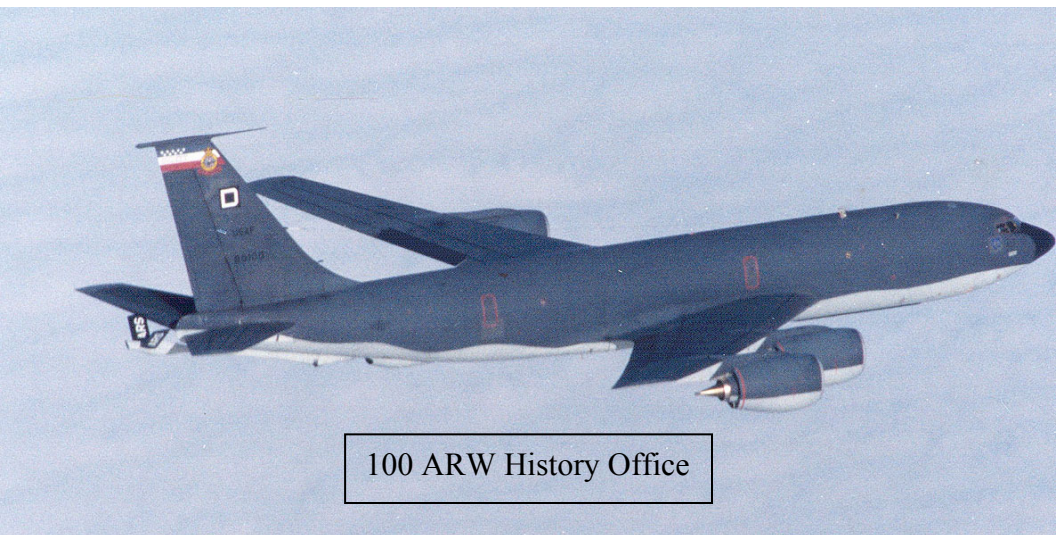
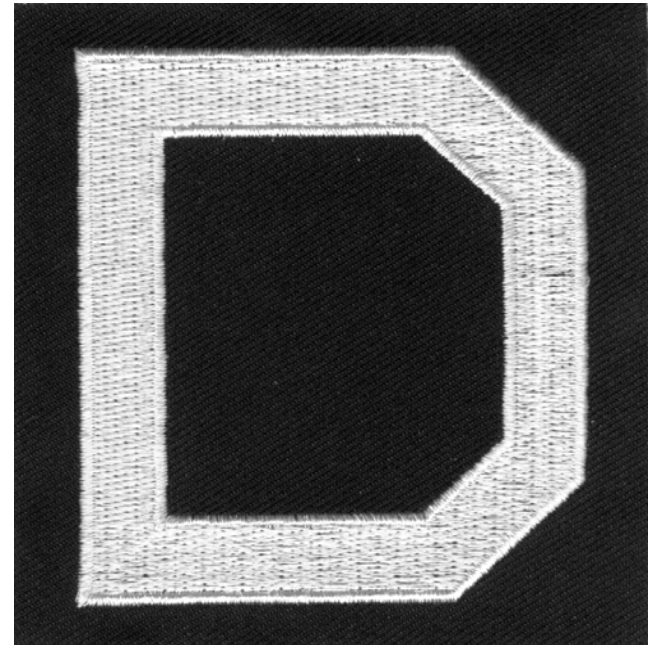


History of the 100th Air Refueling Wing and RAF Mildenhall



100 ARW History Office



SQUARE "D"

During World War II, bomb groups departing from England joined massive formations over the North Sea before heading to their targets on the continent. In order to ensure that members from the same group met and formed together, the bombers had tail markings unique to each bomb group. These consisted of a letter within a geometric shape to simplify recognition. These markings also enabled crews to identify each other when German anti-aircraft defenses and fighters caused the formations to break apart. The B-17s of the 100th Bombardment Group bore the "Square D."



Description - Gray, a base nebuly Azure bearing six mullets Argent arched to base supporting nine billets fesswise in chevron Sable and thereon two lions respectant Or langued Gules armed Black, the dexter grasping a palm branch bendwise sinister Vert and the sinister grasping a lightning flash surmounting bendwise of the sixth, all within a diminished bordure Yellow. Attached below the shield a white scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH" in Ultramarine Blue letters.

Significance - Blue and yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The lions, signifying honor and majesty, hold a lightning flash and a palm branch representing the organization's courage and adaptability in performing its mission through war and peace. The blocks represent the determination of subordinate units that assist in mission accomplishment and the stars represent the wisdom the organization acquired in combat. The stylized clouds are a tribute to those who have served, signifying the retrospection with which the organization honors its rich heritage.

History of the 100th Air Refueling Wing



100th Bombardment Group

On 1 June 1942 the U.S. Army Air Force activated the 100th Bombardment Group (BG) (Heavy) as an unmanned paper unit for B-24 *Liberators* under the 3rd Bomber Command. The group included four bomber squadrons, the 349th Bombardment Squadron, 350th Bombardment Squadron, 351st Bombardment Squadron, and the 418th Bombardment Squadron

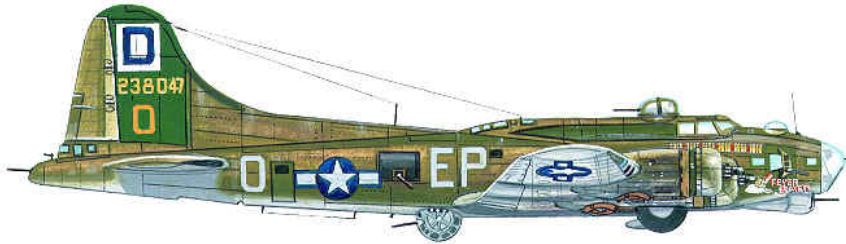


From left to right: 349th Bombardment Squadron, 350th Bombardment Squadron, 351st Bombardment Squadron, and the 418th Bombardment Squadron

27 October 1942 a small number of men transferred from the 29th Bombardment Group to Gowen Field, Idaho, near the state capital of Boise, to serve as the group's initial cadre.

After just four days this small cadre moved the 100 BG to Walla Walla Army Air Base (AAB), Washington. It was here that

the 100 BG received its first four B-17 *Flying Fortresses* from the Boeing factory in Seattle, Washington. It also received four aircrews.



Profile of a B-17 *Flying Fortress* from the 351st Bombardment Squadron

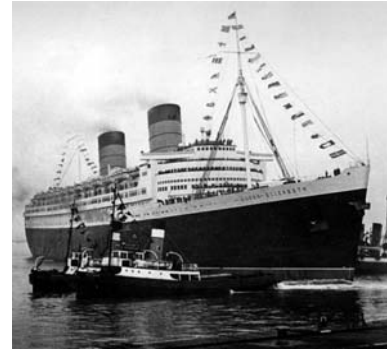


Wendover Field, Utah

The new 100 BG and its four B-17s moved on to Wendover Field, Utah, located on the Nevada-Utah border west of Salt Lake City, on 30 November 1942. It was here that the 100 BG received additional personnel, aircraft, and crew, and began to train for war (bombing, gunnery, and navigation).

Normally, a B-17 bombardment group has 18 to 21 aircraft.

By January 1943, the group was moving again. This time it relocated to two different locations. The ground echelon moved to Kearney Field, Nebraska, located just outside the town of Kearney west of Lincoln, Nebraska. Sioux City AAB, Iowa became the new home for the aircraft and aircrews of the 100 BG. While



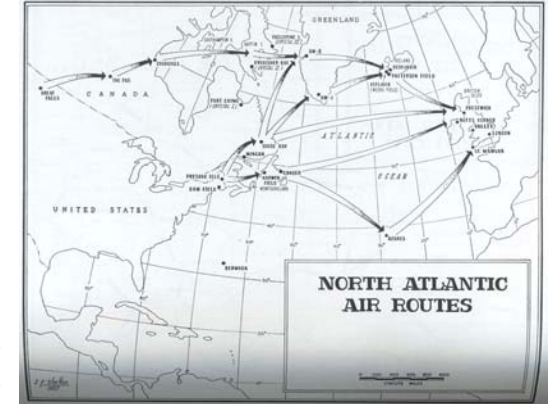
Queen Elizabeth

stationed at these two locations the 100 BG assisted in the air and ground training of other groups bound for overseas.

Mid-April saw the group preparing to begin its trip to England. The aircraft and crews joined the ground echelon at Kearney Field. They also received new B-17s after they arrived at the field.

On 2 May 1943 the ground echelon moved to the East Coast so they could be on the *Queen Elizabeth* for its 27 May 1943 departure from New York to Poddington, England.

After additional training the aircraft and crews of the 100 BG departed Kearney Field on 25 May 1943 to fly the North Atlantic route to England and into the war.



North Atlantic Routes

A few days after the ground and air echelons rendezvoused at Poddington, England on 4 June 1943, the 100 BG moved on to Thorpe Abbots, England or Army Air Force Station 139. The entire group was in place by 9 June 1943. Thorpe Abbots, a small hamlet some 100 miles

northeast of London, remained the home of the 100 BG until the end of the war.



Thorpe Abbots, England or Army Air Force Station 139 as it is today



The 100BG did not stand alone at Thorpe Abbots. Throughout their stay they were assisted by support units: 1776th Ordnance Company, 18th Weather Detachment, 869th Chemical Company, 216th Finance Section, 592nd Postal Unit, 1285th Military Police, 2110th Fire Fighting Platoon, 1141st Quartermaster Company, 83rd Service Group, 456th Sub-Depot, 412th Air Service Group, 838th Air Engineering Squadron, 662nd Air Material Squadron, American Red Cross, and a Royal Air Force Detachment. Throughout its stay at Thorpe Abbots, no matter what was happening in the air, the Ground Echelon of the 100 BG was cited frequently for its excellent maintenance and preparation activity.



The 100 BG flying in formation towards their target

It was not long before the 100 BG flew its first combat mission. On 25 June 1943 the 100 BG flew against submarine yards at Bremen, Germany. This was also the beginning of the *Bloody Hundredth's* legacy. The group inherited the *Bloody Hundredth* nickname from other bomb groups due to the amount of losses it took. While these losses were no more than any other group by the end of the war, the 100 BG experienced several instances where it lost 12 of 13 or 13 of 15 aircraft on one mission.

For the next six months, the group focused its bombing attacks against German airfields, industries, and naval facilities in France and Germany. Just two months after entering the war, the group received its first Distinguished Unit Citation for its attack on

the German aircraft factory at Regensburg on 17 August 1943. The 100 BG lost nine crews on this raid alone. Intelligence estimated production at the factory to be 200 ME-109 aircraft per month, or approximately 25 to 30 percent of Germany's entire single engine production. The attack seriously disrupted German fighter production.



Aircraft factory at Regensburg after the 17 August attack



Flack during the 8 October 1943 mission against Bremen, Germany

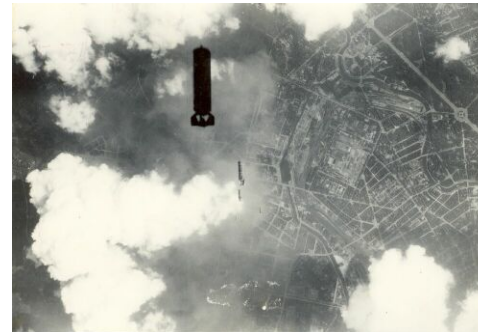
damage and one later had to be salvaged. Because of this the 100 BG could assemble only seventeen serviceable aircraft for the Marienburg, Germany mission on 9 October 1943. There were no losses from this 9 October 1943 mission. On 10 October 1943 the group put up 18 B-17s along with two from the

Another bad time for the group became known as "Black Week" and lasted from 8 October to 14 October 1943. The first target was Bremen, Germany. After that mission, seven B-17s were missing in action, a further six sustained significant battle

390th Bombardment Group to attack Munster, Germany. This made for a group of 20 B-17s. However, six of the 100 BG and one of the 390 BG aircraft had to abort over the North Sea. This left 13 aircraft to complete the mission. Of those 13 only one B-17, A/C 42-6087 "ROYAL FLUSH" of the 418th Bombardment Squadron, returned to base. It returned with two engines shot out and two crewmembers seriously wounded. After the Munster mission, the 100 BG could only get eight aircraft ready for the attack against Schweinfurt, Germany. These eight crews from the 100 BG were added to two other groups, 95 BG and 390 BG. All eight crews returned to base after the mission.



This is a good example of the type of damage inflicted in the B-17s



Mission against Berlin

aircraft factories. Also during this month the 100 BG participated

As 1944 began, the 100 BG continued to target airfields and industries, but added marshaling yards and missile sites (Hitler's Wonder Weapons) to their list. March 1944 saw the group take part in the Allied campaign, known as "The Big Week," against German

in two maximum efforts against Berlin, Germany. During these two missions, 6 and 24 March 1944, the group lost 24 aircraft.

During D-Day the 100 BG supported the invasion by attacking bridges and gun emplacements. As Allied troops moved on, the group continued to support ground troops by hitting enemy positions around St Lo, France in July 1944 and Brest, France in August and September 1944. During a mission over the Ruhland area of Germany on 11 September 1944, the group lost 14 aircraft.

In October 1944, the 100 BG turned its attacks against enemy ground defenses to aid in the Allied drive against the Siegfried Line. The Siegfried Line was a continuous concrete defense system. It ran from Kleve, Germany in the vicinity of Nijmegen, Germany to the Swiss border. These defenses ranged from simple 'Dragon's teeth' to complete fortresses comparable with the French fortifications of the Maginot Line.



American Troops moving through a portion of the Siegfried Line

December 1944 saw the Germans launched a surprise attack that became known as the Battle of the Bulge. As part of its support during this battle, the 100 BG attacked marshaling yards, German occupied villages, and communication targets in the Ardennes, Germany. It was during this month that the group

suffered its last large loss of aircraft. On 31 December 1944, the 100 BG flew a mission against Hamburg, Germany. It was on this mission that the group lost 12 aircraft.



100 BG's B-17 "SILVER DOLLAR" at Mirgorod, Russia in July 1944

Not all of the missions flown by the 100 BG were bombing missions. It participated in all three 8th Air Force shuttle missions, twice to Russia and once to Africa. During the war it flew mercy missions dropping food to the French Resistance. After the war, it continued to fly these humanitarian missions by dropping food to Warsaw, Poland and six food drops to the Netherlands. It also transported former French POWs from Austria back to France.

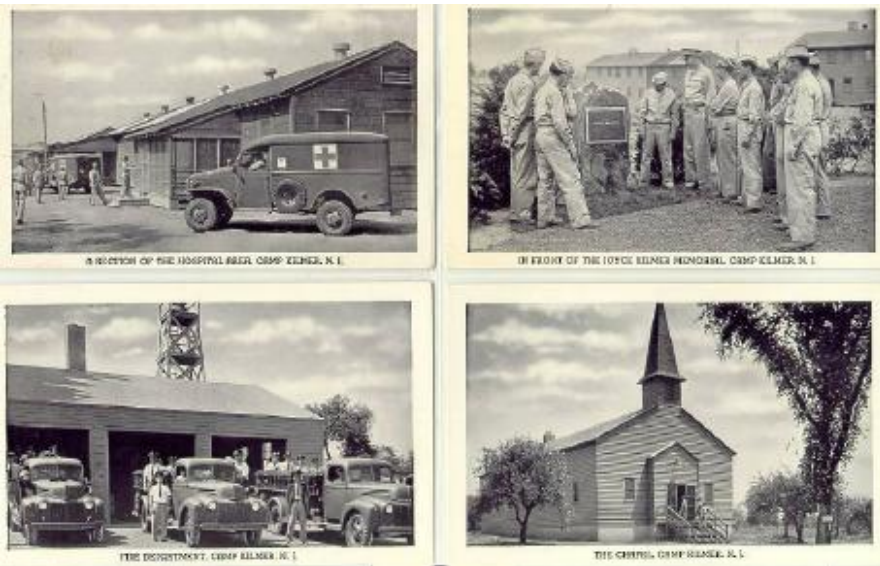
20 April 1945 saw the 100 BG fly its last combat mission. During the 22 months that some 7,000 men and a few women of the 100 BG operated out of Thorpe Abbots, the group flew 306 missions. The Air Force credited them with 8630 sorties; dropping 19,257.1 tons of bombs plus 435.1 tons of food on mercy missions. The 100 BG's gunners



ME-262 German Jet Fighter. One of the few that saw combat.

claimed 261 enemy aircraft shot down, 1,010 probably destroyed, and 139 possibly destroyed. They were some of the first gunners who, late in the war, destroyed a ME-262 German Jet fighter. Additionally, the group received citations by the Norway government-in-exile, and the British for its bombing of Rjukan, Norway, which delayed the manufacture of heavy water for the German atomic bomb, and stiffened the Norwegian underground resistance.

In December 1945, the 100 BG returned to the U.S. and inactivated at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, west of Staten Island New York, on 21 December 1945. It reactivated as a reserve unit at Miami Army Air Field from 29 May 1947 to 27 June 1949.



Pictures from Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.

After almost five and a half years the new independent U.S. Air Force reactivated the unit on 1 January 1956 as the 100th Bombardment Wing (BW) (Medium) at Portsmouth Air Force Base, New Hampshire. With the reactivation of the wing came the reactivation of three of its former squadrons, 349 BS, 350 BS, and 351 BS. It was almost like old times as the 100 BW found itself under the 8 AF again.

On 19 April 1956, the wing received its first new bomber, a B-47 *Stratojet* named, “The State of New Hampshire.” The first of these new bombers went to the 349 BS. With the assignment of the 100th Air Refueling Squadron and its 10 KC-97 *Stratofreighters*, the wing was now in the air refueling business as well. By 17 April 1957, the 100 BW was at its full strength with 45 B-47s and 21 KC-97s.



Above: B-47 Stratojet

Below: KC-97 Stratofreighter



For the next ten years, the wing performed global strategic bombardment training and global air refueling with the B-47s and KC-97s. Portsmouth AFB received a name change on 7 September 1957 to become Pease AFB in honor of Captain Harl Pease Jr., a WWII flyer killed in action. On 22 November 1957,

the official wing emblem changed to the one pictured in the front of this pamphlet. Its new motto was “Peace Through Strength.” During this time, the 100 BW even spent some time rotating in and out of RAF Mildenhall.

Change came to the wing again on 25 June 1966 when the USAF redesignated it the 100th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW). This new unit then moved without equipment/personnel to Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, now one of the largest storage locations for old USAF aircraft.



This is a good example of the drone aircraft used by the 100 SRW. This particular one, “Tom Cat,” set a record of 68 reconnaissance missions.



U-2s from the 100 SRW deployed to Thailand to support U.S. forces in Southeast Asia.

As part of the move the 100 SRW absorbed the resources of the 408th Strategic Wing. During the time period between 1966 and 1976, the wing performed strategic reconnaissance with U-2 and drone aircraft. Drone aircraft used by the 100 SRW were target drones converted to perform reconnaissance missions. These were the precursors to today's Unmanned Aerial

Vehicles. Much of that reconnaissance work was over Southeast Asia during the U.S. involvement with the conflict in Vietnam.

30 September 1976 saw the 100 SRW go through several major changes. First it transferred its drone operations to Tactical Air Command and its U-2 operations to the 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing. It was also phasing down operations at Davis-Monthan AFB. Into this mix the USAF moved the wing to Beale AFB, California without any equipment or personnel and redesignated the wing to the 100th Air Refueling Wing. Its new mission was to provide the 9 SRW with air refueling support with its KC-135Q *Stratotankers*. This mission lasted until the 100 ARW inactivated on 15 March 1983.

While it remained inactive for several years, it did reactivate for a just over a year as the 100th Air Division at Whiteman AFB, Missouri from 1 July 1990 to 1 August 1991.

Just six months after its inactivation as an Air Division the unit returned to



This KC-135R is from the current 100 ARW, but it is very similar to the “Q” model of the KC-135



RAF Mildenhall c.a. 1990

England, after 47 years, as the redesignated 100th Air Refueling Wing on 1 February 1992. Its new home, RAF Mildenhall, was just 23 miles west of its first English home, Thorpe Abbots. The



100 ARW also brought along one of its former WWII squadrons, the redesignated 351st Air Refueling Squadron whose emblem changed on 16 September 1958. Its new motto was Pax Opus Nostrum, “Peace is Our Profession.”



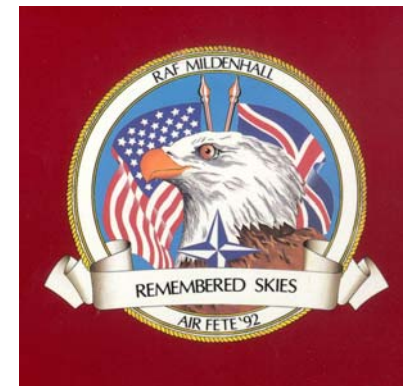
At the same time the 100 ARW activated, the 100th Regional Support Group (RSG) activated. Its mission was to support the smaller units scattered throughout the U.K. and one in Norway. The 100 RSG continued this mission until 1 July 1994 when the group inactivated. To take over this mission, the USAF activated the 603rd Regional Support Group directly under 3 AF. However, as they say, “the more things change the more they stay the same.” In September 1995 the responsibilities for several of the Geographically Separated Units (GSU) once again fell to the 100 ARW. This was the result of 3 AF reviewing its organizational structure. The GSUs picked up by the 100 ARW were the 422nd Air Base Squadron at RAF Croughton, the 423rd Air Base Squadron at RAF Alconbury, the 424th Air Base Squadron at RAF Fairford, and the 426th Air Base Squadron at Stavanger, Norway. On 15 Jan 04, the 420th Air Base Group activated under

Third Air Force and assumed responsibility for the GSUs. A little more than a year later, on 12 May 05, the 501st Combat Support Wing activated and assumed control over the GSUs in England.

Shortly after taking on host wing responsibilities from the inactivating 513th Airborne Command and Control Wing, the 100 ARW also took on the European Tanker Task Force (ETTF) mission from the 306th Strategic Wing when it inactivated on 31 March 1992. This meant the wing would control its own KC-135s as well as the KC-135s rotating in and out of RAF Mildenhall under ETTF.

It was not until later that same year that the 100 ARW received the first of its own KC-135s. This one arrived on 22 May 1992 with a second arriving on 2 June 1992. It did not have its full complement of nine tankers until September 1992.

The arrival of the wing’s first permanent KC-135 was just in time for the 100 ARW’s first Air Fete. This was an annual air show held on RAF Mildenhall. So it was not an unusual event in that regard. However, it was a special one for the 100 ARW. It was the wing’s first time hosting this major event. Second the wing had its first KC-135 to put on display for the show. Finally and most importantly, the timing of the Air Fete came very close to marking the fiftieth birthday of the 100 ARW. Because of this, the wing invited the members of the original 100 BG back to England to



Emblem used for the 1992 Air Fete, known as “Remembered Skies.”

Lineage

celebrate the Air Fete with the 100 ARW. Each Air Fete had a theme, and this one was “Remembered Skies” and commemorated the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF) in Great Britain. As the name implies, the focus of this Air Fete was USAAF aircraft from WWII. The last Air Fete was conducted in May 2001.

Because the 100 ARW and ETTF represented the primary air refueling resource in the United States Air Forces in Europe’s (USAFE) area of operation (AOR), it fell to them to support numerous operations both for the U.S. and for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

On 29 June 1995, the 100 ARW proposed eliminating the need for the ETTF by increasing the wing’s permanently assigned KC-135s from nine to fifteen. After receiving approval from Air Staff in November 1997, the ETTF mission ended on 28 November 1998, ending 22 years of operations. By the time ETTF ended, the 100 ARW was ready, having reached its full complement of 15 KC-135s by September 1998. Since the end of ETTF, the 100 ARW supported numerous USAF/NATO operations as well as several major operations such as: Noble Anvil, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 100 ARW supported Operation ODYSSEY DAWN from 19 March 2011 to 30 March 2011. The wing then supported Operation Unified Protector after 31 March 2011.

Established as 100th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 28 Jan 1942. Activated on 1 Jun 1942. Redesignated 100th Bombardment Group, Heavy, on 20 Aug 1943. Inactivated on 21 Dec 1945. Redesignated 100th Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, on 13 May 1947. Activated in the Reserve on 29 May 1947. Inactivated on 27 Jun 1949. Consolidated on 31 Jan 1984 with the 100th Bombardment Wing, Medium, which was established on 23 Mar 1953. Activated on 1 Jan 1956. Redesignated: 100th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing on 25 Jun 1966; 100th Air Refueling Wing, Heavy, on 30 Sep 1976. Inactivated on 15 Mar 1983. Redesignated 100th Air Division on 15 Jun 1990. Activated on 1 Jul 1990. Inactivated on 26 Jul 1991. Redesignated 100th Air Refueling Wing, and activated, on 1 Feb 1992.

Honors

Distinguished Unit Citation: Germany, 17 August 1943;
Berlin, Germany, 4, 6, 8 March 1944.
French Croix de Guerre with Palm: 25 June - 31 December 1944.
Service Streamers: Air Offensive, Europe, Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe, Air Combat.
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device:
1 July 1972 - 30 June 1973.
Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: 1 April 1993 - 31 July 1994,
1 August 1994 - 31 July 1995, 1 August 1995 - 31 July 1997,
1 August 1997 - 23 March 1999, 24 March 1999 to 10 June 1999*,
11 June 1999 - 10 June 2001, 1 October 2003 – 30 September
2005, 1 October 2005 – 31 December 2006.
*Earned while 100 AEW was assigned to the 16th Air and Space
Expeditionary Task Force, S.O. GA-20, 14 March 2000.

Assignments

III Bomber Command, 1 Jun 1942; Second Air Force, 18 Jun 1942; II Bomber Command, 26 Jun 1942; 15th Bombardment (later, 15th Bombardment Training; 15th Bombardment Operational Training) Wing, 30 Nov 1942; Eighth Air Force, c. 2 Jun 1943; VIII Bomber Command, c. 4 Jun 1943; 4th Bombardment Wing, 4 Jun 1943 (attached to 402d Provisional Combat Wing Bombardment [Heavy], 6 Jun–12 Sep 1943); 3d Bombardment Division, 13 Sep 1943; 13th Combat Bombardment Wing (Heavy), 14 Sep 1943; 3d Air Division, 18 Jun 1945; 1st Air Division, 12 Aug 1945; 3d Air Division, 28 Sep 1945; VIII Fighter Command, 1 Nov–Dec 1945. 49th Bombardment Wing, Very Heavy (later, 49th Air Division, Bombardment), 29 May 1947–27 Jun 1949. Eighth Air Force, 1 Jan 1956; 817th Air Division, 1 Feb 1956 (attached to 7th Air Division, 29 Dec 1957–1 Apr 1958); 12th Strategic Aerospace Division, 25 Jun 1966; 14th Strategic Aerospace Division, 30 Jun 1971; 12th Strategic Missile (later, 12th Air) Division, 1 Aug 1972; 14th Air Division, 30 Sep 1976–15 Mar 1983. Eighth Air Force, 1 Jul 1990–26 Jul 1991. Third Air Force, 1 Feb 1992–30 Oct 2005. US Air Forces Europe, 1 Nov 05–17 Nov 05. Air Command Europe, 18 Nov 05–30 Nov 2006, Third Air Force, 1 Dec 06 – present.

Components

Wings.

351st Strategic Missile: 1 Jul 1990–26 Jul 1991
509th Bombardment: 30 Sep 1990–26 Jul 1991

Group.

100th Operations: 1 Feb 1992 – present

100th Logistics: 1 Feb 1992 – 1 Jul 2002
100th Maintenance: 1 Jul 2002 – present
100th Mission Support: 1 Jul 2002 – present
100th Communications: 31 Mar 1993 – 1 Aug 1994
100th Regional Support: 1 Feb 1992 – 1 Jul 1994
100th Support: 1 Feb 1992 – 1 Jul 2002

Squadrons.

9th Air Refueling: 30 Sep 1976–27 Jan 1982
99th Strategic Reconnaissance: 1 Nov 1972–30 Jun 1976
100th Air Refueling: 16 Aug 1956–25 Jun 1966
100th Aircraft Generation: 1 Jan 1956–30 Sep 1976, 16 Dec 1996 – 1 Jul 2002
100th Aircraft Maintenance: 1 Jul 2002 – present
100th Civil Engineer: 1 Jan–15 Jun 1956; 30 Sep 1976–15 Mar 1983; 1 Feb 1992 – present
100th Communications: 1 Feb 1992 – present
100th Comptroller: 15 Jun 1995 – present
100th Consolidated Equipment Maintenance: 1 Feb 1992–1 Jul 1994
100th Force Support: 13 Jun 2008 – present
100th Logistics Readiness: 1 Jul 2002 – present
100th Logistics Support: 1 Feb 1992 – 1 Jul 2002
100th Maintenance: 1 Jan 1956–30 Sep 1976; 1 Feb 1992 – present
100th Maintenance Operations: 1 Jul 2002 – present
100th Medical Contingency: 1 Feb 1992–1 Jul 1994
100th Mission Support: 1 Feb 1992 – 13 Jun 2008
100th Operations Support: 1 Feb 1992 – present
100th Resource Management: 1 Feb 1992–1 Jul 1994
100th Security Forces: 1 Jan–15 Jun 1956; 30 Sep 1976–15 Mar 1983; 1 Feb 1992 – present
100th Services: 1 Jan–15 Jun 1956; 1 Oct 1979–15 Mar 1983; 1 Feb 1992 – 1 Sep 1992; 15 Jan 1994–13 Jun 2008

100th Supply: 1 Jan-15 Jun 1956; 30 Sep 1976-15 Mar 1983; 1 Feb 1992-1 Jul 2002

100th Transportation: 1 Jan-15 Jun 1956; 30 Sep 1976-15 Mar 1983; 1 Feb 1992- 1 Jul 2002

100th Morale, Welfare, Recreation and Services: 1 Sep 1992-15 Jan 1994

349th Bombardment (later Air Refueling): 1 Jun 1942–1 Dec 1945; 29 May 1947–27 Jun 1949; 1 Jan 1956–15 Mar 1983

350th Bombardment (later Air Refueling): 1 Jun 1942–15 Dec 1945; 16 Jul 1947–27 Jun 1949; 1 Jan 1956–1 Jul 1976 (detached 4 Mar–c. 4 Apr 1958); 28 Jan 1982–15 Mar 1983

351st Bombardment (later Air Refueling): 1 Jun 1942–15 Dec 1945; 17 Jul 1947– 27 Jun 1949; 1 Jan 1956–25 Jun 1966; 31 Mar 1992-present

418th Bombardment (later Air Refueling): 1 Jun 1942– 19 Dec 1945; 29 May 1947–27 Jun 1949; 1 Mar 1959–1 Jan 1962

422d Air Base: 19 Jul 1996 – 15 Jan 2004

423rd Air Base: 19 Jul 1996 – 15 Jan 2004

424th Air Base: 19 Jul 1996 – 15 Jan 2004

426th Air Base: 19 Jul 1996 – 15 Jan 2004

509th Air Refueling: attached 8 Apr–8 Jul 1958

Stations

Orlando AAB, FL	1 Jun 1942
Barksdale Field, LA	18 Jun 1942
Pendleton Field, OR	26 Jun 1942
Gowen Field, ID	28 Aug 1942
Walla Walla AAB, WA	1 Nov 1942
Wendover Field, UT	30 Nov 1942
Sioux City AAB, IA	c. 1 Jan 1943
Kearney AAFld, NE	3 Feb – May 1943
Thorpe Abbots, England	9 Jun 1943–12 Dec 1945

Camp Kilmer, NJ	20–21 Dec 1945
Miami AAFld, FL	29 May 1947–27 Jun 1949
Portsmouth (later, Pease) AFB, NH	1 Jan 1956
Davis–Monthan AFB, AZ	25 Jun 1966
Beale AFB,CA	30 Sep 1976–15 Mar 1983
Whiteman AFB, MO	1 Jul 1990–26 Jul 1991
RAF Mildenhall, England	1 Feb 1992

Commanders

Unknown	1 Jun 1942 – Nov 1942
Col Darr H. Alkire	14 Nov 1942 – 25 Mar 1943
Col Howard M. Turner	26 Mar 1943 – 7 May 1943
Col Harold Q. Huglin	8 May 1943 – 31 Jun 1943
Col Neil B. Harding	1 Jul 1943 – 5 Mar 1944
Lt Col John M. Bennett, Jr.	6 Mar 1944 – 19 Apr 1944 (acting)
Col Robert H. Kelly	20 Apr 1944 – 27 Apr 1944
Lt Col John M. Bennett, Jr.	28 Apr 1944 – 5 May 1944 (acting)
Col Thomas S. Jeffery, Jr.	6 May 1944 – 1 Feb 1945
Col Frederick J. Sutterlin	2 Feb 1945 – 22 Jun 1945
Col John B. Wallace	23 Jun 1945 – 31 Jul 1945
Col Harry F. Cruver	1 Aug 1945 – 21 Dec 1945
Unknown	29 May 1947 – 27 Jun 1949
Col James W. Chapman, Jr.	1 Jan 1956 – 24 Apr 1956
Brig Gen Walter E. Arnold	25 Apr 1956 – 3 Aug 1956
Col Ariel W. Nielsen	4 Aug 1956 – 31 Oct 1957
Col Gordon F. Goyt	1 Sep 1957 – 22 Oct 1957
Col Charles L. Wimberly	23 Oct 1957 – 14 Nov 1957
Col Winton R. Close	15 Nov 1957 – 31 Mar 1958
Col Charles L. Wimberly	1 Apr 1958 – 25 May 1958
Col Winton R. Close	26 May 1958 – 28 Jun 1959
Col Roland W. Bergamyer	29 Jun 1959 – 22 Jul 1959
Col Delmore P. Wood	23 Jul 1959 – 15 Sep 1960

Col Richard D. Reinbold	16 Sep 1960 – 1 Jul 1962
Col Wallace Wall, Jr.	2 Jul 1962 – 7 Jul 1965
Col Raymond E. Buckwalter	8 Jul 1965 – 20 Sep 1965
Col James S. Howard	21 Sep 1965 – 1 Apr 1966
Unknown	c. 1 Apr 1966 – 24 Jun 1966
Col William D. Kyle, Jr.	25 Jun 1966 – 14 Aug 1966
Col Marion C. Mixon	15 Aug 1966 – 30 Jul 1970
Col Raymond L. Haupt	31 Jul 1970 – 28 Jun 1972
Col Donald S. White	29 Jun 1972 – 6 May 1974
Col Charles B. Stratton	7 May 1974 – 10 Jul 1976
Col Lyman M. Kidder	11 Jul 1976 – 29 Sep 1976
Col John J. Tobin	30 Sep 1976 – 3 Jan 1978
Col Robert D. Beckel	4 Jan 1978 – 9 Aug 1978
Col Stanley O. Klepper	10 Aug 1978 – 17 Jun 1980
Col Lawrence F. McNeil	18 Jun 1980 – 18 Feb 1981
Col William G. Dolan, Jr.	19 Feb 1981 – 21 Apr 1982
Col Anthony L. St. Amant,	22 Apr 1982 – 15 Mar 1983
Col Thomas E. Kuenning, Jr.	1 Jul 1990 – 3 Jan 1991
Col John J. Politi	4 Jan 1991 – 26 Jul 1991
Col Jonas L. Blank, Jr.	1 Feb 1992 – 29 Nov 1992
Col David E. Pope	30 Nov 1992 – 2 Oct 1994
Col James W. Morehouse	3 Oct 1994 – 1 May 1996
Col Christopher Kelly	2 May 1996 – 3 Jun 1997
Col Jeffrey B. Kohler	4 Jun 1997 – 27 Jul 1998
Col Glen F. Spears	28 Jul 1998 – 20 Apr 2000
Col Bruce E. Burda	21 Apr 2000 – 19 Jul 2001
Col Donald Lustig	20 Jul 2001 – 15 Jul 2003
Col Richard T. Devereaux	16 Jul 2003 – 5 Jun 05
Col Michael C. Stough	6 Jun 2005 – 21 Jun 07
Col Eden J. Murrie	22 Jun 07 – 09 Sep 09
Col Chad T. Manske	9 Sep 09 - 23 Jun 11
Col Christopher J. Kulas	24 Jun 11 - present

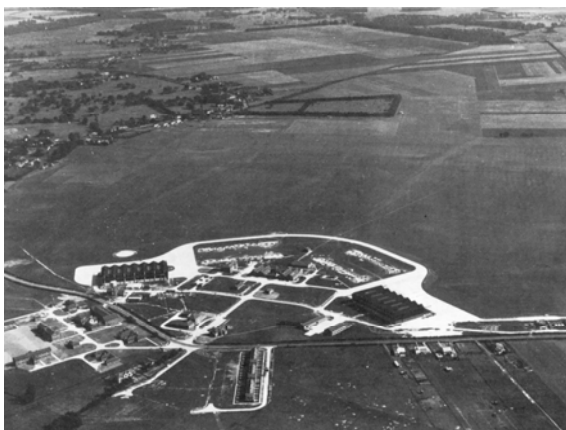
Aircraft

B-17	1942–1945
Unkn	1947–1949
B-47	1956–1966
KC-97	1956–1965
U-2	1966–1976
WU-2	1966–1969
DC-130	1966–1976
CH-3	1966–1976
Q-147 (later, AQM-34) drone	1966–1976
KC-135	1976–1983, 1992-present
Minuteman II	1990–1991



RAF Station Mildenhall Badge
Motto: "That Eagles May Fly"

Contractors completed the first buildings in 1931. Three years later the station was ready for its official opening. RAF Station Mildenhall opened on 16 October 1934. However, King George V officially dedicated the base



RAF Station Mildenhall 1934

History of the RAF Mildenhall

Royal Air Force (RAF) Mildenhall's history of being a large aircraft base goes all the way back to late 1920s. During that time, the British military developed the idea to site a RAF bomber base at Mildenhall in order to meet a perceived "continental threat."

In 1929, the government purchased the land and construction began in October 1930. The first official name for the base was RAF Beck Row, but that changed in 1933 to RAF Station Mildenhall.

on 19 October 1934. Queen Mary, the Price of Wales, and the Duke of York accompanied the king during the dedication. On the same day, Wing Commander F.J. Linnell, O.B.E., assumed his position as the base's first station commander.

The date for the dedication was, in part, due to the Royal Aero Club wanting to start their England-to-Australia air race on 20 October 1934. The dedication, as well as the start of the MacRoberson Air Race from Mildenhall to Melbourne, Australia, saw 70,000 people gathered to witness both events. Twenty aircraft began the race at RAF Station Mildenhall, but it was two Englishmen, who flew the 11,300 miles to Melbourne in 70 hours, 54 minutes, that won the prize of £10,000.

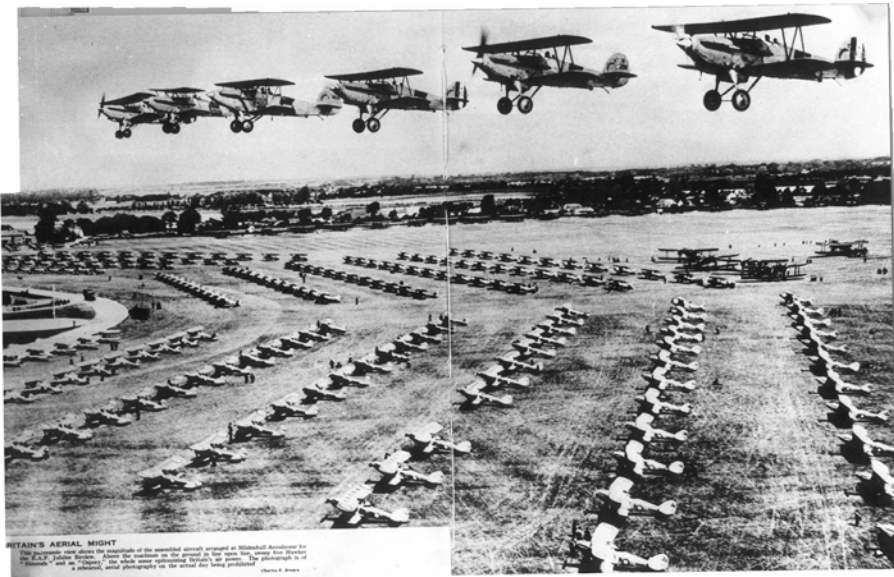


No. 99 (Madras Presidency) (Bomber) Squadron



Heyford Night Bomber

While the base was now open, it did not receive its first operational unit until 15 November 1934 when No. 99 (Madras Presidency) (Bomber) Squadron, arrived at RAF Station Mildenhall. Along with the No. 99 Squadron came the Heyford Night Bomber the first bombers to be stationed at RAF Station Mildenhall. It reequipped with Wellington Bombers in 1938 and



A picture of the practice formation the day before the actual review.



King George V, the Prince of Wales and Duke of York during reviewing aircraft and aircrews.

left the station in March 1941. Its motto was QUISQUE TENAX (Each Tenacious)

As part of the King George V's Silver Jubilee on 6 July 1935, the RAF chose RAF Station Mildenhall as one of two venues to host a royal review of the RAF. Thirty-eight squadrons with 370 aircraft lined up for this royal review by the king. This collection of aircraft included, bombers, fighters,

and observation aircraft. The number of aircraft constituted one third of the RAF's total strength at that time. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of York accompanied the king during his review. A memorial tablet located in front of the Building 562, the current 3AF-UK headquarters, commemorates this historical event.

A second operational squadron activated on RAF Station Mildenhall on 16 September 1935. Its core came from "B" flight of No. 99 Squadron. This was the No. 38 (Bomber) Squadron. They too started with the Heyford bombers and their motto was ANTE LUCEM (Before The Dawn).



No. 38 (Bomber) Squadron

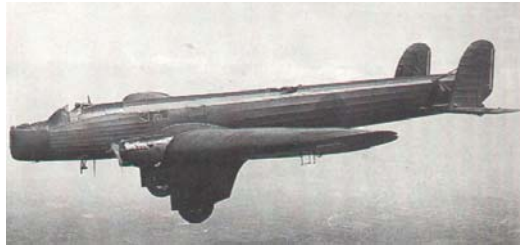
On 1 May 1936, No. 3 Group, one of five groups forming out of the Central and Western Bombing Areas, took control of RAF Station Mildenhall. This group would eventually move to RAF Station Mildenhall.

A few days after that, on 23 May 1936, RAF Station Mildenhall opened its gates to the public for Empire Air Day. This was the very first "Air Show" at RAF Station Mildenhall. Around 6,000 people came to watch flying displays and shows of technical equipment.

8 July 1936 saw King Edward VIII, the Duke of York and the Chief of the Air Staff came to RAF Station Mildenhall to inspect No. 99 Squadron, No. 38 Squadron and No. 40 (Bomber) Squadron. No. 40 Squadron came to RAF Station Mildenhall for this inspection. The King also inspected some of the base facilities. He had only assumed the throne seven months before, after his father, King George V died. He reigned from January to

December 1936. He was also the first monarch to be a qualified pilot.

Towards the end of the year, No. 38 Squadron began to replace their Heyford bombers with the Fairey Hendon Night Bomber. The first one arrived at RAF Station Mildenhall on 20 November 1936.



Fairey Hendon night bomber

These were not new bombers. A Fairey Hendon first flew in November 1930 but because of a prolonged series of trials, they were not ordered into production until the spring of 1934. Even then, only 14 Fairey Hendons were ordered and they all served with No 38 Squadron between 1936 and January 1939.



Building used by No. 3 Group

On 16 January 1937, No. 3 Group moved from Andover to RAF Station Mildenhall. The building they used later became home to Third Air Force, and in April 2008, the consolidated home of the 100th Air Refueling Wing and other agencies.



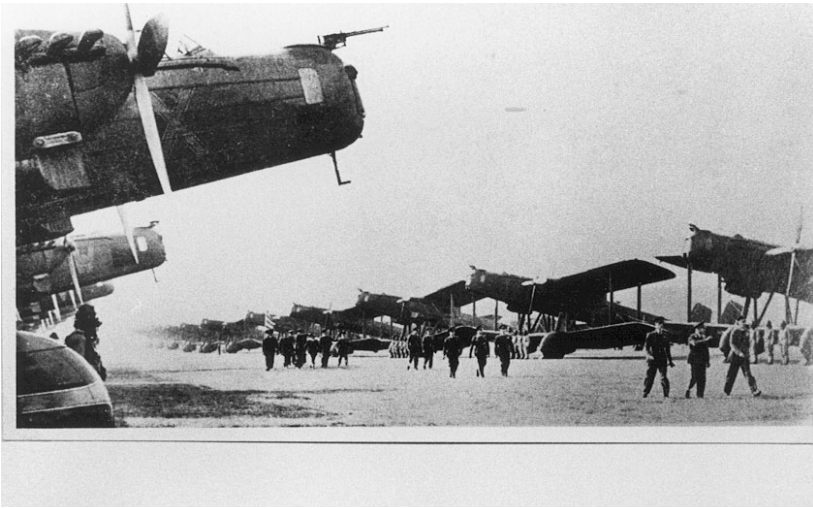
No. 149 (East India) (Bomber) Squadron

A new unit with new aircraft arrived on RAF Station Mildenhall on 12 April 1937. It was the No. 149 (East India) (Bomber) Squadron and they brought Wellington Bombers with them. No. 149 Squadron formed from part of the No. 99 Squadron and was one of several commonwealth units that operated out of RAF Station Mildenhall. This bomber squadron's motto was FORTIS NOCTE (Strong by Night). It operated from the station during WWII until 6 April 1942.



The Wellingtons pictured here are early models before the rotating gun turret replaced the single gun in the nose of the aircraft.

On 19 October 1937, a German Air Force Mission visited the RAF Station Mildenhall. They inspected No. 99 Squadron and No. 149 Squadron and also received a fly-past by various new medium and heavy bombers. RAF Command instructed the crews of the British bombers to give misleading information about their aircraft's capabilities when asked by members of the German mission.



Top-level German Mission inspecting bombers of No. 99 and 149 Squadrons. The mission included Gen Erhard Milch, the architect of the German Luftwaffe.

After a year of relative peace, the preliminary events of what would become World War II began when Czechoslovakia rejected Hitler's claims to her territory. Between 26 September and 4 October 1938, the "European Crisis," or "Munich Crisis," as it was known, caused a great deal of activity on RAF Station Mildenhall. This was the German invasion of Czechoslovakia. Even though the two squadrons were not mobilizing, many of its

officers received orders to other units. Families around the station were told to be ready to evacuate at a moments notice.

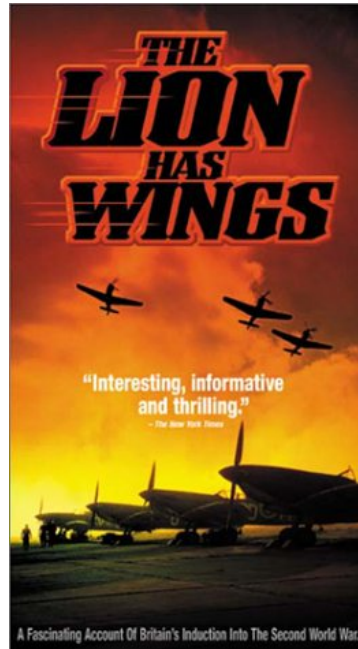
On 3 September 1939, three days after Germany's invasion of Poland, Britain and France declared war on Germany. Six hours after the official declaration of war on Germany, three Wellington Bombers from No. 149 Squadron took off to bomb German battleships in the Kiel Canal. The Kiel Canal is the stretch of waterway that links the North Sea to the Baltic Sea.



King George VI and the Queen Mother during their inspection of No. 149 Squadron

Shortly after becoming king, King George VI made his first visit to RAF Station Mildenhall as king, during a surprise inspection of the aircrews of No. 149 Squadron on 2 November 1939.

In 1940 RAF Station Mildenhall became the location for the making of two films. The first being “The Lion has Wings,” and the second was “Target for Tonight.” The propaganda film staged at RAF Station Mildenhall entitled “The Lion has Wings,” showed the nation how the station and its Wellington bombers were preparing for war. Crown Film Unit filmed Harry Watt’s film “Target for Tonight” on RAF Station Mildenhall using Wellingtons from No. 149 Squadron.



Advertisements for both movies.

On 18 January 1940, No. 149 Squadron conducted its first night bombing. Previously British bombers conducted daylight bombings over targets in Europe. This changed to nighttime bombing due to heavy bomber losses.

27 October 1940 saw RAF Station Mildenhall receive its first attack by German fighters and bombers. Like many RAF Stations throughout southeast England who were in range of German aircraft, this would not be the last attack on RAF Station Mildenhall.

Another first for RAF Station Mildenhall and the RAF itself came on 4 December 1940 with an attack by Wellington bombers on Turin, Italy, located near the border between France and Italy. This was the first attack on Italy by Wellington bombers flying directly from the U.K.



Nearly a year later on 2 November 1941, No. 149 Squadron traded its Wellington bombers for the new Stirling bombers. These were the first Stirling bombers permanently stationed at RAF Station Mildenhall.

These Stirling bombers from the No. 620 Squadron are preparing to tow gliders full of British paratroopers. Note the D-Day stripe markings on the aircraft

The following month RAF Station Mildenhall became home for a new bomber squadron. On 15 December 1941 the No. 419 (Canadian) (Bomber) Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Force, activated at RAF Station Mildenhall. They remained based there until 13 August 1942 when the squadron transferred to the newly formed Group 6. They were only the third Canadian squadron to become operational overseas. It was known as the “Moose” squadron in honor of its first commanding officer, WG CDR John “Moose” Fulton. Their motto was MOOSA ASWAYITA (Beware the Moose).



**No. 419 (Canadian)
(Bomber) Squadron,
Royal Canadian Air
Force**

	OPERATIONAL GROUPS	OTUs	FLIGHT TRAINING COMMAND	TOTAL FLYING	TOTAL LOST	% LOST
Twin-engined:	Wellingtons	299	4	602	29	4.8
	Whitleys	7		28	1	3.5
	Hampdens	34		79	1	1.2
	Manchesters	46		46	4	8.7
Four-engined:	Stirlings	88		88	2	2.3
	Halifaxes	131		131	3	2.3
	Lancasters	73		73	1	1.4
TOTALS	678	365	4	1,047	41	3.9

This is the breakdown of the aircraft used in the “1000 Bomber Raid” against Cologne, Germany

On 31 May 1942, 18 Wellingtons from No. 419 Squadron and 17 from No. 149 Squadron at RAF Station Mildenhall took part in the first “1000 Bomber Raid” against Cologne, Germany. In this raid 1,047 aircraft were dispatched to Cologne, of which

868 attacked the main target dropping 1,455 tons of explosives, two-thirds of which were incendiaries. The city suffered severe damage with about 250 factories and 18,400 houses destroyed or damaged. This was a major effort by the RAF’s Bomber Command, because in May 1942, they only had an average of about 400 serviceable aircraft in the operational bomber squadrons. Finding an additional 600 aircraft meant stripping Bomber Command clean. Most of these additional aircraft came from Operational Training Units with the aircraft being flown by instructors.

A few months later two more squadrons came to RAF Station Mildenhall to call it home. First, No. 75 (New Zealand) (Bomber) Squadron replaced No. 419 Squadron when that squadron moved from RAF Station Feltwell on 15 August 1942. The motto of the No. 75 Squadron was AKE AKE KIA KAHA (Forever and Ever Be Strong). Next, on 25 September 1942 No. 115 (Bomber) Squadron moved to RAF Station Mildenhall from RAF Marham. The No. 115 Squadron remained until 8 November 1942. Their motto was DESPITE THE ELEMENTS.



**Left: No. 75 (New
Zealand) (Bomber)
Squadron**



**Right: No. 115
(Bomber) Squadron**

RAF Station Mildenhall's population grew again during 1943. On 13 April 1943, No. 15 (Bomber) Squadron relocated to RAF Station Mildenhall and operated from there until the end of the war. Their motto was AIM SURE. Ground crews for No. 15 Squadron arrived in Horsa gliders. As a side note, Horsa gliders came back to RAF Station Mildenhall for storage for a short period of time under the administration of the No. 25 Glider Maintenance Squadron. These left for the Mediterranean Theater in March 1944. 10 August 1943 saw the No. 622 (Bomber) Squadron, activated on RAF Station Mildenhall from "C" Flight of No. 15 Squadron. They remained on RAF Station Mildenhall until the end of the war. Their motto was BELIMUS NOCTU (We Wage War By Night).



Lancaster bomber

Station Mildenhall.



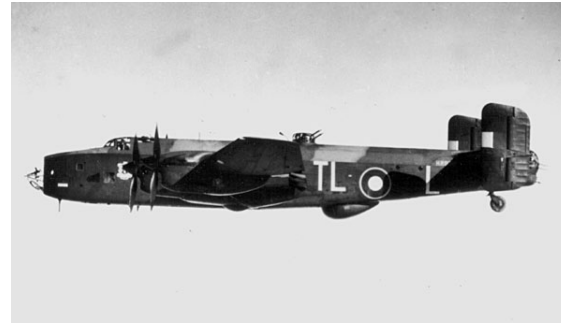
Above: No. 15 (Bomber) Squadron

Below: No. 622 (Bomber) Squadron



Within a few months both of the new squadrons were converting to a new bomber. November 1943 marked the arrival of the first permanently stationed Lancaster bombers to RAF

On 22 March 1944 Lancaster and Halifax bombers from RAF Station Mildenhall took part in the first major raid against Berlin, Germany. The raid consisted of more than 800 bombers from several bases. It marked the end of what Bomber Command called the "Battle of Berlin."

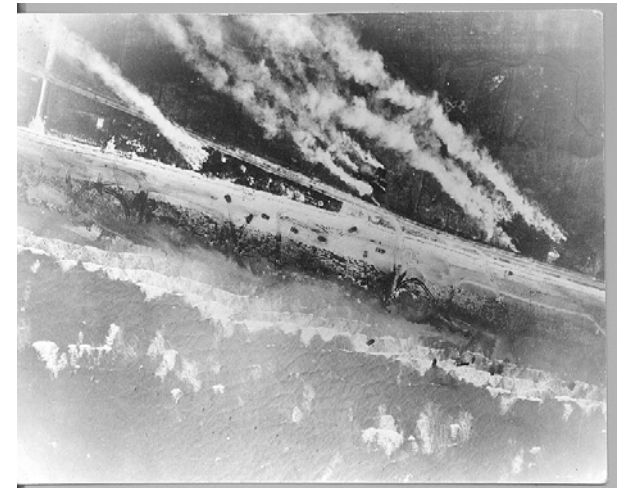


Halifax bomber

point for large numbers of Horsa Gliders before D-Day. These attacks marked the first daylight bombing raids carried out by both squadrons.

On 6 June 1944, the first day of D-Day operations, 35 Lancaster bombers from No. 15 and No. 622 Squadrons struck targets along Hitler's Atlantic Wall. The next day saw 33 Lancasters attack targets near Lisieux, France. RAF Station Mildenhall was also the staging

Invasion landing on D-Day as seen by the aircraft the supported them



For RAF Station Mildenhall the war affectively ended on 22 April 1945 when bombers from the station flew their last combat mission against Bremen, Germany. Germany officially surrendered on 7 May 1945. However, this did not mean the



**No. 44 (Rhodesia)
(Bomber) Squadron**

bomber squadrons were without work. Immediately after the war, RAF Station Mildenhall aircraft returned repatriated prisoners of war to their home countries and dropped relief supplies to Dutch flood victims. The retreating German Army had caused the flooding.

On 25 August 1945, 19 days after the surrender of Japan, No. 44 (Rhodesia) (Bomber) Squadron moved to RAF Station Mildenhall. Their motto was FULMINA REGIS IUSTA (The King's Thunderbolts Are Righteous)

The end of 1945, December, marked the first major involvement by the USAAF with RAF Station Mildenhall. Two B-17 *Flying Fortresses* arrived at the station for bomb trials. They were stripped of their armament and modified to carry a rocket assisted 4,500 lb bomb, or a 2,000 lb bomb with a special penetration head under each wing. A third B-17 arrived shortly after the first two. These B-17s took part in service trials for the new Lincoln



Example of a B-17 *Flying Fortresses*

Bomber. No. 15 Squadron participated in these trials that included conducting high-level bombings with the three deployed B-17s. The trials took place in January 1946

With work completed on up-dating and resurfacing RAF Station Mildenhall's runway in July 1948, Bomber Command planned to bring in No. 230 Operational Conversion Unit (OCU) to train Lancaster pilots at RAF Station Mildenhall in the new Lincoln bomber. However, this never happened as the USAF moved in B-29 *Super Fortresses* into RAF Station Lakenheath in August 1948. The RAF did not want a training unit operating so close to the B-29s, so No 230 OCU never made it to RAF Station Mildenhall.



Lincoln bomber

Almost two years after the aborted idea to move the No. 230 OCU to RAF Station Mildenhall, the RAF changed the station's status from active to "Care and Maintenance" on 1 April 1950. It remained in the status while the RAF awaited an answer from the USAF, who expressed an interest in moving units to the station. During this time there were still detachments of the RAF Regiment and a RAF Police Security Flight on station.

On 12 July 1950, after improving facilities and spending £1,000,000 to lengthen the runway to 9,000 feet, elements of the 93rd Bomb Group (BG), 329th Bombardment Squadron (BS), 330th Bombardment Squadron, and 4115th Organizational

Squadron arrived to operate on a rotational duty with 45 WB-50 *Superfortresses*. The U.S. worried that the Soviets might think the U.S. too occupied with the Korean conflict to adequately protect Europe. To counter this threat during the Cold War, RAF Mildenhall, as it was now known, was one of the initial bases identified to base B-29, B-47, and B-52 bombers, and KC-97 and KC-135 tankers. The B-50, to include all its variants, was first designated as the B-29D, but modifications to the original B-29 structure were considerable so it was redesignated as the B-50. The W for the WB-50 stood for weather-reconnaissance



RAF Station Mildenhall July 1945



From left to right: 93rd Bomb Group (BG), 329th Bombardment Squadron (BS), and 330th Bombardment Squadron

Also, on 12 July 1950, USAFE established the 7511th Air Base Squadron (ABS) to provide support to the temporary duty Strategic Air Command (SAC) units rotating in and out of RAF Mildenhall. This unit changed to the 7511th Air Support Wing on 26 September 1950 and then to the 7511th Air Base Group on 16 May 1951.



This RB-29 gives a good idea of what the B-29 and B-50 *Superfortress* variants looked like.

February 1951 saw the first B-29s stationed at RAF Mildenhall, when the 93 BG rotated out and the 830th Bombardment Squadron, from the 509th Bombardment Wing took its place. This was followed in May 1951 by the first B-50s to operate out of RAF Mildenhall from the 49th Bombardment Squadron. They replaced the 830 SB.



From left to right: 509th Bombardment Wing, 830th Bombardment Squadron, and 49th Bombardment Squadron

Strategic Air Command established the 3910th Air Base Group (ABG) to take over the responsibilities of the 7511 ABG on 1 October 1951. In addition to supporting the rotating deployed SAC units, the 3910 ABG also took administrative control of RAF Mildenhall from the RAF's No. 3 Group. However, the No. 3 Group remained on RAF Mildenhall until 1967.



55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing



2nd Bombardment Wing

The next few years saw several aircraft make their first appearance at RAF Mildenhall, as they called the base home for a short period of time. First in April 1952, the RB-29s, reconnaissance variant, came to RAF Mildenhall with the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing when it first used RAF Mildenhall for its RB-50s and RB-29s. Next, in September 1952,

RAF Mildenhall saw its first KB-29 when the headquarters and maintenance of the 2 BW returned to RAF Mildenhall to service B-50s and KB-29s. The KB-29s were the first USAF tankers to operate out of RAF Mildenhall. By this time, the USAF began to replace the B-29 and B-50 variants with newer aircraft.

June 1953 saw the first KC-97E *Stratofreighter* tankers move to RAF Mildenhall. These were tankers of the 306th Air Refueling Squadron from the 306th Wing. The mission of the new tankers was to provide air refueling support to the



306th Wing

306 Wing's new B-47 *Stratojets* based at RAF Fairford. This was a first time for both aircraft at each base.



From left to right: KC-97E Stratofreighters, and 306th Air Refueling Squadron



1607th Air Transport Wing

On 17 January 1958, RAF Mildenhall officially became the new home for the Military Air Transport Service's United Kingdom Passenger Terminal. This terminal made RAF the central site for logistical support for the whole of the U.K. With this role came repeated arrivals of C-47 *Skytrain*, C-54 *Skymaster*, C-118 *Liftmaster*, C-124 *Globemaster II*, C-133 *Cargomaster*, as well as DC-6 and DC-7 commercial airlines. All these aircraft brought cargo and personnel to and from Europe and the U.S. To oversee the comings and going of all these different aircraft the USAF activated the 1607th Air Transport Wing.

1 September 1959 saw the 3913th Combat Support Group (CSG) become a Third Air Force unit and redesignate to become the 7513th Air Base Group. The 3913 CSG had only recently taken

on the duties of running RAF Mildenhall from the 3910 ABG when it activated on 1 January 1959. This new group, 7513 ABG, now took on the mission of running RAF Mildenhall, including supporting the new Military Air Transport Service's Passenger Terminal.



Commercial Boeing 707, similar to the ones used by Pan Am, taking off

On 20 January 1960, the experimental Turbo-Prop Boeing YC-97J arrived to begin several trans-Atlantic trial crossings. The experimental Turbo-Prop Boeing YC-97J was the cargo version of the KC-97. The following year, 1961, saw Pam Am Airlines begin to fly its Boeing 707s in and out of RAF Mildenhall for the transportation of personnel.



420th Air Refueling Squadron

Between January and July 1964, the U.S. Navy moved its detachment at West Malling to RAF Mildenhall. This provided the U.S. Navy with a vital air link between land-based units in the U.K. and naval ships at sea. This made the Navy unit here on RAF Mildenhall the oldest unit until it was disestablished on 1 February 2006.



U.S. Navy at RAF Mildenhall



Left: C-118 Liftmaster



Right: EC-135 from the 7120 ACCS

On 15 November 1965, the 7120th Airborne Command and Control Squadron (ACCS) relocated from Chateauroux AS, France

to RAF Mildenhall. This move was glimpse of things to come, because on 7 March 1966 General de Gaulle, the French president, informed the USA that he wanted all foreign troops to leave France. Along with the 7120 ACCS came the Silk Purse Control Group mission. This operation functioned as an airborne command post for the U.S. Commander-in-Chief of Europe. After arriving on base, the 7120 ACCS began converting to EC-135s from their old C-118s. On 1 January 1970 the 1720 ACCS redesignated to become the 10th Airborne Command and Control Squadron

Early the next year, 8 January 1966, RAF Mildenhall received another new unit. Because of the increasing cargo and passenger traffic moving in and out of RAF Mildenhall, the USAF activated the 627th Military Airlift Support Squadron. This unit now ran the Military Air Transport Service's Passenger Terminal.



627th Military Airlift Support Squadron



513th Troop Carrier Wing

The decision by the French on 7 March 1966 forced the USAF to relocate several units. One of these units was the 513th Troop Carrier Wing (TCW). To prepare RAF Mildenhall for the arrival of the 513 TCW from Evreux-Fauville Air Base, France, the 513th Combat Support Group formed. With RAF Mildenhall prepared, the 513 TCW began to relocate to its new base. The relocation began on 15 April 1966 and ended on 1 September 1966. With its activation on Mildenhall, the 513 TCW assumed operational control of the two Military Airlift

Command rotational C-130 *Hercules* squadrons and the 7120 ACCS. Two years after its arrival, the Air Force redesignated the 513 TCW to the 513th Tactical Airlift Wing (513 TAW).



This picture of an Air Fete at RAF Mildenhall gives an idea of just how large and popular these events were.

On 18 September 1967, the 513 TCW held an open house at RAF Mildenhall to celebrate the Air Force's 20th birthday. This was the first air show at RAF Mildenhall since the USAF took control of the base and a prelude to the many "Air Fetes" to come.

3 August 1969 saw a real historical first for RAF Mildenhall when President Nixon visited the base. This was the first time in the base's history that a President of the United States visited the base. President Nixon came to the U.K. to meet with the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson.

In December 1970, comedian Bob Hope came to RAF Mildenhall to open the new community center named in his honor. The personnel of RAF Mildenhall wanted to honor Mr. Hope for all the work he had done in entertaining troops dating back to WWII.



During February 1971, the 513 TAW began replacing its VC-47s and C-47s with T-29s. June 1971 saw the last C-47 leave the U.K. From March and on into September 1971 RAF Mildenhall became home for 45 F-100 *Super Sabers* from the 48th Fighter Wing at RAF Lakenheath. This was the first time in RAF Mildenhall's history that fighters operated from the base.



Top: C-47 Skytrain, Middle: T-29, Bottom: F-100 Super Saber

June 1972 saw Third Air Force (3 AF) relocate from South Ruislip to RAF Mildenhall. For its new headquarters, 3 AF took over the building originally used by Bomber Command's No. 3 Group. As of 2006, HQ Third Air Force is now located at Ramstein AB, Germany, with 3AF-UK continuing at RAF Mildenhall.



SR-71 Blackbird taking off from RAF Mildenhall

While it was only a visit, it was a look of things to come when a SR-71 *Blackbird* made its first visit to RAF Mildenhall in September 1974. The trip between New York and

London took only one hour and 55 minutes to cover 3,479.41 miles. To achieve this new record the SR-71 had to fly more than three times the speed of sound. On 13 September 1974, the SR-71 departed RAF Mildenhall for a record-setting flight to Los Angeles, California. The trip took three hours and forty-seven minutes and covered 5,446.86 miles. Within five years, both the SR-71 and the U-2 would be operating from RAF Mildenhall.

In January 1975, the 513 TAW began to retire its T-29s. This was the result of the Air Force's worldwide consolidation of all tactical airlift under the Military Airlift Command. The last 513 TAW T-29 left RAF Mildenhall to be loaned to the British Imperial War Museum. Even though the 513 TAW did not replace the T-29 with another aircraft, it was still responsible for the rotating C-130 squadrons as well as the Silk Purse Control Group mission under the 10 ACCS.

During the next year, 1976, the European Tanker Task Force (ETTF) mission operated by the 306th Strategic Wing (SW) began. Under this concept, deployed KC-135 *Stratotankers* at RAF Mildenhall would rotate from two other bases, Zaragoza Air Base, Spain, and Hellenikon Air Base, Greece, to provide air refueling support. Later that same year on 1 December 1976, RAF Mildenhall became the main European tanker base when Detachment 1 of the 98 SW inactivated at Torrejon AFB, Spain.



306th Strategic Wing

The 306 SW was responsible for two other issues that affected RAF Mildenhall. First was the RC-135 Rivet Joint/Block II testing that took place at RAF Mildenhall on 22 August 1977. Next on 30 June 1978, the headquarters of the 306 SW relocated from Ramstein AB, Germany to RAF Mildenhall to handle all the SAC rotational forces at RAF Mildenhall and manage the ETTF.



U-2 Reconnaissance aircraft like the ones flown at RAF Mildenhall

U-2 and SR-71 aircraft. While this was a return appearance for the

1 April 1978 saw the SR-71 return to RAF Mildenhall, but this time it would operate out of the base. This happened when the 9th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Detachment 4, moved to RAF Mildenhall to oversee temporary duty deployments of

SR-71, it was the first appearance for the U-2. However, U-2 operations moved to RAF Alconbury in February 1983. On 5 April 1982, almost a year before the U-2s left RAF Mildenhall, the British Government gave permission for two SR-71s to be permanently based at RAF Mildenhall. From its arrival until the departure of the last SR-71 on 18 January 1990, the aircraft came to symbolize RAF Mildenhall in the local public's eye.

On 25 October 1982, RAF Mildenhall received its first and, so far, last visit by a member of the royal family since the USAF took control of the base. Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, visited the base to dedicate six stained-glass windows installed into the base chapel.



Prince Charles trying out the front seat of a SR-71 *Blackbird*



National Aeronautical Space Agency's Quiet Short Haul Research Aircraft

RAF Mildenhall has even helped the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). On 12 May 1983, NASA's Quiet Short Haul Research Aircraft (QRSA) landed at RAF Mildenhall. During its stay, the NASA QRSA conducted several local flights for senior AF

officials, including the Under Secretary of the Air Force, Edward C. Aldridge. It left for the Paris Air Show on 23 May 1983. The QSRA program developed and demonstrated technologies necessary to support short-takeoff and high-lift cargo aircraft. These technologies were employed on the C-17 *Globemaster III*.

On 18 December 1983, a restored DC-2 of the KLM Royal Dutch Airlines stopped off at RAF Mildenhall to refuel and begin its re-enactment of the original 10,500 mile race from Mildenhall to Melbourne that marked the opening of RAF Station Mildenhall. The original DC-2 Serial #PH-AJU 'Uiver' from KLM Royal Dutch Airlines was the winner of the handicap portion of the 1934 air race from London to Sydney. Almost a year later on 21 October 1984, some 20 vintage aircraft took part in the recreation of the MacRobertson race to celebrate its 50th anniversary.



While this is not the exact aircraft as the one that took part in the race, it is the same in all but the tail number

11 – 15 April 1986 saw the 513 TAW support SAC's buildup of KC-10 and KC-135 tankers in support of a combined attack by

the U.S. Navy and USAF on Benina and Tripoli, Libya during Operation El Dorado Canyon. This operation was a result of several incidents off the Libyan coast and the bombing of a nightclub in Berlin, Germany. When addressing the U.S. public about the attack, President Ronald Reagan emphasized that this action was a matter of U.S. self defense against Libya's state-sponsored terrorism.



100th Air Refueling Wing

The next major change for RAF Mildenhall took place on 1 February 1992 when the 100th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) activated. It replaced the 513th Airborne Command and Control Wing, redesignated on 18 June 1987, but with a different mission. As host wing, it took over the support of all the tenant units on RAF Mildenhall. Also on 1 February 1992, the USAF activated the 100th Regional Support Group (RSG) at RAF Mildenhall. Several squadrons activated under it. They were the 100th Consolidated Equipment Maintenance Squadron, the 100th Resource Management Squadron, and the 100th Medical Contingency Squadron. Their combined mission was to provide support to functions at the smaller bases throughout the U.K. and Norway. By the end of the next month, 31 March 1992, the 306 SW inactivated moving the entire refueling mission to the 100 ARW. The 100 ARW now maintained its own fleet of KC-135s as well as the ETTF's.

While the 100 ARW activated on 1 February 1992, it did not receive its first permanent KC-135 until 22 May 1992 and did not reach its full complement of nine tankers until September 1992. The number of permanently assigned KC-135s at RAF

Mildenhall changed on 28 November 1998 when the USAF ended the ETTF mission. This raised the number of 100 ARW tankers to 15. The ETTF mission ran for 22 years before ending. When the ETTF ended, the 100 ARW was ready with all of its 15 KC-135s.

On 31 March 1993, the 2147th Communications Wing (CW) redesignated to become the 100th Communications Group. This moved the responsibility for all USAF communications within the U.K. to the 100 ARW. Originally, the 2147 CW activated as the 2147th Communication Squadron on RAF Mildenhall on 1 August 1962. It changed first to a group and then a wing as its span of control increased.

Control of what would become the Geographically Separated Units (GSU) moved from the 100 ARW when the 100 RSG inactivated on 1 July 1994. In its place, the USAF activated the 603rd Regional Support Group under 3 AF. All the squadrons under the old 100 RSG received redesignations to align them under the new unit. This changed again after 3 AF reviewed its organizational structure in September 1995. While the 603 RSG inactivated on 19 July 1996, no new unit activated to take on the responsibility of supporting the GSUs. Four of the main GSUs and the operating locations they controlled moved directly under the 100 ARW, until 15 January 2004.

United States Air Forces in Europe announced the relocation of the 352nd Special Operations Group (SOG) from RAF Alconbury to RAF Mildenhall on 7 May 1993. However, several delays prevented the 352 SOG from completing this move until 30 April 1995.



352nd Special Operations Group

The activation of the 501st Combat Support Wing on 12 May 2005, marked the last new unit to call RAF Mildenhall home. However, on 1 May 2007, the unit moved to RAF Alconbury.

One of the last major changes to affect the 100 ARW and RAF Mildenhall was the USAF's Combat Wing Structure. After a review by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, this structure was to streamline support and logistical functions to make the deployment of forces easier. During a USAFE commander's conference in May 2002, the 100 ARW volunteered to be one of the first two units in USAFE to change over to the new combat wing. This did not give the 100 ARW much time as USAFE wanted the first units initially converted by 1 July 2002. The new wing structure consisted of three groups, the 100th Operations Group, 100th Maintenance Group, and the 100th Mission Support Group, with their respective squadrons assigned to each of the groups. However, the 100th Comptroller Squadron, formerly the 100th Resource Management Squadron, remained assigned directly to the wing. On 15 Jan 2004, the 420th Air Base Group activated under Third Air Force and assumed responsibility for all GSUs, the 422 ABS, 423 ABS, 424 ABS and 426 ABS. As noted above, when the 501 CSW activated, it gained all of the GSUs in England.

RAF Mildenhall Station Commanders

- Wing Commander F.J. Linnell Oct 1934 - Jul 1935
- Wing Commander H.V. Drew Jul 1935 - Feb 1936
- Group Captain R.S. Maxwell Feb 1936 - Apr 1937
- Group Captain H.K. Thorald Apr 1937 - Apr 1938
- Group Captain F.H. Coleman Apr 1938 - Jun 1940
- Group Captain F.G. Fogarty Jun 1940 - Sep 1941
- Group Captain A.C. Evans-Evans Sep 1941 - Mar 1942
- Group Captain D. MacFayden Mar 1942 - Aug 1942

Group Captain J.A. Powell Aug 1942 - Mar 1943
 Air Commodore A. McKee Mar 1943 - Oct 1943
 Group Captain R.H. Young Oct 1943 - Dec 1944
 Group Captain K.S. Batchelor Dec 1944 - Sep 1945
 Group Captain C.E. Morse Sep 1945 - Mar 1946
 Group Captain W.H. Merton Mar 1946 - Jul 1946
 Group Captain J.H. McC. Reynolds Jul 1946
 Squadron Leader E.J. Wicht Apr 1950 - Jul 1950
 Group Captain D.L. Thompson Jul 1950 - 1951
 Squadron Leader F. Wincott * - Apr 1958
 Squadron Leader L.W. Quick Apr 1958 - Sep 1963
 Squadron Leader J. Cassels Sep 1963 - Mar 1965
 Unknown Mar 1965 - Dec 1967
 Squadron Leader W. Pine Dec 1967 - Oct 1969
 Squadron Leader J. Lomas Oct 1969 - May 1972
 Squadron Leader N.J.J. Dunningham May 1972 - Aug 1974
 Squadron Leader W. Ward Aug 1974 - Feb 1976
 Squadron Leader G. Taylor Feb 1976 - May 1976
 Squadron Leader S. Spinks Jun 1976 - Dec 1978
 Squadron Leader I.E.D.B. Logan Dec 1978 - Aug 1981
 Squadron Leader K.E.H. Hollands Aug 1981 - Mar 1984
 Squadron Leader E.E. Harnett Mar 1984 - Oct 1986
 Squadron Leader P.W. Hughes Oct 1989 - Oct 1993
 Squadron Leader A.H. Galloway Oct 1993 - Aug 1996
 Squadron Leader A. Payne Aug 1996 - Jul 1997
 Squadron Leader S. Shay Jul 1997 - Apr 2000
 Squadron Leader C. Chaplin Apr 2000 - Aug 2003
 Squadron Leader J. Savage Aug 2003 – Apr 2006
 Squadron Leader M. A. Finneran Apr 2006 – Nov 2006
 Squadron Leader R. P. Fryer May 2007 – Present

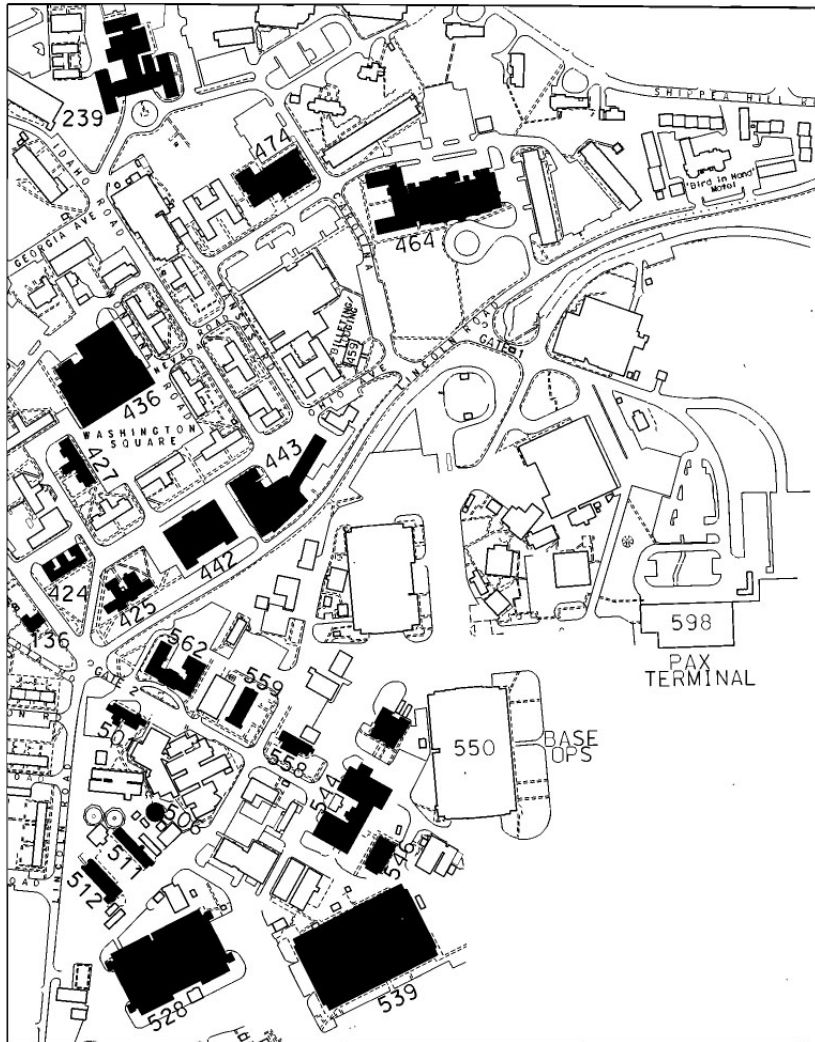
RAF Mildenhall's Heritage Trail

In 1929, the people of Mildenhall learned of the Royal Air Force's (RAF) decision to use the outlying area of their town as the site of a new-style RAF Bomber base. With the local community suffering through a gripping agricultural depression, the news of the airfield offered local people the hope of relief in terms of new employment. Actual construction work on the base began in October 1930 as crews from Fred Hale and Sons of Sutton, Ely, began building the base's first facility, the office for the Resident Engineer.

The first phase of construction brought much needed relief to the depression stricken communities in and around Mildenhall. After taking over the building contract in 1931, the London-based construction firm employed numerous locals. However, the firm of Redpath Brown, which built the hangars, brought its own special workforce down from Newcastle. Despite this, a common sight of the times saw as many as a hundred men from various towns and villages queuing outside the various contractor's offices hoping for work.

The initial phase of construction lasted over three years and many of the buildings built during the initial phase of construction remain in existence today. A good example of this are the base's first hangars, which were built during the initial stages, and because of their size and quality of original construction, they continue to serve the needs of the modern U.S. Air Force. With this in mind, the 100 ARW developed RAF Mildenhall's Heritage Trail highlighting a varied selection of the base's more significant structures. As you take the short walk on the trail, refer to this

brochure and the plaques located at each site for a brief history on the buildings.



Map of RAF Mildenhall's Heritage Trail

STOPS ALONG THE TRAIL

Building 136: The first building constructed on RAF Mildenhall. Initially, the building housed the station's Resident Engineer and his staff. After construction on the base was complete, the workers remodeled the quarters to serve as a Warrant Officer's married quarters. Today, the building is part of the base's family housing.

Building 427: Built in 1931 to accommodate single airmen, the barracks had four dormitory rooms to accommodate 12 airmen each. A separate room housed a corporal, who was in charge of the floor he was on. The center part of the building served as the bathroom area. This particular building, like the others around it, face onto Washington Square, which was the station's parade square. The station's airmen paraded at the beginning of each day where they were assigned their day's duties. Notice the neo-Georgian style roof, common in pre-war RAF buildings, and compare it with Building 422, a barracks that was built four years later. Today, the building is used as the base's Education Offices.

Building 424: Built in 1931 as an "Airmen Pilots' Quarters." Originally, the building accommodated 14 people. However, during the pre-WWII expansion, workers added a second story to increase the accommodation capacity to 26 single sergeants. Today, the building is used as offices for Third Air Force-UK International Affairs.

Building 425: Built in 1931 as the original "Sergeants Mess." This facility accommodated 69 members and provided recreational and dining facilities. Workers added the small western wing in the 1939 expansion of the station. Eventually, the station's

growth in personnel resulted in the building of a new facility, placing the "Sergeants Mess" into auxiliary status. Today, the building serves as the base's Library.

Building 442: Originally the "Airmen's Mess and Club Complex," and built in 1931 for 343 airmen. Inside, the building possessed a barber's shop, mess, a club for dining and recreation, and the Navy, Army, Air Force Institute (NAAFI). With the expansion of the station in 1939, a larger building (Building 436) replaced this one, as this building became part of the enlarged Sergeants Mess complex (including adjacent Building 425). Until 2006, the building served as the base's Post Office.

Building 436: Erected in 1939 as part of the expansion of the Station, this was a Combined Dining Room and Institute. It was the second Airmen's Mess and Club to be built (replacing Building 442). Since its construction, this facility's basic function has remained unchanged. Today, the enlisted dining facility is still located in the building, while the upper floors serve as office space for the 100th Force Support Squadron's Military Personnel Flight.

Building 239: Built in 1936 as a Group Headquarters, the RAF Bomber Command's Headquarters 3 Group occupied this building from 1937 until 1967. During WWII the headquarters dispersed to nearby Exning. The headquarters controlled a number of RAF bomber stations in the geographical area of East Anglia. Aircraft such as the Wellington, Stirling, Lancaster, Canberra bomber and the Thor IRBM missile system were associated with No. 3 Group. In June 1972, Headquarters Third Air Force took up residence in the building. In April 2008 3AF-UK moved to Building 562, where it remains today.

Building 474: Although not an historic building, the base Chapel's unique stained glass windows graphically depict the station's history and were dedicated by His Royal Highness, Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales, in 1982.

Building 464: The Officers' Mess built in 1931 was one of the first buildings to be constructed at RAF Mildenhall. Workers added the western wing of the building during the station's expansion in 1939. In December 2000, the 100 ARW received permission to memorialize this building as Middleton Hall in memory of Pilot Officer Rawdon Hume Middleton.

Building 443: Designed as a "Sick Quarters" and built in 1931, this facility served as the station's medical facility for many years. During the station's expansion in 1939, the RAF added a blocked shaped gas annex (a gas-proof medical facility) to be used in the event of gas attacks. During World War II, the RAF added several medical wards, which increased the facility's capacity and capability. It later served as the base Civil Engineer's complex, but was demolished in July 2008.

Building 562: Built in 1933 to house the Station Headquarters. In addition to the Station Commander and staff, this building hosted the "Offices and Operations Block," including Library and Lecture room. The stone memorial plaque in front of Bldg 562 commemorates King George V's Royal Review of the Royal Air Force on 6 July 1935. As part of the Silver Jubilee celebrations, King George V reviewed 365 RAF combat aircraft parked in 8 ranks in a great arc on the grass airfield. In later years it served as home to the 100th Air Refueling Wing Headquarters. In April 2008, the 100 ARW and 3AF-UK traded their headquarters buildings.

Building 559: Built as an Operation Center just prior to WWII, this facility served as the station's Operation Center. With its “splinter-protected” features, it provided some measure of protection from aerial bombardment. Through the years it has served in various capacities; including as the Alternate Wing Command Post. This facility is one of the few that no longer exists.

Building 558: Built in 1931 as a parachute store, this facility underwent major physical changes in 1994 to accommodate the move of the Special Operations Group from RAF Alconbury to here. This facility is one of the few that no longer exists

Building 544: Originally built in 1933 as the Station Armory, this facility contained an “Air Ministry Laboratory Bombing Teacher” where bomb aimers could be taught the use of “Course Setting Bomb Sight.” Additionally, the building hosted a “Photographic Block, Gas Respirator” (a test facility), and a Paint Store. The Fabrications Flight currently uses this building.

Building 545: Built in 1931 as the “Main Store and Workshops,” this building housed the logistical heart of the station. Currently, the building is the home of the Non Destructive Inspection laboratories.

Building 546. Built in 1931 as the “Crew Room and Locker Room,” this was originally part of a two building complex (the second building has since been demolished) designed to provide flightline facilities for crews. During World War II, the RAF used this facility as a chapel for the Protestant Free Churches, a reminder of which is displayed in the present base Chapel (Bldg 574).

Building 554: Constructed in 1933, this facility was the station’s Armory. While functioning as the Station Armory, it would have housed several functions relating to maintaining bombs as well as the bombs themselves. Although it has had a verity of occupants over the years, it currently provides a home for the 100th Force Support Squadron.

Building 539: This particular facility was a “C” type Aircraft Shed and one of three “Sheds” (including Bldgs 538 and 550) built in 1935 during the second, and more modern phase of hangar construction. The annexes included flight offices, stores, and a charging room (for aircraft batteries). This type of hangar is typical of the immediate pre-WWII expansion era and is still a common sight on many RAF airfields.

Building 528: This hangar’s design dates back to the 1920s) and was built in 1933 as an “A” type Aircraft Shed. It was part of the first phase of hangar construction on RAF Mildenhall. The Mildenhall-to-Australia air race participants in 1934 used this facility, and its identical sister hangar (Bldg 582), to prepare and store their aircraft, as well as a sleeping quarters. The hangar is currently home to the aircraft ground equipment maintenance operation.

Buildings 511 and 512 : Constructed in 1931 as “MT Sheds and Yard,” these facilities have been associated with motor transport (MT) storage and maintenance ever since their original construction. The RAF added some of the bays and refueler vehicle garage blocks during the WWII expansion period. Today, the facilities house the RAF Mildenhall Exchange Car Care Center.

Building 506: This structure is one of the more “modern” buildings on the Heritage Trail, having been built in 1942 and is known as the Astro Building. This “Dome Teacher” is the best-preserved example of only a handful of such wartime buildings that are still standing. Originally intended for astronavigation (celestial) training for RAF bomber crews, it later served to train ground anti-aircraft gunners. This strange structure can be seen in today's air forces, in modern guise, as one of the forerunners of the aircraft simulator. More recently, the facility housed the 100th Communication Squadron's secure communications functions.

Building 501: Built in 1931, the original facility, a “Type C Guard House,” included the Fire Tender House, Personal Hygiene Room, and Paint and Repair Shop. The Station Guard, made up of duty personnel drawn from a roster, also doubled as the station's Fire Picquet. All personnel wishing to “book out” from the station before proceeding on a typical weekend's 48-hour pass came to this building and would come under the eagle-eyed scrutiny of the Station Warrant Officer (SWO), the station's disciplinarian. The original guardroom cell remains in existence within the building. The wing's Military Equal Opportunity makes its home in this building.

The History of the 100 ARW and RAF Mildenhall was written, edited and updated by the many historians assigned to the 100 ARW History Office and previous host unit historians assigned to RAF Mildenhall.

The historical information in this product is also constantly being updated and thus a “work in progress.” If you see something outdated or incorrect, please notify the 100 ARW History Office.