintenance Group, it became Detachment 1 of the 40 Tactical Group on 1 November 1967 when the 7232d was discontinued. Headquarters USAFE activated the 7401st Munitions Support Squadron on 1 April 1972 to replace Detachment 1 at Rimini AB. It was reassigned to the 401st Fighter Wing when this unit replaced the 40th Support Wing at Aviano AB. The mission of the 7401 MUNSS involved providing munitions maintenance, supply and security, plus command and control functions in direct support of NATO and the 5th Stormo of the Italian Air Force. The 7401st earned three Air Force Outstanding Unit awards since its activation, two of which it shares with the 40th Support Wing. The third was awarded for meritorious service 1 May 1973 through 30 April 1975.

RIMINI AB

Rimini Air Base served as an Axis air base during World War II. It received heavy damage when it was attacked by fighter-bombers of the Army Air Forces's Twelfth Air Force on 11 July 1944. After its capture by Allies, Rimini became the home station for P-51s of the 325th Flight Group and the B-25s of the 340th Bomb Group. It is currently the home of the Italian Air Force's 5th Stormo and the 7401 MUNSS.

COMMANDERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATES ASSIGNED</u>
Col Paul P. Correll	August 1970
Maj Paul F. Dudley	21 July 1972
Maj Richard W. Moore	8 July 1974
Maj Harold H. Phillips	18 July 1975
Lt Col Shelby Cordon	20 June 1977
Maj William R. McNally	15 June 1979
Maj Robert Carmicheal	17 June 1981
Maj Steven Hurwitz	15 July 1983
Lt Col Jeffrey B. Pearson	19 December 1984
Lt Col Michael D. Miller	9 June 1986
Lt Col Garry L. Shelton	5 December 1988
Lt Col Robert C. Munsey	5 November 1990
Lt Col George S. Williams	13 August 1992

EMBLEM: None on file.

401ST FIGHTER WING

Locations in Italy



7402D MUNITIONS MAINTENANCE SQUADRON7402D MUNITIONS SUPPORT SQUADRON

This unit became operational in December 1963 as Detachment 1200 of USAFE's 7232d Munitions Maintenance Group. Upon inactivation of the 7232d on 1 November 1967, the unit became Detachment 2 of the 40th Tactical Group, at Aviano, Italy. It was redesignated the 7402d Munitions Support Squadron on 1 April 1972. When the 401st Fighter Wing replaced the 40th Support Wing on 4 May 1992, it assumed responsibility for the 7402d as well. The unit's mission; to receive, store, maintain, and, upon receipt of properly authenticated instructions, provide reliable weapons to the 154th Fighter-Bomber Squadron of the 6th Stormo remained unchanged throughout its history. The squadron shares two of the 40th Support Wing's Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, 1 October 1972-30 April 1973 and 1 July 1982-30 June 1984.

GHEDI-TORRE AIR BASE

Located in the heart of the rich Po Valley of northern Italy, Ghedi AB served as an Axis air base during World War II. The Army Air Force raided the base more than 20 times between May 1944 and April 1945. By September 1945, Ghedi was a heavy bomber base under the jurisdiction of the US Army Air Force Services Command. It is currently the home of the 154th Fighter-Bomber Squadron of the Italian Air Force's 6th Stormo and the 7402 MUNSS.

COMMANDERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE ASSIGNED</u>
Lt Col Zigmund Dara	1 April 1972
Lt Col James L. Henningsen	10 October 1972
Lt Col Gary R. Constantine	29 January 1975
Maj Joseph Drauzewski	17 June 1977
Lt Col Daniel DeSluca-Matteoni	15 June 1979
Lt Col James R. MacGeorgey	22 June 1981
Maj John P. Dipierro	8 August 1983
Lt Col Ronnie L. Primrose	17 June 1985
Lt Col Elkton J. Harrington	5 December 1987
Lt Col David P. Jones	11 December 1989
Lt Col Gilberto L. Ornelas	26 November 1991

EMBLEM: The airplane is symbolic of the missions of the squadron. The figure symbolized determination and readiness to meet any challenge any time, as were the centurions of ancient Rome. The emblem bears the national colors and the Air Force colors of gold and ultramarine blue.

DATE APPROVED: 27 July 1983



401ST MUNITIONS MAINTENANCE SQUADRON (THEATER)

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401ST MUNITIONS MAINTENANCE SQUADRON (THEATER)

This squadron's unique history derives from two separate entities. The first, constituted the 40th Aviation Depot Squadron (ADS) on 5 December 1956, activated on 1 January 1957. This unit, initially assigned to the 820th Air Base Group, and later the 380th Bombardment Wing (Medium), remained at Plattsburgh AFB, New York, from 1 January 1957 until it inactivated on 30 September 1972. On 1 July 1960, the 40 ADS was redesignated the 40th Munitions Maintenance Squadron. The second squadron, the 40th Ammunition Supply Squadron, was constituted on 15 August 1972 and activated on 8 October 1972. This squadron, assigned to the 40th Tactical Group, at Aviano, replaced the 7235th Ammunition Supply Squadron at Leghorn (Camp Darby), Italy. The Air Force consolidated the two squadrons on 1 May 1986, and on 15 May 1986 redesignated the combined squadrons as the 40th Munitions Maintenance Squadron (Theater) (MMS(T)).

Following the consolidation, the 40 MMS(T) remained at Camp Darby and continued to store conventional munitions as theater assets. In addition, the squadron assumed responsibility for USAFE Harvest Eagle base kits on 31 December 1975, when the Air Force inactivated Detachment 3, 40th Tactical Group and merged its personnel and equipment with the 40th Ammunition Supply Squadron. The Harvest Eagle Branch moved to Aviano in 1986, reassigned to the 40th Tactical Group. Since then the squadron's primary mission has involved maintaining the capability to receive, store, maintain, protect, dispose of, and prepare for the redistribution of non-nuclear munitions in support of the USAF in the Mediterranean area. The 40 MMS(T) became the 401st Munitions Maintenance Squadron (Theater) when the 401st Fighter Wing replaced the 40th Support Wing at Aviano AB. The 401st Munitions Maintenance Squadron, originally activated 15 May 1963 and assigned to the 401st, inactivated on 30 June 1979.

Over the years the squadron earned a reputation for superior performance. In addition to the three Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards it shared with the 40th Support Wing, the squadron earned two additional awards for meritorious service, one for the period 1 June 1978 to 31 May 1980 and the other from 30 June 1987 through 30 June 1989.

COMMANDERS

<u>NAMES</u>	<u>DATE ASSIGNED</u>
Capt Joseph A. Pombo	8 October 1972
Capt David J. White	19 July 1973
Capt Richard D. Zweig	15 July 1975
Major John B. Sloan	7 July 1978
Major Edward K. Johnson	18 July 1981
Major Jerry D. Reel	2 May 1983
Major Michael D. Baker	17 August 1984
Major Bruce Twining	13 July 1987
Major Steven L. Fuzzell	23 June 1990

**EMBLEM:** The clouds suggest the sky and reiterate the Air Force mission. The lightning bolts reflect speed in compliance to commitments. The open book and key allude to the knowledge of squadron personnel. The hammer and wrench represent the technical expertise of the unit's personnel. The heraldic bomb is symbolic of munitions and recalls the unit's predecessors.

**DATE APPROVED:** 7 March 1989

**MOTTO:** Prepared



## 7061ST MUNITIONS MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

28

## COMMANDERS (cont)

7061ST MUNITIONS SUPPORT SQUADRON

The United States Air Force established this military unit at Araxos on 14 July 1962. After several redesignations, the unit became the 7061st Munitions Maintenance Squadron on 1 April 1972. The 7061st MUNSS's primary mission is identical to that of the 7401st and 7402d in Italy. It also exists to receive, store, maintain, and, upon receipt of properly authenticated instructions, provide reliable weapons but to the 116th Combat Wing of the Hellenic Air Force (HAF) in Greece. The 7061st was reassigned to the 40th Support Wing on 28 June 1991, when Hellenikon Air Base, Greece, closed.

ARAXOS AIR BASE

Araxos Air Base was first established in April 1941 but had to be rebuilt in 1945 as the runway was completely destroyed by enemy aircraft during World War II. The base is located in the northwest corner of Peloponesos about 120 miles from Athens. It is the home of the 116th Combat Wing of the Hellenic Air Force which flies the F-104G in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's air-to-ground mission in the southern region.

COMMANDERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE ASSIGNED</u>
Lt Col Thomas S. Doane	Nov 71-Nov 72
Lt Col Patrick J. Frickleton	Nov 72-May 74
Lt Col William C. Grawler	May 74-May 75
Colonel Charles A. Pfeiffer	May 75-May 76
Major Stanley F. Jones	May 76-Apr 77
Major Frank T. Moorman	Apr 77-Apr 78
Major John W. Thompson	Apr 78-Apr 79
Major Lee R. Galbrath	Apr 80-Apr 81
Major David W. Copson	Apr 80-Apr 81
Major George Rohowsky	Apr 81-Apr 82
Major Raymond P. Merkle	Apr 82-Apr 83
Major Robert H. Kerr	Apr 83-Apr 84
Lt Col Alexander J. Lasio	Apr 84-Apr 85
Lt Col Stephen T. Forbes	Apr 85-Apr 86
Lt Col James M. Ward	Apr 86-Apr 87
Major Tommy C. Graves	Apr 87-Apr 88
Major Harold Donahue	Apr 88-Jan 89
Col Richard S. Davis, Jr.	Jan 89-Feb 89

Major Kelley R. Creamer	Feb 89-Mar 90
Major Thomas M. McCloghry	Mar 90-Feb 91
Lt Col Michael G. Koller	Feb 91-Jun 92
Major Kenneth Schuenemeyer	Jun 92-Present

**EMBLEM:** On a blue disc within a yellow border, rising above a wavy horizontal centerline two brown mountains with white tops and centered in front overall a black eagle with yellow head and black eye facing to left, with tail to right, wing upraised and grasping in its left claw a white battle axe with double blade to the left and in its right claw a green sprig of olive.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** The eagle, our national bird, flies through the blue skies, the squadron's theater of action. It flies over the mountains and waters representing both our countryside and waters and those of our allies, which we are pledged to protect. The eagle's body is black, the squadron color, and represents its strength in surprise, striking fear in the enemy's heart. The golden head represents the dignity and worth of the service member. The eagle carries the olive branch in its right claw representing the primary desire for peace. Its left claw carries the double headed axe, the unit's historical logo, representing the squadron's two-way threat, first as a deterrent power and secondly as the striking force should the enemy fail to be deterred.



### HISTORY OF AVIANO AIR BASE

Aviano Air Base pre-dates the US Air Force, originating in the early days of Italian military history. Built in 1911 at the foot of the pre-Alp Dolomite Mountains, it served as an Italian military school. Aviano shares the distinction of being the "cradle of the Italian Air Force" with Merna and Campoformido, two other airfields in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region.

During World War I, Italians used the field to fly combat missions against Austro-German armies in Austria to the north and parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which formed Yugoslavia after the war) to the east. At the end of the war, the base officially became Aeroporto Pagliano e Gori, in honor of two Italian aviators--Capt Maurizio Pagliano and Lt Luigi Gori--who made an unauthorized but heroic and successful raid during World War I. This 10 May 1916 raid on Austrian naval yards in Pola (part of the Austro-Hungarian empire) made them heroes and earned them national acclaim. A year later, in May 1917, the pair lost their lives while flying strafing missions in a tri-motored Caproni biplane bomber. They flew their fatal mission shortly after the 1917 disaster at Caporetto when enemy troops succeeded in rolling back the Italian line from the Austrian border to the banks of the Piave in one massive push. During the retreat, Pagliano and Gori stayed behind at Comina to blow up buildings before the Austro-German armies arrived. Enemy troops shot them down near Conegliano. The Italian poet and airman Gabriele D'Annunzio popularized their unauthorized heroic raid, and in 1920 the Italians renamed the base in their honor.

Between World War I and World War II, the base again supported training as well as operations for both fighter and bomber squadrons. Aviano Air Base produced some of Italy's finest aerobatic teams in this interim period. During World War II, both the German Luftwaffe and the Italian Air Force used Aviano Airfield to launch bombing raids against the Allies until 1945 when the Allied forces captured the base. Aviano received such severe damage from Allied bombs during the latter stages of the war that it took several years to return the base to operational status.

The US and Italian governments signed a joint use agreement in 1954 which brought Aviano into the family of NATO bases. Headquarters USAFE activated the base on 15 February 1955 and Detachment 1 of the 629th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron moved to Aviano Field from Campoformido, near Udine, Italy. Later the 629th at Udine was redesignated the 7227th Support Squadron while Detachment 1 at Aviano became the 7207th Air Base Squadron. Aviano's initial mission involved supporting NATO-committed rotational units from the Tactical Air Command. On Christmas Eve 1955, the first rotational squadron of Republic F-84 Thunderstreaks from the 390th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, Alexandria Air Force Base, Louisiana, arrived at Aviano. In 1957, the 7227th moved from Udine to Aviano and united with the 7207th to form the 7227th Combat Support Group. The Air Force reactivated the 40th Bombardment Group at Aviano on 14 March 1966 to replace the 7227th Combat Support Group which inactivated on 1 April 1966. It then redesignated the group the 40th Tactical Group. On 30 July 1990, the group was upgraded to wing status. On 4 May 1992, the 40th Tactical Support Wing inactivated and was replaced by the 401st Fighter Wing from Torrejon AB, Spain. Thus Aviano continued to serve as an essential component in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Southern Region defenses

*1 Apr 94 - 401 FW inactivated*