



## *Heritage and Legacy:*

*A Brief History of the 22d Air Refueling Wing  
and  
McConnell Air Force Base*

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and  
McConnell Air Force Base



Office of History  
22d Air Refueling Wing  
McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas  
Dec 2017

## Preface

This booklet provides a brief survey on the history of the 22d Air Refueling Wing and McConnell Air Force Base. A short monograph such as this takes on greater importance at a time such as this. Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Michael W. Wynne and Chief of Staff, General T. Michael Moseley released the 2006 Air Force Vision Document in February 2006. Entitled “Lasting Heritage...Limitless Horizons: A Warfighter’s Vision,” The Secretary and Chief both held Air Force heritage as one of three key pillars of Air Force philosophy alongside innovation and joint war fighting with the other armed services.<sup>1</sup>

Heritage is by definition a legacy. One generation makes their contributions then passes this legacy along to their successors. The 22d Air Refueling Wing holds a rich heritage. The current members of the organization represent the sum total of their predecessors’ efforts and achievements. They in turn will pass the wing’s heritage to their own successors and therefore hold a fiduciary responsibility to not only uphold the wing’s history but also add to it for those who assume their role.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge a couple of members of the 22d Bomb Group Association for their valuable contributions to this narrative. Cy Klimesh, himself a member of the “Red Raiders” and David Ghen a hometown neighbor of the late 22 BG Commander, Colonel Richard W. Robinson. Mr. Ghen graciously granted use of a couple of photos from his personal collection and provided me with valuable insight on Col. Robinson. Mr. Klimesh was more than gracious in directing me to sources of information in documenting the Bomb Group’s activities in World War II. Finally, my personal gratitude also extends to Mr. Mark Schock, son of Richard Schock, one of the original Airmen assigned to the newly minted “Wichita Air Force Base.” Mr. Schock shared some of his father’s photographs from the bases earliest days in the B-47 era, one of which appears in this volume. I hope all who read this narrative find it worthwhile.

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<sup>1</sup> Wynne, Honorable Michael W. and Moseley, General T. Michael, *Air Force Vision Document*, (Washington, DC: Headquarters, United States Air Force, 2006), 1.

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\*All illustrations are from the Office of History, 22d Air Refueling Wing, unless otherwise noted.

*Cover illustration: Lt. Col. Dwight Divine stands atop his plane at left following a perfect "wheels up" controlled crash landing 9 June 1942 at Port Moresby New Guinea. Lt. Col. Divine received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his airmanship. (22d Bomb Group Association).*

## 22d Bombardment Group Chronology

- 22 Dec 1939 Constituted as the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium).
- 1 Feb 1940 Activated at Mitchel Field, New York. Consisted of the 2d, 19th and 33rd Bombardment Squadrons and the 18th Reconnaissance Squadron.
- 14 Nov 1940 The group moved to Langley Field, Virginia, for training.
- 16 Jan 1941 Assigned to the Northeast Air District, 2d Bombardment Wing.
- 22 Feb 1941 United States Army Air Forces accepted the first four Martin B-26 Marauder aircraft and assigned them to the 22d Bombardment Group.
- 26 Mar 1941 Assigned to the First Air Force, 2d Bombardment Wing.
- 5 Sep 1941 The group became part of the First Air Force, First Bomber Command.
- 8 Dec 1941 Ordered without notice to report to Muroc Dry Lake and March Field, California, for training and coastal antisubmarine patrol duties.
- 31 Jan 1942 The 22d's ground echelon boarded the U.S. Navy transport *Hugh L. Scott* docked in the San Francisco harbor and sailed for Australia and the Southeast Pacific.
- 6 Feb 1942 technicians disassembled the group's B-26 Marauders and loaded them aboard the U.S. Navy transport *U.S.N.T Grant* bound for Hickam Field, Hawaii.
- 15 Feb 1942 The air echelon arrived at Hickam Field, Hawaii, and flew sea patrol while being outfitted for deployment to Australia.
- 1 Mar 1942 The ground echelon moved to Amberley Field near Brisbane, Australia.
- 22 Mar 1942 The 19th Bombardment Squadron landed the first of the group's 13 B-26 bombers at Amberley Field, Australia. Taking off on 18 March 1942, the southwest Pacific air route ran for Hickam, Hawaii, to Palmyra Island, Canton Island, Nandi of the island of Fiji, Tontouta, New Caledonia and finally ending in Brisbane, Australia. Between March through May 1942, the 33rd, 2d bombardment and 18th reconnaissance squadrons would make the trip across the Pacific.
- 28 Mar 18 Assigned to Allied Air Force, Southwest Pacific Area, the 22d moved 700 miles north of Brisbane to Garbutt Field in Townsville, Australia.
- 6 Apr 1942 Staging from Port Moresby, New Guinea, the 22d flew its first combat mission against heavily defended targets at Rabaul on New Britain.

- 7 May 1942 Elements of the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) engage on the first of the two-day unit participation in the Battle of Coral Sea.
- 4 Jun 1942 Two B-26 crews assigned to the 408th Bombardment Squadron (22 BG) residing at Hickam Field were diverted to Midway Island to defend against the oncoming Japanese fleet. Joined by three B-26's from the 38th Bombardment Group, and later six Navy Avengers, the bombers for the first time would carry and launch torpedoes against the advancing enemy fleet. Although ending in the loss of two B-26's and the other two crash landing, the bombers managed to release a torpedo against the Japanese carrier *Akagi*. Despite producing no real damage to the Japanese forces, the small attack caused the Japanese to alter its strike plans; resulting in the U.S. fleet to sink four enemy aircraft carriers and change U.S. policy in the Pacific from a defensive to offensive campaign.
- 9 Jun 1942 The 22d took part in the raid on Lae, Papua New Guinea, known as TOW 9. Then Texas Congressman and future U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson flew along as an observer. During World War II, Johnson served as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy Reserve, acting as a personal representative for President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- 5 Jul 1942 The group moved to Woodstock, Australia.
- 3 Sep 1942 The 22d Bombardment Group reassigned to Fifth Air Force, Fifth Bomber Command.
- 2 Oct 1942 The group moved to Iron Range, Queensland, Australia.
- 2 Oct 1943 The 2d, 33rd and 408th Bombardment Squadrons' completed training and began combat operations flying the North American B-25 Mitchell bomber.
- 5 Nov 1943 The 22d earned a Distinguished Unit Citation by destroying enemy entrenchments on New Guinea in support of Australian ground forces.
- 13 Jan 1944 2d and 408th squadrons moved to Nadzab, New Guinea.
- 11 Feb 1944 Redesignated as the 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy) and equipped with the Consolidated B-24 Liberator aircraft.
- March 1944 While stationed at Nazdab, the group unveiled a new yearbook-type publication titled "The Marauder," along with a new unofficial group nickname and insignia, "Red Raiders." Named and designed in honor of the 22d's new commander, the red-haired Lieutenant Colonel Richard W. Robinson, the emblem reflected a wooden shield adorned with an image of the Viking warrior Erik the Red. The inscription RED RAIDERS was lettered above the shield. Soon, the design appeared on stationary and uniform patches. Each aircraft assigned to the group

received a six-foot painting of the emblem above the left nose. Later, each squadron adapted the insignia by painting the shield in the appropriate squadron color: blue for the 2d, white for the 19th, yellow for the 33rd and green for the 408th.

- 17 Aug 1944 The first elements of the group move to Owi, Schouten Islands, in preparation for airstrikes against Japanese position on the Philippines Islands.
- 1 Sep 1944 The 22d contributed 18 aircraft to the 55 B-24 Liberator formation making the first daylight air attack against the three main Japanese airfields at Davao, Philippines Islands. Despite the loss of two 22d bombers, the formation managed to destroy 22 enemy aircraft and deal significant damage to all three enemy airfields.
- 15 Nov 1944 The 22d ground echelon arrived at Leyte, Philippines Islands.
- 26 Nov 1944 The group moved to Anguar Island in the Palau chain, to support the Allied invasion of Mindoro Island on 5 December 1944.
- 26 Dec 1944 The 22d successfully hit enemy targets at Clark Field to clear the air of Japanese aircraft in anticipation of the Allied invasion at Luzon on 9 January 1944. The group participated alongside other bomber and fighter units through 9 January before commencement of the ground attack.
- 20 Jan 1945 The group moved to Samar, Philippines Islands.
- 21 Jan 1945 The commander of the 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy), Colonel Richard W. Robinson, perished alongside his crew in an aircraft collision while taking off from the base at Samar to serve as the lead aircraft on the first daylight raid against Japanese targets stationed at Heito, Formosa (now Taiwan). The B-24, #860, OUR HONEY, crewed by 11, fully fueled and armed with five 1000-pound bombs collided with an F4U Corsair assigned to Marine Corps VMF 251 and parked along the runway. While taking off in wet weather, the Liberator drifted and the left wing clipped the spinning propeller of the fighter aircraft, removing a six-foot section of the aileron and wing. The bomber still managed to slightly ascend, but quickly crashed into a parked construction vehicle belonging to the U.S. Navy Seabee's. The aircraft burst into a ball of flames followed by low-order explosions as the intense heat cooked some of the munitions off. The following day, the remains of Colonel Robinson and the crew were flown to Tacloban and buried in a common grave with a small, but moving ceremony.
- 22 Jan 1945 The first mission to Heito occurred with the 22d contributing 22 aircraft to the larger formation targeting a large enemy airfield complex. Escorted by 49 P-38 fighters, the 22d bombers dropped 50 tons of high explosive bombs that hit the target area resulting in extensive damage to the airfield.



- 12 Mar 1945 The 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy) moved to the recently liberated Clark Field, located on the island of Lunzon, Philippines Islands.
- 3 Aug 1945 The 22d began the redeployment process to Motobu, Okinawa, in the Ryukyu Islands. Final movement to the island concluded on 15 August 1945.
- 25 Aug 1945 The group began flying the first of several reconnaissance missions from Okinawa to Japan. The final 22d combat mission occurred on 29 August 1945 with an aircrew from the 2d Bombardment Squadron flying a routine reconnaissance mission to Tokyo, Japan.
- 16 Sep 1945 The 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy) transferred several B-24 aircraft and aircrews to the 380th Bombardment Group as the rest of the unit awaited further orders and a return to the United States. The group redesignated as the 22d Bombardment Group (L).
- 23 Nov 1945 Assigned to Far East Air Forces, the 22d transferred without personnel or equipment to Fort William McHenry, Luzon, Philippines Islands.
- 15 May 1946 Moving to Kadena Army Air Base, Okinawa, the group remanned and rearmed with the B-29 Superfortress aircraft.
- 15 Jun 1946 Redesignated as the 22d Bombardment Group (Very Heavy).
- 29 Jun 1948 The Department of the Air Force returned the 22d Bombardment Group (Very Heavy) to the Continental United States, basing it at Smoky Hill Air Force Base, Kansas.
- 28 Jul 1948 The group is redesignated as the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium).
- 1 Aug 1948 With the newly independent Air Force's reorganization, the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) became a part of the newly created 22d Bombardment Wing. From 15 November 1948 – February 1949, the group detached from the wing and moved to Royal Air Force Stations Marham and Lakenheath, England.
- 1 May 1949 The group returned to the United States and moved with the 22d Bombardment Wing to March Air Force Base, California. From December 1949 – March 1950, the group detached and moved to Royal Air Force Stations Marham and Lakenheath, England.
- Jul 1950 The 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) detached from the 22d wing and deployed to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. Attached to Far East Air Forces, the group conducted bombardment missions in support of the Korean War. Attacked enemy marshalling yards, bridges, highways, airfields, industrial complexes and

supported United Nations ground forces. Returned to the United States in October-November 1950.

- 16 Jun 1952 The 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) inactivated following reorganization. The 22d Bombardment Wing continued to function.
- 31 Jul 1985 Although still in an inactive state, the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) redesignated as the 22d Air Refueling Group (Heavy).
- 29 Aug 1991 While still inactive, the 22d Air Refueling Group (Heavy) redesignated as the 22d Operations Group.
- 1 Sep 1991 The 22d Operations Group activated and returned to the 22d Air Refueling Wing and air refueling duties at March Air Force Base, California. In the same year, the group acquired the KC-10 Extender aircraft, which it flew until 1994. The unit also flew the C-12 aircraft from 1993-1995. From 1992-1994, the group airlifted humanitarian equipment and supplies to Somalia.
- 1 Jan 1994 The 22d Operations Group moved with the 22d wing to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. The group began flying the KC-135 Stratotanker. Colonel Lawrence H. Stevenson assumed command of the group.
- 25 Jan 2019 The group took operational control of the KC-46A Pegasus tanker at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas.

### **22d Air Refueling Wing Chronology**

- 1 Aug 1948 Activated at Smoky Hill Air Force Base, (later renamed Schilling Air Force Base), Kansas, as the 22d Bombardment Wing, Medium (BMW (M)), incorporating the 22d Bombardment Group, 22d Maintenance and Supply Group, 22d Air Base Group and 22d Medical Group. Established on 28 July 1948. Colonel Leslie G. Mulzer served as the first wing commander.
- 10 May 1949 The 22 BMW (M), moved to March Air Force Base, California.
- 20 Sep 1951 The 352d Bombardment Squadron was attached to the 22 BMW (M) until November 1951.
- 16 Jun 1952 The 22d, 19th and 33rd Bombardment Squadrons' (BMS) began operations under the command of the 22 BMW (M). The 22 BMS remained until 15 March 1963 and then returned 15 September 1963 – 1 October 1982. The 19th and 33rd BMS' remained until 15 March 1963. All three units were initially attached to the 22 BMW (M) 10 February 1951 – 15 June 1952.

- 16 Jun 1952 The 22d Air Refueling Squadron (AREFS) activated under the authority of the 22 BMW (M). The unit would deploy to Mildenhall RAF, England, 7 December 1953 – 5 March 1954; Ernest Harmon Air Force Base, Newfoundland, 3 March - 19 – April 1955<sup>2</sup>; and Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, 3 January – 2 March 1956.
- 22 Jun 1952 The 22 BMW (M), received its first KC-97 Stratofreighter aircraft.
- 29 Jan 1953 The wing entered the jet age by receiving its first B-47 Stratojet to replace the B-29 fleet.
- 1 Jan 1959 The 408th Bombardment Squadron was assigned to the 22 BMW (M). The unit remained until 1 January 1962.
- 15 Jun 1960 The wing's air refueling squadron, 22 AREFS, moved to McChord Air Force Base, Washington.
- 16 Jun 1962 The 320th Air Refueling Wing arrived at the wing to replace the 22 AREFS. The unit remained until 15 September 1962.
- March 1963 The 22 BMW (M), phased out its B-47 fleet, transferring the aircraft to other bases.
- 15 Mar 1963 The 22 BMW (M), redesignated as the 22d Bombardment Wing, Heavy (BMW (H)).
- 1 Jul 1962 The 22 AREFS returned to March Air Force Base, California, to rejoin the 22 BMW (H).
- Sep 1963 The wing received the B-52 Stratofortress aircraft to replace the B-47's.
- 4 Oct 1963 The 22d received its first KC-135A Stratotanker aircraft to replace the KC-97 fleet.
- 25 Jun 1966 The 909th Air Refueling Squadron joined the 22d Bombardment Wing as a second air refueling squadron. The unit remained with the wing until 1 July 1971.
- 1 Oct 1966 The 486th Bombardment Squadron joined the wing. With four squadrons, the 22d became the largest bomb wing in Strategic Air Command.
- Nov 1966 Two of the wing's B-52 bombers traveled to the Western Pacific for the first of a series of ARC LIGHT deployments in support of operations in Southeast Asia.

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<sup>2</sup> Data could not be verified.

- 20 Dec 1972 The 22d lost a bomber, its first since World War II, over North Vietnam. Search and rescue teams rescued all but one of the crew, Major Frank Gould, who was reported missing in action.
- 22 Dec 1972 The 22d lost a second bomber and crew over North Vietnam. As part of a mission supporting Operation Linebacker II the B-52D was struck by a surface-to-air (SAM) missile over Hanoi, North Vietnam. The six-man aircrew consisted of Major Peter J. Giroux, pilot; Captain Thomas W. Bennett, co-pilot; Captain Peter P. Camerota, bombardier; 1st Lieutenant Joseph B. Copack, Jr., navigator; Master Sergeant Louis E. LeBlanc, tail gunner; and Lieutenant Colonel Gerald W. Alley. Of the six-man aircrew all were taken prisoner: Giroux, Camerota and LeBlanc were released during the general prisoner release in 1973, the remains of Copack and Alley returned to the United States in 1989 and Bennett remained listed as missing in action.
- 27 Dec 1972 The 22 BMW (H) headquarters received word that two of its aircrew members, Major James C. Condon, Navigator and Captain Samuel B. Cusimano, co-pilot, were lost in action over North Vietnam. Both men were part of a mixed bomber crew flying a mission from Guam.
- 16 Jan 1973 An aircrew from the 22 BMW (H), became the first tanker aircrew to provide air refueling to the F-15 Eagle fighter over the skies of Edwards Air Force Base, California.
- 15 Feb 1973 Held a prisoner of war by the North Vietnamese, Captain Peter J. Giroux, was released from captivity and returned home to March Air Force Base, California.
- 26 Feb 1973 The same 22 BMW (H) aircrew flying the first F-15 Eagle air refueling flew Strategic Air Command's first air refueling of the G-5A Galaxy transport aircraft.
- 1 Apr 1973 As part of the general prison release and return mission titled Operation HOMECOMING, Major James C. Condon, Captain Samuel B. Cusimano, Captain Peter P. Camerota and SMSgt LeBlanc returned home to the 22 BMW (H).
- 1 Aug 1982 The 9th Air Refueling Squadron (AREFS) activated at March Air Force Base, California. The new unit became the second of two tanker squadrons under the authority of the 22 BMW (H).
- 11 Aug 1982 The wing received the first of a squadron of KC-10A Extender tanker aircraft slated to replace the B-52D fleet. The second KC-10A arrived on 17 August.
- 1 Oct 1982 As the wing phased out its B-52D fleet, Headquarters Strategic Air Command redesignated the 22d Bombardment Wing as the 22d Air Refueling Wing, Heavy (AREFW (H)).

- 3 Jan 1989 The 6th Air Refueling Squadron activated at March Air Force Base, California. The new unit would fly the KC-10A Extender alongside the existing 9 AREFS.
- 17 Nov 1989 The last of the KC-135A Stratotankers, tail #63-8875, departed the wing and March Air Force Base.
- 1 Dec 1989 The 22 AREFS, equipped with KC-135A's, inactivated; leaving the wing with only two flying squadrons, the 6th and 9th AREFS', both with the KC-10 Extender.
- Dec 1989 The 22 AREFW (H) supported Operation JUST CAUSE, the US invasion of Panama and removal of Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega.
- 2 Aug 1990 A substantial portion of 22 AREFW (H) members deployed in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD, the American buildup of troops in defense of Saudi Arabia. Wing personnel remained deployed through the combat phase of the campaign, titled Operation DESERT STORM (17 January – 28 February 1991), in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Earning victory over Iraq, wing members returned home beginning March through April 1991.
- 1 Sep 1991 The 22 AREFW (H) redesignated as the 22d Air Refueling Wing (ARW).
- Dec 1992 The 22 AREFW (H) supported Operation RESTORE HOPE, the US response to the civil war in Somalia. Wing members facilitated an assortment of military and civilian aircraft transporting personnel and equipment.
- 1 Jun 1992 The United States Air Force underwent a major reorganization of its major commands. The 22d and other tanker units moved from the inactivated Strategic Air Command to Air Mobility Command, previously known as Military Airlift Command.
- 1993 The Congressional Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) and the Department of Defense (DoD) announced its recommendation for further base alignment and force restructuring. The plans called for the 6th and 9th AREFS' and its KC-10 Extenders to move to Travis Air Force Base, California. At the same time, the United States Air Force ordered the 22 ARW to replace the 384th Bombardment Wing at McConnell Air Force Base., Kansas.
- 3 Jan 1994 The 22 ARW succeeded the 384th Bombardment Wing as host unit of McConnell Air Force Base. The bomber wing served as an associate unit as it transferred its B-1B Lancer fleet to the Kansas Air National Guard and subsequent inactivation in September 1994. Brigadier General Calvin H. Coolidge, Jr., assumed command of the wing.

- 3 Jan 1994 The 384th Air Refueling Squadron (ARS), a geographically separated unit attached to the 19 ARW stationed at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, and a previous McConnell unit, returned to McConnell Air Force Base as the first of four KC-135 squadrons to comprise the 22 ARW's new tanker force. Lieutenant Colonel Patrick A. McVay assumed command.
- 3 Jan 1994 The first contingent of 22 ARW personnel departed for Sigonella Naval Air Station, Sicily, to support Operation DENY FLIGHT. Led and commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Peter C. Fortescue, the KC-135's refueled an assortment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- 24 Jan 1994 Continuing support of Operation RESTORE HOPE, a 384 ARS replacement team departed McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, to relieve fellow 384th member Major Ricardo Hernandez's 49-personnel Integral Tanker Unit Deployment team who had been in Africa since 10 December 1993. Led by Captain Raymond E. Lamarche, Jr., the 36 personnel and two KC-135 aircraft team progressed with supporting air refueling requirements for AC-130 Spectre gunships in theatre. The team returned to McConnell Air Force Base on 3 April 1994.
- 31 Jan 1994 The second of four flying squadrons assigned to the 22 ARW, the 349th Air Refueling Squadron (ARS) arrived at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas to begin operations flying the KC-135 Stratotanker. Since 1976, the unit previously served at Beale Air Force Base, California, specializing in the KC-135Q-model operations, designed specifically to carry and transfer fuel for the SR-71 Blackbird reconnaissance aircraft. Lieutenant Colonel Richard E.E. Antaya assumed command of the squadron.
- 13 Feb 1994 The second contingent of KC-135 aircraft and personnel departed for Istres Air Base, France, to relived the initial team supporting Operation DENY FLIGHT. Lieutenant Colonel Richard E.E. Antaya led the team and served as detachment commander. The final aircraft and aircrews returned to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, on 15 April 1994.
- 29 Apr 1994 Arriving as the third of four new flying units assigned to the 22 ARW, the 344th Air Refueling Squadron arrived at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, without men or material. The unit was previously stationed at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina since 1986. Lieutenant Colonel Joseph M. Drobezko assumed command of the unit.
- 30 Jun 1994 The final of four tanker units assigned to the 22 ARW, the 350th Air Refueling Squadron joined its fellow squadrons' at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. Since 1982, the unit was previously assigned to Beale Air Force Base, California, flying KC-135 Stratotanker alongside the 349 ARS. Lieutenant Colonel Karen Daneu took command of the squadron.

- 8 Jan 1996 The 22 ARW deployed four KC-135 Stratotankers flown by an aircrew from each of the wings four flying squadrons to support Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. This mission, beginning in December 1995, entailed North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ground forces on a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. The aircrews completed 17 sorties and unloaded 40,000 pounds of fuel to receiver aircraft supporting the ground force. The aircrews returned to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, on 31 January 1996.
- 14 Jan 1996 The 22 ARW deployed 140 members and six KC-35 aircraft to Riyadh Air Base, Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. Led by 350 ARS commander, Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Kaan, the team aided in refueling fighter aircraft patrolling the southern and south-central area of Iraq.
- Aug 1996 The 22 ARW received the first two of its newly modified KC-135 tanker fleet under the PACER CRAG (compass, radar and global positioning system (GPS)) avionics modernization program.
- 28 Jul 1997 The 350 ARS worked with the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC) in evaluating the PACER CRAG Block 20 avionics package. Testing lasted through 10 October 1997 where the last test flight completed. A total of 48 sorties were completed inspecting the package components' effectiveness and suitability for sustaining air refueling and airlift operations.
- 10 Nov 1997 The 344 ARS tasked two aircrews to work with the 33d Flight Test Squadron (FTS) from McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, to begin testing of the Multi-Point Refueling System (MPRS) on two 22d-owned KC-135 Stratotankers. This new system allowed the tankers to refuel US Navy, European and Coalition aircraft not designed to take the standard refueling boom configuration. On 4 December 1997, the 344 ARS and 33 FTS concluded testing, which encompassed eight sorties refueling US Navy receiver aircraft.
- 17 Nov 1997 In response to Iraqi aggressions and refusal to allow weapons inspectors access to its weapons facilities, the 22 ARW deployed 11 KC-135 Stratotankers in support of Operation Phoenix SCORPION, delivering one million pounds of fuel to US bomber, fighter and transport aircraft involved in the mission. The tankers also transported wing personnel and equipment to overseas bases supporting the operation.
- 3 Jan 2001 The wing deployed 108 personnel and five KC-135 Stratotankers to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey to support air refueling requirements for Operation NORTHERN WATCH. This operation saw coalition aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone in northern Iraq. The team returned to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, by 1 March 2001.

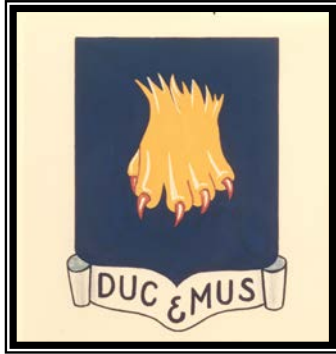
- Sep 2001 Terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. resulted in the launch of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The 22 ARW deployed tankers supporting Operation NOBLE EAGLE. By the end of the year, the wing deployed aircraft, equipment and personnel to Kyrgyzstan, Southwest Asia and other locations in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.
- 14 Jun 2002 By taking command of the 22 ARW, Colonel Michelle D. Johnson became the first female commander of an air refueling wing in the United States Air Force. She broke ground as the first female commander in 22 ARW and McConnell Air Force Base history.
- 1 Oct 2002 Directed by an Air Force-wide reorganization, the 22d Logistics Group became the 22d Maintenance Group, losing the 22d Contracting, Supply and transportation Squadrons'. Simultaneously, the 22d Support Group redesignated as the 22d Mission Support Group. The 22d Transportation Squadron redesignated as the 22d Logistics Squadron. The supply squadron inactivated and the career field merged with under the logistics squadron. Both the logistics squadron and the 22d Contracting Squadron fell under the authority of the 22d Mission Support Group.
- Mar 2003 The 22 ARW deploy personnel and aircraft in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Members found themselves at locations across Southwest Asia and the Middle East supporting air and ground operations.
- 11 Jul 2008 The 22d Services Squadron redesignated as the 22d Force Support Squadron, resulting the 22d Mission Support Squadron inactivating.
- 23 Feb 2009 The senior leadership team of the 22 ARW received approval from Headquarters Air Mobility Command and Headquarters Air Force to convert 163 acres of land from the non-appropriated funds category of the budget to the operations and maintenance (O&M) funds category after the closure of the McConnell Air Force Base golf course located on those grounds.
- 24 Apr 2009 Aircrew Flight Equipment (AFE) personnel began preparations to consolidate work centers and moved from the 350 ARS to the 344 ARS. A number of logistical preparations, primarily related to infrastructure, were necessary prior to the move. The move finished on 31 May 2009.
- 1 Jul 2009 Headquarters Air Mobility Command issued the order to activate Detachment 2, Headquarters 22d Operations Group at Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire.
- 1 Oct 2009 Headquarters Air Mobility Command activated the 64th Air Refueling Squadron at Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire, assigning it the 22d Operations Group. The 64 ARS began service as an associate active duty unit to the 157th Air Refueling Wing, New Hampshire Air National Guard.



- 2 Dec 2009 A KC-135 Stratotanker, tail 60-0321, flew in support of a START EAST treaty mission. With less than 24 hours' notice, this critical mission ended successfully and served as the final mission of the 15-year old Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).
- 15 Aug 2010 The 22 ARW participated in Headquarters Air Mobility Command's first Operations Plan (OPLAN) 8010 Forward Location Alert Generation (FLAG) exercise. The wing deployed 115 personnel to Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota, to demonstrate the wing's ability to provide nuclear support in a deployed location. The event concluded on 18 August 2010.
- 13 Jan 2013 The 22d Operations Group supported the KC-135 Block 45 developmental test and upgrade program. McConnell Air Force Base served as the lead base for the program, conducting all Block 45 training and employment for Headquarters Air Mobility Command. Block 45 upgrades include modernization of KC-135 instrumentation to a digital format, new flight director, auto-pilot, vertical navigation and radio altimeters. All McConnell assigned Kc-135 aircraft will receive the upgrades.
- 3 May 2013 A KC-135 Stratotanker, tail 63-8877, from McConnell Air Force Base and temporarily deployed/assigned to the 22d Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, 376th Air Expeditionary Wing at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, crashed near Chon-Aryk, Kyrgyzstan. The aircrew: Captain Mark T. Voss, Captain Victoria A. Pinckey and Technical Sergeant Herman Mackey III, all from the 92d Air Refueling Wing, Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, perished.
- 19 Jun 2013 The 22d Maintenance Operations Squadron inactivated. The 22d Maintenance Group formulated the 22d Maintenance Operations Flight within the unit to assume duties of the inactivated squadron.
- 30 Jun 2014 The 22 ARW held a groundbreaking ceremony initiating the beginning of construction for the KC-46A Pegasus aircraft. Headquarters Air Force named McConnell Air Force Base as the first active duty led KC-46A operating base on 23 April 2014. On hand for the ceremony was the commander of Air Mobility Command, General Darren W. McDew, along with civic leaders with contractors.
- 8 Dec 2015 The 22 ARW received notice from Headquarters Air Mobility Command in its selection as a candidate wing to stand up a cyber-squadron. This new unit would support 25 various joint agencies in cyber capability operation of the new KC-46A Pegasus tanker aircraft. The 22d Communications Squadron headed the development of the cyber squadron.

- 5 Apr 2016 The 22 ARW hosted the first Nuclear Deterrence Forum at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. The three-day event brought leadership and subject matter experts from the chemical, biological and nuclear fields together to discuss real-world threats, protective and prevention measures. The conference lasted through 7 April.
- 15 Jul 2016 The 22 ARW received the Global War on Terrorism-Service (GWOT-S) streamer for its role in supporting global war on terrorism operations from its home station for the period of 11 September 2002 to present.
- 30 Sep 2016 The 384 ARS temporarily stood down as it prepared for transition to the 92 ARW stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. This was done out of necessity to realign flying squadrons in preparation for the KC-46A Pegasus tanker's arrival to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas.
- 16 Oct 2017 The 22 ARW hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony officiating the completion of the \$267 million, 16 structure KC-46A construction project. Several distinguished visitors attended from the federal, state and local levels. New buildings included separate one, two and three-bay hangars, a fuselage trainer, a regional maintenance training facility, a flight simulator and a composite maintenance shop.
- 25 Jan 2019 A multitude of senior Air Force, State and local distinguished visitors were on hand to welcome the arrival of the first and second KC-46A Pegasus tankers, tail 15-046009 and 17-046031 respectively, to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. Flown exclusively by the 344 ARS (22 ARW) and 905 ARS (931 ARW), these new aircraft will become the mainstay of tanker operations at McConnell Air Force Base.

## 22d Bombardment/Operations Group



**Figure 1. The original "Cougar Paw" emblem design established in 1941.**

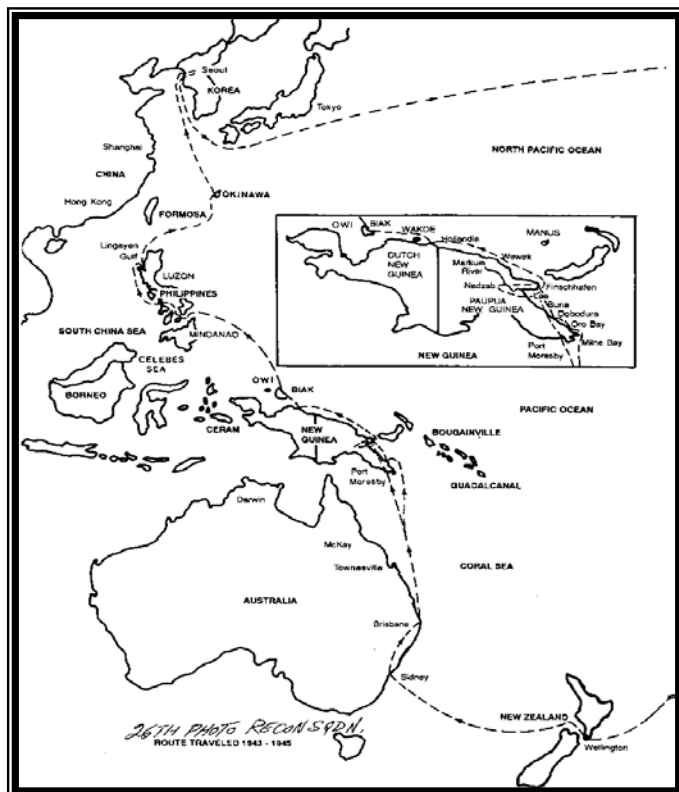
The history of the 22d pre-dates America's entry into World War II. The group originally constituted as the 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) on 22 December 1939, activated on 1 February 1940, at Mitchel Field, New York and assigned under the 2d Bombardment Wing. Comprised of the 2d, 19th, 33d and later, the 408th Bombardment Squadrons, the group trained with the B-18 aircraft. In November 1940, the group moved to Langley Field, Virginia. While at Langley, the group received the first 55 Martin B-26 "Marauder" bomber aircraft to enter the Army Air Force (AAF) inventory in February 1941. The 22d trained in bombardment and sea surveillance as the Marauder aircraft continued to arrive.<sup>3</sup>

The group struggled with what was for the period, a tricky, high performance aircraft that many of the relatively inexperienced pilots found difficult to handle. The AAF, in fact, grounded the B-26 in April due to accidents. The problem compounded exponentially by rapid production turn-outs resulting in incomplete aircraft coming off the line. According to 22d veteran Walter Gaylor, 16 of 19 aircraft received at Langley by the end of May arrived without propellers, presumably via ground transport. Once the unit completed training, the 22d's primary mission on the east coast was anti-submarine surveillance. A strong concern existed that large numbers of U-boats patrolled with relative impunity off the America's Atlantic coastline. Most reported

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<sup>3</sup> The 408th's precedent unit, the 18th Reconnaissance Squadron, was attached to the 22d from February 1940-April 1942. The unit was then re-designated as the 408th and formally assigned to the 22d. *Brief History of 22d Bombardment Group 1939-1952*, unpublished manuscript, (Montgomery, AL: Air Force Historical Research Agency, 1998), 1. While at Mitchel Field, the 22d had very limited resources. They had not yet begun to receive the B-26. They possessed a few B-18s, though not nearly enough to keep all the pilots current. The group made use of all aircraft of opportunity and flew whatever was sitting on the airfield. See, Gaylor, Walter, *Not to be Forgotten: The 22d Bombardment Group in World War II*, unpublished manuscript, 1986, 18-19, 26. Gaylor, a 22d veteran lists six different aircraft in addition to the B-18 that the 22d used for training.

accounts of German submarine sightings were erroneous. Not only was the United States a “neutral” country but Germany dedicated the vast majority of the U-boat fleet to prey on the convoy sea-lanes. When America entered the war, only six German U-boats were ready to patrol American waters.<sup>4</sup>



**Figure 2. Map of the South Pacific and Australia ca. 1943. The 22d flew out of Darwin and Townsville, Australia and staged raids from Port Moresby. The Japanese controlled Lae, a frequent 5 AF target. Moresby and Lae were separated by only 400 miles (Marauder Photo Archive).**

On 7 December 1941, a Japanese carrier task force attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This abruptly ended the 22d’s participation in Atlantic coast operations. Thirty minutes after the attack, members of the 22d received orders to report. Two and one half hours later, B-26s started flying west and ground troops boarded trains heading the same direction for California and Muroc Dry Lake, a bombing range. In February 1942, the group crated and shipped their B-26s to Hickam Field, Hawaii. Once there, technicians

reassembled and tested the aircraft. In late March, the 22d followed its planes on the 3,480-mile journey to Australia, making it

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 29. See also, Craven W. F. and Cate J. L., *The Army Air Forces in World War II: Plans & Early Operations, Vol I January 1939-August 1942*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 514-515. One should not take the text’s statement as an implication of Nazi Germany possessing little or no interest in American waters. Craven and Cate note that a great deal of political expediency also served as primary motivation to avoid American waters prior to America’s entry in the war. Until the United States formally engaged in World War II, in December 1941, Germany demonstrated far greater interest in more practical strikes on trans-Atlantic shipping of both the British and neutral countries. Craven and Cate pointedly note that only six subs were equipped for patrolling American waters once the German government removed its self-imposed constraints. Warren A. Trest also addressed the anti-submarine effort in a very clear manner. See, Trest, Warren A., *Air Force Roles and Missions: A History*, (Washington, D. C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1998), 78-84.

the largest mass deployment in Army Air Force history.<sup>5</sup>

On 5 April 1942, the group launched its first combat mission from bases in Australia. With this action, the 22d became the first B-26 bomb unit to participate in combat. The group used its B-26 bombers to attack enemy shipping, installations and airfields on New Guinea and New Britain. Also on the bombing target list were troop concentrations and enemy merchant marine shipping in New Guinea, particularly at Lae and Salamaua. Through most of 1942, the 22d flew with little or no fighter cover. Predictably, few flyable B-26s remained by year's end. Starting in early 1943, the 22 BG received North American B-25 "Mitchell" and Consolidated B-24 "Liberator" bombers. The remaining Marauder aircraft all transferred to the 19th Bombardment Squadron with the other three squadrons flying the new planes.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 3. Lt Cmdr Lyndon Johnson shakes hands with Brig Gen Martin Scanlon before his flight with the 22d Bomb Group, 9 June 1942.**

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<sup>5</sup> 5 Sgt Carson, William R., *A Brief History of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Bombardment Wing, Heavy and March Air Force Base*, (Riverside, CA: Office of History, 22d Bombardment Wing [H], 1969), 3. See also, Schroeder, Frederick A., *DUCEMUS: WE LEAD*, (Daytona Beach, FL: Hall Publishing, 1985), 3. Schroeder was a photographer in the 18<sup>th</sup> Photo Reconnaissance Squadron (later 408<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron) of the 22 BG. As a charter member of the 22 BG, he was an eyewitness to the group's early activity in World War II. Although a "vanity press" publication, his book is a valuable collection of recollections from primary actors in the group's activities.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 3. Gaylor, *Not to be Forgotten*, 320. The 19th Bombardment Squadron's B-26s were also "redecorated" by removing the camo paint scheme leaving the planes with their pristine shining metal skins. From that point forward, the 19th was known as the "Silver Fleet."

Perhaps the most famous mission in the history of the 22d occurred on 9 June 1942. Elements of the group received a tasking to strike the Japanese at Lae, New Guinea. A Navy observer flew aboard a 22 BG Bomber called the *Heckling Hare*. This observer also happened to be a Congressman. His name was Lyndon Baines Johnson, a Democrat from Texas. The B-26 carrying Johnson broke off short of the bombing run though due to generator problems. It landed back in Australia at roughly the time the other Marauders of the 22 BG were making their bombing runs on Lae. General Douglas McArthur awarded Johnson the Silver Star for valor. It remains hotly debated today as to what exactly took place. Group commander Lt Col Dwight Divine II had an especially dangerous landing on returning. His B-26, nicknamed *Rum Runner* was heavily battle damaged and he safely landed the plane “gear up.” His near flawless execution of what was, in reality, a controlled crash, earned Lt Col Divine the Distinguished Flying Cross for his performance. Eleven bombers took part in the mission.<sup>7</sup>

On 5 November 1943, the 22 BG aided Australian ground forces by bombing enemy entrenchments near Dumpu and Wewak northwest of Lae. This operation earned the 22d its second Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) that stated in part,

...the 22d Bombardment Group (H), then consisting of one squadron of B-24s and three squadrons of B-25s based at Dobodura, New Guinea, to wipe out the Japanese positions. As the 32 medium bombers neared the target, cloud cover forced them down to a dangerously low altitude. Although they could honorably have turned back, they continued their descent, braved the concentrated antiaircraft fire, and accurately pinpointed over 23 tons of bombs on extremely small targets, difficult to locate because of the terrain and situated only a few hundred feet in front

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<sup>6</sup> Numerous Johnson biographers have written about his activities during the early days of World War II. Several congressional representatives including Lyndon Johnson volunteered for service in the wake of Pearl Harbor. Both Robert Dallek and Doris Kearns Goodwin provided balanced looks at the TOW 9 mission. See, Dallek, Robert, *Lone Star Rising: Lyndon Johnson and His Times, 1908 – 1960*, (NY: Oxford University Press), 1992 and Goodwin, Doris Kearns, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, (NY: St. Martin’s Press), 1991.

of the Australian forces. Every known enemy-occupied position in the area was destroyed...<sup>8</sup>

In February 1944, the group began replacing its B-25s and B-26s with more B-24s, changing the group's designation to the 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy). The group also gained the nickname "Red Raiders" after redheaded group commander, Colonel Richard W. Robinson and the name of his, first B-24. The Red Viking logo, used by the 22d and executed in patch form, never formally entered into the squadron's heraldry. The "cougar paw" in use today, has remained the 22d's emblem since activation in 1941. Equipped with the new planes and operating from new bases in New Guinea, the 22d attacked Japanese airfields, shipping and oil fields and installations in Borneo, Ceram and Halmahera. American and allied forces continued to press the fight and in September 1944, the group attacked the Japanese bases in the southern Philippines for the invasion of the island of Leyte.<sup>9</sup>

From December 1944 to August 1945, the 22d attacked airfields and bases on the island of Luzon, the largest of the Philippine islands, in support of allied forces' efforts to liberate the country. It was during this time that the group lost its commander, Colonel Robinson. He perished in January 1945 when his plane crashed on takeoff. While the 22d conducted operations in the Philippines, the group



**Figure 4. Col Richard W. Robinson, 22 BG Commander and Red Cross worker Mary Corken relaxing. (David Ghen Collection, 22d Bomb Group Association).**

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<sup>8</sup> Distinguished Unit Citation dated 1945, Office of History, 22d Air Refueling Wing, Repository [Hereafter OHR].

<sup>9</sup> Gaylor, *Not to be Forgotten*, 13. The wing's heraldry as officially recognized is contained within Appendix 1 of this monograph.

also supported Australian ground forces on Borneo and bombed railways and industrial targets on Formosa (present-day Taiwan) and China. After the battle of Okinawa, the unit moved to that island's Motobu Peninsula and initiated reconnaissance missions over southern Japan.<sup>10</sup>

Looking strictly at the chronology of the 22d, one develops the impression the group constantly moved throughout World War II. This is true to an extent, but in actuality, the 22d used a number of bases simultaneously. For instance, in 1942 the 2d and 19th Bombardment Squadrons' based from both Ipswich and Townsville, Australia, while the 33d flew primarily from Woodstock and the 408th from Reid River. The group's staff spent most of 1942 between Townsville, Woodstock and Iron Range. Additionally, these locations acted as basing assignments only. The 22d staged most of the actual bombing runs from Port Moresby in New Guinea. As expected with any military unit in the South Pacific, frequent moving became the rule once Douglas MacArthur's "Island Hopping" campaign commenced in full gear. At the end of the war, the 22d remained



**Figure 5. Crew and maintainers of the 22 BG's B-29 "Mule Train" at Kadena Air Base, Japan.**

in theater under Far East Air Forces (FEAF), Pacific Air Forces' predecessor. Towards the end of 1945, the group relocated to Clark Field in the Philippines, doing so without personnel or equipment. In April 1946, the AAF re-designated the 22d as a "Very Heavy" bomb group in anticipation of a change in aircraft, which came in June when the unit switched to the Boeing B-29 "Superfortress". The group remained in the Pacific until it moved to Smoky Hill Air Force Base (AFB), near Salina, Kansas, in May 1948.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Corken, Mary Elizabeth to Ruth Robinson, January 26, 1945, 22d Bomb Group Association (David Ghen Collection), [www.klimesh.com/redraiders](http://www.klimesh.com/redraiders), accessed, 26 January 2005. The letter gives an account of circumstances regarding Robinson's death and subsequent funeral.

<sup>11</sup> Maurer, Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force World War II*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1982), 12, 101,160, 499; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*, (Washington, D. C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 72.



Like other combat groups during the now independent Air Force's first re-organization, the 22d Bomb Group became subordinate to a brand new wing with the same numeric designation. On 1 August 1948, the unit became the 22d Operations Group and with the newly created 22d Maintenance, Supply and Air Base Groups constituted the newly established 22d Bombardment Wing (BMW). In 1952, the Air Force reorganized again and inactivated groups. Their functions replaced by directorships directly under wing organizations. This directorate structure continued until 1991, when the Air Force, under the direction of Chief of Staff General Merrill A. McPeak, reverted to the objective wing.<sup>12</sup>

### **22d Bombardment/Air Refueling Wing**

Following the 1948 re-organization, the new wing shared its commander with the 301st Bombardment Wing until the 22d moved to March AFB, California, in 1949. There, the 22d had a commander in common with the 1st Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) until that unit moved to George AFB, California, the following year.



**Figure 6. Remains of North Korea's largest ore smelting facility in Chinnampo, North Korea following a visit by the 22d's B-29s in 1950.**

With the onset of hostilities in Korea, the wing deployed ten B-29s to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, in July 1950 to participate in the Korean Conflict in support of combat operations of the FEAF who quickly utilized the 22d's Superfortresses by bombing North Korean marshalling yards, airfields and industries. The unit also provided air support to United Nations ground forces that defended South Korea from Communist North

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<sup>12</sup> Lineage and Honors History of the 22d Air Refueling Wing, OHR.

Korea's forces. The group wasted no time and launched their very first combat sortie against marshalling yards and an oil refinery near Wonsan, Korea, just eight days after the first plane departed March AFB for Japan. The group clearly demonstrated the utility of rapid response mobility.<sup>13</sup>

The involvement of Strategic Air Command (SAC) assets in the Korean Conflict, to include the 22d, was a short-lived affair. SAC bombers eliminated all of their assigned targets and the 22d returned to March AFB in October 1950. In June 1952, the wing branched into air refueling with the addition of Boeing's KC-97 "Stratofreighter" tankers and stood up the 22d Air Refueling Squadron in June of that year. By November the B-29 fleet was retired and replaced by jet-powered, B-47 "Stratojets," a Boeing Wichita product.<sup>14</sup>

With this 600 mile-per-hour plane, wing aircrews flew the longest non-stop mass flight in



Figure 7. B-52 alert aircrew members respond to their jet. (U. S. Air Force)

Air Force history. The operation took place in 1954 when the 22d's crews flew 5,840 miles from the United Kingdom to California. The wing converted its entire bomber fleet to B-52s by late 1963. During that period, the organization's tanker component completed the move into the jet age when the 22d Air Refueling Squadron replaced its propeller-driven KC-97s with the KC-135 "Stratotanker", an air-refueling

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<sup>13</sup> Futrell, Robert R., *The United States Air Force in Korea*, (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 74, 91.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.; Carson, *Brief History*, 8-10.

platform based on the Boeing 707 airframe.<sup>15</sup>

The Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 brought the 22d into its third major conflict in as many decades as the United States entered into full involvement in the Vietnam conflict. The wing's KC-135s refueled Tactical Air Command (TAC) aircraft deploying to Southeast Asia, and supported Strategic Air Command bombers on rotation to Guam. The 22d Bombardment Wing witnessed heavy involvement in a number of operations during the war in Vietnam. In fact, the 22d accounted for 50 percent of all 15th Air Force support overseas at the time of the ARC LIGHT operation. Such concentrated action was not limited merely to ARC LIGHT. Operation LINEBACKER II, 18-29 December 1972, realized equally heavy participation on the part of the wing's jets and aircrews. On 22 December, an enemy surface-to-air missile brought down a 22d BMW B-52, while conducting a bombing mission over North Vietnam's capitol, Hanoi; making it, the first bomber the wing lost since World War II. In March 1973, the wing received an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for its exemplary performance in Southeast Asia--the fourth in the unit's history. The 22d returned fully to the nuclear deterrence mission with the withdrawal of U. S. forces from Vietnam.<sup>16</sup>

Cold War alert status and nuclear dissuasion remained the constant through the rest of the 1970s. Since the creation of President Eisenhower's "Single Integrated Operational Plan," SAC's posture for the Cold War was one of ballistic missiles, B-52 bombers and KC-series air refueling tankers standing alert. As historian Richard K. Smith has noted, SAC's basic philosophy was, "not to prepare for war, but to go to war."<sup>17</sup> In August 1982, the wing received the first three of its KC-10A Extenders and assigned them to the 9th Air Refueling Squadron,

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<sup>15</sup> Price, Jay M., *Wichita's Legacy of Flight*, (Charleston, SD: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 98. Between 1956 and 1962, 467 of 744 B-52-Ds built rolled out of Boeing's Plant II. Discussion of the KC-135's relationship to the Boeing 707 airframe is discussed in Smith, Richard K., *75 Years of Inflight Refueling: Highlights, 1923 – 1998*, (Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museum Program, 1998), 45.

<sup>16</sup> Tagg, Lori S., *Development of the B-52: The Wright Field Story*, (Dayton, OH: History Office, Aeronautical Systems Center, 2004), 88.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *75 Years*, 52.

making them the second Air Force unit to use the new refuelers. This action preceded the re-designation of the 22d to an air-refueling wing in October of the same year. The 22d used the KC-10A's cargo, passenger and fuel load capacity to provide comprehensive airlift and air refueling support during the evacuation of American citizens from Grenada the following year.

In December 1989, the wing's 22d Air Refueling Squadron inactivated and its KC-135A Stratotankers retired or transferred to other SAC bases. This left the 6th and 9th Air Refueling Squadrons' as the wing's only flying squadrons. The roughly twenty year expansion of tanker capabilities represented by development of the KC-135 and KC-10 aircraft during the Cold War years led one historian to describe the air refueling component as, "practically an air force unto itself..."<sup>18</sup>



**Figure 8. A KC-10 Extender conducts refueling operations for an F-15 Eagle (U. S. Air Force)**

Air Force combat operations drew down to occasionally small interdictions such as Grenada and Panama following the Vietnam era. These were all relatively small-scale contingencies of limited time. The 22 ARW found itself engaged in most of these, providing air refueling and airlift via their Extender

aircraft. This changed with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Strategic Air Command proved reluctant in utilizing the cargo capability of the aircraft during the initial Operation DESERT SHIELD build up and most 22 ARW Extenders were used strictly in refueling efforts during the beginning stages of force deployment. As a whole, no more than 20 KC-10s were utilized for cargo and troop transport during the Persian Gulf War, with most of those committed at the

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<sup>18</sup> Giroux, Vincent A., *Seventy Years of Strategic Air Refueling, 1918 – 1988, A Chronology*, (Omaha, NE: Office of the Historian, Headquarters Strategic Air Command, 1990), 58; Smith, *Inflight Refueling*, 75.

outbreak of hostilities. For the most part, the critical function provided by KC-10 aircraft remained strictly in the air-refueling arena. In total, SAC's KC-10s lifted 1,111 troops and 19,905 tons of cargo into Southwest Asia between August 1990 and January 1991.<sup>19</sup>

Incidents such as the SAC reticence to support pure mobility missions as just described provided Air Force leadership prime examples of the changing nature in the employment of airpower. Varying weapon systems would no longer be rigidly viewed from "tactical," "strategic" or "mobility" standpoints. Interchanging capability based on mission requirements was a more desirable end state. Combined with the breakup of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact, it became apparent that contingency-based force structures were needed. Air Force leaders elected to consolidate the major commands from 13 to 10. This provided obvious cost savings



**Figure 9. Brig Gen Charles Coolidge accepts command of the 22d Air Refueling Wing from Lt Gen Walter Cross, 15th Air Force Commander, 3 January 1994. To the right stands the outgoing 22 ARW Commander Col (later Brig. Gen.) Stephen Lorenz. Coolidge would "win and pin" a second star while commanding the 22d.**

and eliminated levels of bureaucracy that often hampered operations during the Persian Gulf buildup. On 1 June 1992, Strategic Air Command, Military Airlift Command (MAC) and Tactical Air Command (TAC) inactivated. Air Force Space Command gained SAC's intercontinental ballistic missile forces. The new Air Combat Command (formerly TAC) gained SAC's bomber fleet. The 22 ARW and other tanker units joined the airlift fleet forming the new Air Mobility Command (formerly MAC) and united all aspects of the transportation

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<sup>19</sup> Matthews, James K. and Holt, Cora, *So Many, So Much, So Far, So Fast: United States Transportation Command and Strategic Deployment for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm*, (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1996), 49 – 50. To get a compliment of Extender aircraft turned over to MAC for mobility missions took the direct involvement of MAC/CC General Hansford T. Johnson. SAC for its part was highly focused on refueling deploying fighter aircraft.

mission under a single major command. This latter move in particular was a necessity in a military environment that grew increasingly more mobile and global in nature.<sup>20</sup>

The new commands quickly found themselves tested with a new operation on the African continent, supplying humanitarian assistance in Operation RESTORE HOPE. The 22 ARW used the Extenders and deployed 12,000 Marines into the theater. They also provided air refueling to allied aircraft that supported this operation. That same year, the Congressional Base Realignment and Closure Commission and Department of Defense (DoD) announced their recommendations for further base realignment and force restructuring. The plans called for the relocation of the 6th and 9th Air Refueling Squadrons' to Travis AFB, California. At the same time, the USAF ordered the 22 ARW to replace the 384th Bomb Wing at McConnell AFB, Kansas.<sup>21</sup>

At a 3 January 1994 ceremony conducted by General Walter Kross, 15th Air Force Commander, the 22d succeeded the 384th Bomb Wing as McConnell's host unit under the command of Brigadier General Charles Coolidge. Brigadier General Ron Henderson's bomber unit converted to a bomb group and remained at McConnell as an associate until it deactivated and transferred its fleet of ten B-1B Lancers to the 184th Bomb Group, Kansas Air National Guard (BG, KANG) in September 1994. This represented a monumental shift for the 184th. Since the unit's inception as the 127th Observation Squadron in 1941, they flew fighter aircraft almost exclusively as the primary plane of assignment. A quick glance at Appendix 7 illustrates this fact. The 384th Air Refueling Squadron, an associate unit under the 19th Air Refueling Wing at Robins AFB, Georgia joined the 22 ARW as the first of four KC-135 squadrons to comprise the wing's new tanker force. The 344th, 349th and the 350th joined the 384th over the

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<sup>20</sup> "Air Combat Command Activates," Air Combat Command News Service, reprinted in *Contrails*, June 5, 1992; Gen McPeak, Merrill A., memorandum reprinted as, "McPeak Welcomes New Commands," *Contrails*, Jun 5 1992, OHR. From 1992 until early 1994 several issues of this base publication carried articles related to the restructure and subsequent move of the 22d Air Refueling Wing to McConnell Air Force Base.

<sup>21</sup> Capt Cox, Larry, "New Host Wing Commander named; Bomber Unit Becomes Tenant Group," *Contrails*, November 19, 1993, OHR.

next eight months to fly the wing's 48 KC-135s and support AMC's "Global Reach" component. Under Coolidge's leadership and that of his successors, the 22d supported several worldwide contingencies. The wing participated in Operations DENY FLIGHT, SUPPORT HOPE and UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. The 22 ARW continued to lead by supporting ongoing contingencies such as NORTHERN WATCH and SOUTHERN WATCH. The 22 ARW led the Air Force in refueling interchangeability with the Multi-Point Refueling System (MPRS). This allowed the wing to provide refueling services to US Navy and allied aircraft. The PACER CRAG program consisted of modernized KC-135 avionics with technology that allowed for routine air refueling missions to proceed sans navigator.<sup>22</sup>

The wing provided air refueling to fighter planes patrolling American air space during Operation NOBLE EAGLE, and continued to deploy in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. With the kickoff of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the wing deployed forces in support of the regime change in Baghdad. The wing's efforts in these most recent operations garnered successive Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, the thirteenth and fourteenth such awards in the wing's history. Post 9/11 operations and missions were joint efforts conducted with the 931st Air Refueling Group and the 184th Air Refueling Wing, both stationed at McConnell Air Force Base. In April 2014, the 22d Air Refueling Wing received notification of its selection as the primary active-duty led main operating base for the new KC-46A Pegasus tanker aircraft. On 16 October 2017, the wing officially declared "mission complete" of its 16-structure, \$267 million dollar construction project to support the KC-46A. The first two Pegasus' finally arrived at McConnell Air Force Base on 25 January 2019. The present operational environment of the wing continued formation from a decidedly joint approach with the focus clearly on "Team McConnell," more so than each unit is individually. The Air Force doctrinal approach of "Mirror Force" remained evident in all of the wing's operations.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Rockwell Industries, "Pacer CRAG Program Review," 13 – 14 November 1996, OHR

<sup>23</sup> Air Force Outstanding Award Citations, August 1, 2002 – July 31 2004 and August 1 2004 – July 31, 2005, OHR.

## Chronology of McConnell Air Force Base

- Fall 1908 The “Peerless Prophets’ Jubilee” fair became the first aerial exhibition in Wichita, Kansas. Intended to link Wichita to aviation, fair organizers exhibited the Knabenshue Airship. This 150-foot dirigible made several failed attempts to circle city hall before succumbing to the Kansas wind and crash-landing.
- 5 Sep 1916 The formal announcement was made that Clyde Cessna would come to Wichita and build the first aircraft at the Jones Motor Car plant (what is now Broadway and 35th St).
- 31 May 1921 The Air Derby became Wichita’s first air show. The event occurred on the “California Section,” an empty hay field located southeast of Wichita that was owned by Jack Turner and would become the future home of the Wichita Municipal Airport, the Stearman plant, Boeing Wichita plant, and Wichita Air Force Base. The field earned the name “California” because the owners resided in the state.
- 11-12  
Oct 1924 The National Air Congress took place at the “California Section.”
- 10 Nov 1928 The Wichita Board of Park Commissioners announced plans for a new municipal airport.
- 28 Jun 1930 Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new airport administration building occurred at the location formerly known as the “California Section.”
- 31 Mar 1935 The Wichita Board of Park Commissioners inspected and accepted completion of the Wichita Municipal Airport administration building. Falling victim to the Great Depression, construction of the structure quickly ran out of funding and stood as a vacant shell. In 1934, construction efforts resumed backed by funding from the federal government’s New Deal program.
- 4 Aug 1941 The Kansas Air National Guard unit received federal recognition as the 127th Observation Squadron. The recently completed building 1218, located at the southeast end of the airstrip served as the unit’s headquarters.
- 6 Oct 1941 The Army Air Forces assumed command of the 127th Observation Squadron as it entered active duty serving in Tennessee and Okinawa.
- 24 Feb 1941 The Army Air Field Material Center, Midwestern Procurement District, established its headquarters on the second floor of the Wichita Municipal Airport administration building. The center worked exclusively with the Boeing Wichita plant in developing several warplanes.



- 7 Sep 1945 The 127th Observation Squadron reorganized and redesignated as the 127th Fighter Squadron, gaining the F-51 Mustang aircraft.
- 11 Oct 1946 The last military personnel assigned to the Midwestern Procurement District departed the Wichita Municipal Airport administration building.
- Feb 1951 Public hearings began considering the location of an Air Force base near the Wichita Boeing facilities.
- 31 May 1951 The Air Force took title to Wichita Municipal Airport.
- 5 Jun 1951 The 3520th Combat Crew Training Wing, Air Training Command, activated at Wichita Municipal Airport, to train aircrews to operate B-47 Stratojet aircraft.
- 12 Jun 1951 The United States Government paid the City of Wichita \$9.4 million for the Wichita Municipal Airport.
- 15 May 1953 Wichita Municipal Airport becomes Wichita Air Force Base.
- 15 Apr 1954 Message arrived officially renaming Wichita Air Force Base as McConnell Air Force Base.
- 15 May 1954 During a public ceremony, Wichita Air Force Base became McConnell Air Force Base, in honor of Fred and Tom McConnell, two deceased brothers of the three “Flying McConnell Brothers,” of World War II fame.
- 21 Apr 1955 The 1,000th B-47 Stratojet aircrew graduated from training at McConnell Air Force Base.
- 1 Jul 1958 Strategic Air Command took control of the base and replaced the 3520th with the 4347th Combat Crew Training Wing.
- 15 Jul 1959 The 42d Strategic Aerospace Division activated.
- 1 Aug 1960 The Air Force released one million dollars to begin construction of access roads and utilities for Titan II missile complexes.
- 29 Nov 1961 The 381st Strategic Missile Wing activated at McConnell Air Force Base.
- 1 Oct 1962 The 388th Tactical Fighter Wing activated at McConnell Air Force Base.
- 10 Oct 1962 The 184th Tactical Fighter Group assigned to the Kansas Air National Guard as the 127th Fighter Squadron’s parent unit.
- 1 Jul 1963 The 42d Strategic Aerospace Division inactivated.

- 8 Feb 1964 The 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing replaced the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing at McConnell Air Force Base.
- Jul 1964 The 835th Air Division activated at McConnell Air Force. The unit established its headquarters in the former Wichita Municipal Airport administration building.
- 21 Jul 1964 The 355th Tactical Fighter Wing moved from George Air Force Base, California, to join alongside the 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing at McConnell Air Force Base.
- 16 Jan 1965 A KC-135 Stratotanker from Clinton-Sherman Air Force Base, Oklahoma, crashed into a Wichita residential area shortly after takeoff. Thirty people died in the crash including the entire seven-man aircrew.
- 30 Jun 1965 McConnell assumed responsibility for the Smokey Hill weapons range.
- 25 Mar 1971 The 184th Tactical Fighter Group redesignated as the 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group. The unit began training operations with the F-105D/F Thunderchief.
- 1 Jun 1971 The 91st Air Refueling Squadron, a tenant unit from Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, arrived at McConnell Air Force Base to begin operation of the KC-135 Stratotanker. Approximately 20 KC-135 aircraft trickled in during the month with the squadron reaching full combat readiness and execution by 30 June.
- 30 Jun 1971 The 835th Air Division inactivated.
- 1 Jul 1972 The 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing moved to England Air Force Base, Louisiana, returning the base to Strategic Air Command control and transferring host unit duties to the 381st Strategic Missile Wing.
- 1 Dec 1972 The 384th Air Refueling Wing arrived at McConnell Air Force Base with additional KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft. The wing took command of the 91st Air Refueling Squadron.
- 1 Oct 1973 The 184th assumed responsibility for operating and maintaining the 36,000-acre Smokey Hill weapons range located near Salina, Kansas.
- 5 Mar 1974 A KC-135 Stratotanker, aircraft 57-1500, flown by an aircrew assigned to the 91st Air Refueling Squadron, suffered mechanical failure and crashed during take-off, killing two of the seven-aircrew members. The aircraft itself burned and declared a total loss.

- 23 Aug 1976 An F-105 Thunderchief fighter aircraft, assigned to the Kansas Air National Guard's 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group, McConnell Air Force Base, crash-landed, hitting an automobile and killing both aircrew members.
- 2 Oct 1977 The 381st Communications Squadron redesignated as the 2155th Communications Squadron. This move aligned the unit with the at the time-standard Air Force Communication Service squadron identification.
- 24 Aug 1978 An oxidizer leak at Titan II missile complex 533-07 killed two maintenance personnel and injured several others.
- 8 Oct 1979 The 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group redesignated as the 184th Fighter Group and transitioned from the F-105 Thunderchief to the F-4D Phantom fighter aircraft.
- 1 Jun 1981 International attention focused on the base when authorities accused a missile crew officer with alleged illegal contact with officials of the Soviet Union.
- Oct 1981 Air Force officials announced plans to phase out the Titan II weapon system.
- 5 Apr 1983 The 384th Air Refueling Wing received the first of the re-engined "R" model KC-135 Stratotanker. Lieutenant General George D. Miller, vice commander of Strategic Air Command, piloted the aircraft. The engine re-modification was the first on the KC-135 platform in over 25 years.
- 21 Jul 1983 The 381st Strategic Missile Wing transferred host unit duties to the 384th Air Refueling Wing.
- 1 Feb 1984 McConnell Air Force Base selected as the fourth base to receive the B-1B lancer bomber aircraft.
- 1 Jul 1984 The 2155th Communications Squadron stationed merged with the 381st Data Automation Branch to form the 2155th Information Systems Squadron.
- 2 Jul 1984 The first Titan II missile, located at complex 533-08, removed from alert status for deactivation.
- 2 Jul 1984 The commander of Strategic Air Command, General Bennie L. Davis, officially accepted the delivery of the command's first KC-135R Stratotanker from the Boeing Wichita plant. In addition to the new engines, the aircraft received upgrades to its steering mechanism, modifications to the landing gear, monitoring systems and other improvements. All to increase fuel efficiency and extend the life of the aircraft to meet the increased demand for aerial refueling capability. Strategic Air Command formally assigned the aircraft to the 384th Air Refueling Wing.

- 1 Nov 1985 The 533rd Strategic Missile Squadron, assigned to the 381st Strategic Missile Wing, inactivated. All of its personnel and equipment transferred to the 532nd Strategic Missile Squadron.
- 8 Aug 1986 The 381st Strategic Missile Wing, along with its subordinate units the 381st Missile Maintenance Squadron and 381st Headquarters Squadron, inactivated.
- 1 Jul 1987 The 384th Air Refueling Wing redesignated as the 384th Bombardment Wing (Heavy).
- 1 Oct 1987 The 91st Air Refueling Squadron inactivated and the left the 384th Air Refueling Squadron as the bomb wing's sole tanker squadron.
- 4 Jan 1988 The first B-1B Lancer bomber aircraft landed at McConnell Air Force Base.
- 26 Apr 1991 Measuring F-3 on the FUJITA scale, a tornado swept across and devastated a sizable section of McConnell Air Force Base. The large funnel destroyed 102 base houses and nine major facilities including the base hospital, gymnasium, NCO club, bowling and recreation centers. The base suffered 16 injuries and no deaths.
- 1 Sep 1991 The 384th Bombardment Wing (Heavy) redesignated as the 384th Wing.
- 1 Jun 1992 The 384th Wing redesignated as the 384th Bomb Wing. On the same day, the Air Force activated Air Combat Command and Air Mobility Command, while inactivating Strategic Air Command, Tactical Air Command and Military Airlift Command. The 384th joined other bomb wings under Air Combat Command. The 384th Air Refueling Squadron, along with other tanker units, fell under the authority of Air Mobility Command. This left the 28th Bomb Squadron as the 384th's only flying squadron, remaining at McConnell as a tenant unit.
- 1 Jan 1994 The 22d Air Refueling Wing arrived at McConnell Air Force Base to assume host unit duties. Simultaneously, the 384th Bomb Wing redesignated as the 384th Bomb Group.
- 31 Mar 1994 The 22 ARW held a ribbon-cutting ceremony recognizing the opening of the new 22d Medical Group's Medical Treatment Facility, dubbed the "Super Clinic." This new \$17 million, 90,000-square foot facility replaced the existing hospital destroyed by the April 1991 tornado.
- 1 Jul 1994 The 184th Fighter Group redesignated as the 184th Bomb Group, becoming the first Air National Guard unit to fly bombers.

- 1 Oct 1994 After transferring all its B-1B bombers to the Kansas Air National Guard, the 384th Bomb Group inactivated.
- 26 Aug 1994 The ribbon cutting ceremony marking the grand opening of the new Emerald City community center on McConnell Air Force Base took place. Born from the devastation caused by the April 1991 tornado that tore across the base, the new structure housed several recreational outlets under one roof. Important amenities included a full gymnasium, indoor swimming pool and track, a bowling alley, ballroom, gift shop, food court and the Signatures Restaurant and Lounge.
- 1 Jan 1995 The 931st Air Refueling Group (Air Force Reserve) joined the base as an associate unit providing aircrews to augment the 22d's, while the active duty wing provided the aircraft and maintenance crews.
- 16 Oct 1995 The 184th Bomb Group redesignated as the 184th Bomb Wing.
- 3 Nov 1997 A three member advance team from the Royal Singapore Air Force (RSAF) visited McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas to observe operations, maintenance and administrative functions in preparation for a future contingent of RSAF personnel, family members and KC-135 aircraft training mission per the USAF/RSAF KC-135 PEACE GUARDIAN letter of agreement.
- 9 Feb 1998 The first wave of eight aircrew members from the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) arrived at McConnell Air Force Base to begin preparations for flight crew and maintenance training. The entire program would become 240 Singaporeans (80 RSF members and 160 accompanying dependents) moving to the base for a two-year period to train in aircraft operations and maintenance procedures for the nation's newly acquired KC-135R Stratotankers.
- 14 Jun 1999 Team McConnell held a re-dedication ceremony, adding Edwin McConnell's name to the base namesake. Edwin passed away on 1 September 1997. Kicking off the first of a three-day base-wide open house titled the Air Power Blitz; the wing hosted Edwin's spouse, Lorraine McConnell, as the guest of honor where she and 22d wing commander, Colonel Fred Roggero, unveiled a new plaque recognizing the names of all three brothers.
- May 2000 Headquarters Air Force decided to concentrate all of the B-1B Lancer aircraft to two active duty bases. As part of the plan, the 184th Bomb Wing began receiving KC-135 Stratotankers to replace its bomber fleet.
- 20 May 2000 The leadership of the 22d Operations Group dedicated Dorm 340, one of three newly constructed dormitories, in honor of Sergeant Harold Spatz. After graduating from Lebo High School in Lebo, Kansas, in 1939, Spatz joined the Army Air Corps and became a B-25 flight engineer and gunner. After the raid on

Tokyo in 1942, his aircraft landed in Manchuria where the Japanese forces took his aircrew prisoner. The Japanese executed Spatz in Shanghai, China.

- 1 Jun 2003 The 184th Bomb Wing redesignated as the 184th Air Refueling Wing.
- 6 Feb 2004 The 384 ARS held a ribbon cutting ceremony for its new operations building marking the completion of the last of four flying squadron operations buildings. The 931st Air Refueling Group (Air Force Reserve) would occupy the fifth and final building constructed next door.
- 21 Sep 2004 McConnell Air Force Base served as the first refueling airfield for the Open Skies Treaty (OST) in support of the joint mission between the Russian Federation Mission. The mission lasted through 24 September.
- 29 Oct 2004 The 22 ARW rededicated the Emerald City Community Center as the Robert J. Dole Community Center in honor of former Kansas senator Robert (Bob) J. Dole (R-Kansas). The wing's vice-commander, Colonel David J. Kramer, and House Representative Todd Tiahrt (R-Kansas) were on-hand with the former senator to unveil the dedication plaque.
- 10 Dec 2004 The Air Force named McConnell Air Force Base as one of three finalists for the Commander In Chief's Installation Excellence (CINCIE) Award.
- 1 Jul 2008 The 184th Air Refueling Wing redesignated as the 184th Intelligence Wing.
- 11 Jul 2008 The 22d Services Squadron redesignated as the 22d Force Support Squadron, resulting in the 22d Mission Support Squadron inactivating.
- 23 Feb 2009 The 22d Air Refueling Wing leadership received from Headquarters Air Mobility Command and Headquarters Air Force to convert 163-acres of land from the non-appropriated funds category of the budget to the operations and maintenance funds category after the closure of McConnell Air Force Base golf course located on those grounds.
- 1 Jul 2009 Headquarters Air Mobility Command issued Special Order GAA1-17, activating Detachment 2, Headquarters 22d Operations Group at Pease Air National Guard Base, New Hampshire.
- 1 Oct 2009 Headquarters Air Mobility Command activated the 64th Air Refueling Squadron at Pease Air National Guard Base, New Hampshire, and assigned it to the 22d Operations Group. The 64th Air Refueling Squadron began service as an associate active duty squadron to the 157th Air Refueling Wing, New Hampshire Air National Guard.

- 19 Aug 2010 The McConnell Air Force Base telephone operator function began transferring to Travis Air Force Base, California, as part of a Headquarters Air Mobility Command operator consolidation. The move concluded on 27 August 2010.
- 18 Mar 2011 Under the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (NST), KC-135 aircraft from McConnell Air Force Base began escorting Russian Federation and American Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) teams to various bases around the Continental United States. The joint teams performed and observed numerous Type I and II inspections on various armaments.
- 3 May 2013 A KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft, aircraft tail 63-8877, from McConnell Air Force Base, temporarily deployed and assigned to the 22d Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, 376th Air Expeditionary Wing at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, crashed near Chon-Aryk, Kyrgyzstan. The aircrew: Captain Mark T. Goss, Captain Victoria A. Pinckney and Technical Sergeant Herman Mackey III, all from the 92d Air Refueling Wing, Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, perished in the crash.
- 23 Apr 2014 Headquarters Air Force announced McConnell Air Force Base as the first active duty-led main operating base of the Boeing KC-46A Pegasus supertanker aircraft. This final announcement followed the 22 May 2013 selection of McConnell Air Force Base as the preferred alternative.
- 30 Jun 2014 The commander of Air Mobility Command, General Darren W. McDew, along with base leadership, civic leaders and contractors held a groundbreaking ceremony on the McConnell Air Force Base flight line to mark the official start of building construction to support the KC-46A Pegasus aircraft.
- 25 Jan 2016 The 931st ARG redesignated as the 931st Air Refueling Wing. The impending arrival of the KC-46A Pegasus to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, sparked increases to manpower that prompted the change from group to wing. As a result of this upgrade an organization restructure ensued. Effective 5 March 2016, the 931 ARW received the 931st Operations Group and 931st Maintenance Group. The existing 18th Air Refueling Squadron would join the future 924th and 905th Air Refueling Squadrons' under the operations group. The existing 931st Aircraft Maintenance and Maintenance Squadrons' would serve under the maintenance group.
- 30 Sep 2016 To make room available for the pending KC-46A Pegasus operations coming to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, the 384th Air Refueling Squadron held a ceremony recognizing its temporary stand down as it moves to the 92d Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington.
- 16 Oct 2017 Team McConnell hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate completion of the \$267 million construction project completed in preparation for the KC-46A

Pegasus tanker. The project entailed 16 new structures including three separate hangers, a regional training facility, fuselage-training center and composite training shop. In addition to the 22d Air Refueling Wing Commander, Colonel Joshua M. Olson, several distinguished visitors attended the event including Kansas Senator Jerry Moran, Brigadier General Steven Bleymaier, director of Air Mobility Command Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection and Dr. James Hearn, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Northwest Division regional business directorate.

25 Jan 2019 Team McConnell held a ceremony honoring the arrival and delivery of the first KC-46A Pegasus aircraft, tail 15-046009, to McConnell Air Force Base. The second tanker, tail 17-046031, arrived simultaneously to a large audience of base personnel, families, media reporters and distinguished visitors. Those in attendance included Secretary of the Air Force, Heather Wilson; Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General David L. Goldfein; Air Mobility Command Commander, General Maryanne Miller; 22d Air Refueling Wing Commander, Colonel Joshua M. Olson and 931st Air Refueling Wing Commander, Colonel Bruce P. Heseltine, Jr. Kansas Senator's Pat Roberts and Jerry Moran along with U.S. House Representative Ron Estes joined in the festivities as well.



## History of McConnell AFB

### Keeper of the Plains

Construction of a major airfield was not on the mind of Cadet J. Earl Schaefer in the summer of 1917. As he stood in front of the Assistant Commandant of West Point, the future president of Boeing Wichita was only concerned with being on the receiving end of a tongue-lashing. With his impending graduation, the impetuous Schaefer made what the Academy perceived to be an ill-considered response when he submitted his three career choices for military

service. He listed aviation for all three choices. This did not amuse the Assistant Commandant. Later in life Schaefer commented, "I thought I was going to be court-martialed."<sup>24</sup> In no way was it possible that Schaefer could ever have considered his decidedly brash response would lead to the development of an Air Force base and the single largest tanker operation in the United States Air Force.



Figure 10. Stearman Hangar now known as Building 9 sometime in 1930 (Kansas Aviation Museum)

Born in Wichita, Schaefer's passion for aviation and natural salesmanship

combined with the talents of other local business people gave birth to what is now McConnell Air Force Base and the home of the 22d Air Refueling Wing, the Keeper of the Plains.

The first aerial demonstration in Kansas took place in 1908 a mere five years after the Wright Brothers' success in North Carolina. Ever since April 1911, when a Curtiss Exhibition Team did a barnstorming stop, aviation existed as a fixture in Wichita. Beginning in 1919,

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<sup>24</sup> Thompson, Susan, *Prairie Runways: The History of Wichita's Original Municipal Airport*, (Wichita, KS: Air Capital Press, 2000), 9.

cantankerous and blunt El Dorado oilman Jake Mollendick, along with Matty Laird, a man as calm as Mollendick was surly, began operating the Laird Airplane Corporation in the city.<sup>25</sup>

In October 1924, Wichita hosted the National Air Congress at the so-called “California Section” of Wichita, site of present day McConnell Air Force Base. Over 35,000 people attended.



The event highlight was an air race with 47 military and civilian aircraft participating, including the Laird produced Swallow. Building on the enthusiasm generated by this event, Schaefer and his associates, Jack Turner, L. W. Clapp and Alfred MacDonald pursued funding to purchase

the California Section. Companies such as Laird, Travel Air (later Beechcraft), Cessna and Stearman (later a part of Boeing) were Wichita fixtures by 1929.<sup>26</sup>



Figure 12. The East Gate as seen from Rock Road, 1954.

By June of 1929, Schaefer, Clapp, Turner and MacDonald turned a spade of dirt and saw construction begin on the administration building, the present day Kansas Aviation Museum. With the crash of the Stock Market that October and the start of the Great Depression in 1930, it took another five years before the building opened in 1935. Having

<sup>25</sup> Phillips, Edward H., “General Aviation Visionary Walter Beech,” *Aviation Weekly*, (November, 2001), 24.

<sup>26</sup> Thompson, *Prairie Runways*, 17-22.

long since left the Army, Earl Schaefer took charge of Boeing Wichita, formerly Stearman. On the eve of America entering World War II, the Boeing plant on the west side of the flight line expanded its floor space by 70,000 square feet to accommodate tens of thousands of bomber orders from the government. The Army Air Force Material Center established its headquarters in the Administration building in the early 1940s to work alongside Wichita's aircraft manufacturers, particularly Boeing which operated the B-29 project in Plant II.<sup>27</sup>

At Boeing and other aircraft plants in town, wartime aircraft production kept the companies and the Army Air Force detachment busy. By war's end aircraft production in



**Figure 13 Airman Second Class Richard J. Schock (L) of the 3520th Motor Vehicle Squadron and another unidentified Airman stand outside the enlisted tent city, winter 1951. (Richard J. Schock Family)**

Kansas, Wichita specifically, accounted for 12% of all aircraft produced including 27% of trainers, 23% of transport planes and a whopping 31% of all medium bombers in the AAF inventory. The material command chose this site to take advantage of the airport's five 150-foot wide runways, each with a 60,000-pound wheel load capacity. In September 1945, the Material Center moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, eventually becoming the Air Force Logistics Center at what is now Tinker

AFB, Oklahoma. Meanwhile, the 4156th Army Air Field Base Unit arrived at Wichita to service and maintain transient of locally based aircraft. One year later, this unit disbanded and the Air Force would not return until 1951.

In May 1951, the Air Force decided to take up permanent residence in Wichita and established Wichita Air Force Base. The airport administration building served as the new

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<sup>27</sup> Rowe, Frank Joseph and Miner, Craig, *Borne on the South Wind*, (Wichita, KS: Wichita Eagle and Beacon Publishing, 1994), 129 – 35, See also Price, *Air Legacy*, 58. The AAF stationed over forty officers in Wichita to oversee War Department acquisition projects for the Material Command.

headquarters while still handling civilian air traffic. This time, the Air Training Command's 3520th Combat Crew Training Wing (CCTW), under the command of Colonel Henry R. Spicer, began training Boeing B-47 Stratojet bomber aircrews. For the first six months after the activation, a "tent city" housed assigned personnel. This "city" consisted of 174 tents, a fire tower and a few leased buildings in Wichita. One major piece of construction was the base chapel dedicated in August of 1952. Still in use today, the original building underwent several renovations through the years. From 1954 to 1956, a \$22 million construction program turned the old airport into one of the Air Force's major bases. These improvements included 495 Capehart-style housing units, ten miles of paved streets and two hangars. Other improvements included clubs, theater, commissary, bank, hospital and Base Exchange. On 1 July 1958, the 4347 CCTW, under Strategic Air Command (SAC), replaced the 3520th.<sup>28</sup>



**Figure 14 Anna McConnell pins pilot's wings on her sons, from left, Fred, Edwin and Thomas.**

At a formal dedication ceremony on 15 May 1954, the name of the base changed to McConnell Air Force Base in honor of Tom and Fred McConnell, two of the three "Flying McConnell Brothers" of World War II (WWII). The brothers, from Wichita, entered the Army Air Corps together during WWII. The trio gained fame as "three of a kind." Second Lieutenant Thomas McConnell perished in July 1943, when his B-24 Liberator crashed into a fog-covered mountain while en route to his home base at Guadalcanal after a bombing mission. Captain Fred McConnell died when his private plane crashed in October 1945 near Garden Plain, Kansas. Edwin passed away in August 1997 at the

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<sup>28</sup> "500 Witness Chapel Opening by Dignitaries," *Sweepback*, August 7, 1952, OHR. The Capehart housing units were finished in August of 1959. See also, TSgt Johnston, Gary, *Red Raiders Still Leading the Way*, (Wichita, KS: Office of History, 22d Air Refueling Wing, 2003), 20.

age of 76. At a rededication ceremony on 14 June 1999, base officials added Edwin's name to the installation, making McConnell the namesake of all three brothers.<sup>29</sup>

On March 1, 1962, SAC stood up the 381st Strategic Missile Wing (SMW). Using McConnell as its base, 18 Titan II missile silos formed a ring from the northeast and south to the west on an irregular radius of 20 to 50 miles from the installation. Construction crews finished the project in the early 1960s, at a cost of \$80 million. This mission of deterrence dominated base activity for the next twenty-four years. On 1 October 1962, the 388th Tactical



Figure 15 The first KC-135R rolls out at Boeing Wichita, 1984.

Fighter Wing (TFW) arrived at McConnell and flew the F-100C Super Sabre, and later the F-105D Thunderchief. This wing left in 1964 for Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base (RTAFB), Thailand, and the 355 TFW began operations in Wichita alongside the 23 TFW, which replaced the 388th on 8 February 1964. It trained F-105 crews for combat in Southeast Asia. The 355th arrived from George AFB, California, in July 1964 joining the 23d

at McConnell under the 835th Air Division. The stay was brief for the 355th, which departed for Thailand in October of 1965. Squadrons of both wings saw action in Vietnam.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> “Dedication Day Highlights Armed Forces Day at McConnell AFB,” *Sweepback*, May 14, 1954, and “Base is Renamed McConnell AFB,” *Sweepback*, April 16, 1954, OHR. Confusion exists as to when Wichita Air Force Base became McConnell Air Force Base. From a strictly “official” Air Force perspective, the base renaming came via teletype message on April 15, 1954. From the formal acknowledgement/ceremonial standpoint though, May 15, 1954 is more proper. The event was grand in scale featuring an air show, 4,000 military personnel from all branches passing in review and 50,000 people watching.

<sup>30</sup> *Wichita Salutes McConnell Air Force Base*, (Lubbock, TX: Boone Publications, 1966), 5, and *Wichita – The Air Capital Salutes McConnell Air Force Base*, (Lubbock TX: Boone Publications, 1966), 1. Both of these works are standard base information booklets typical of those still in use today.

The base received a new mission in May 1971 with the arrival of the 91st Air Refueling Squadron (ARS) and their KC-135A Stratotankers on 1 June 1971. In July 1972, the 23 TFW departed for England AFB, Louisiana, making the 381 SMW host unit. The 384th Air Refueling Wing (ARW) began its tour at McConnell AFB in December 1972. In October 1981, President Ronald Reagan announced the Air Force phase out of its Titan II ICBMs. In early 1983, 384 ARW leadership learned it would be the first wing to receive the R model KC-135 tanker and the B-1B Lancer bomber. On 8 August 1986, the 381 SMW inactivated. The 384 ARW assumed duties as the host organization and redesignated as the 384th Bombardment Wing (Heavy) (BMW) in the summer of 1987. The 91 ARS inactivated later that year, and the 384 ARS became the sole refueling unit. The first B-1B touched down at McConnell on 4 January 1988 and one year later the first Lancer aircrew and aircraft assumed alert duty.<sup>31</sup>

In August 1990, Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait. With Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Team McConnell responded. Wing members from all three Air Force components deployed throughout the area of responsibility to help eject the invaders from the small kingdom. Tanker crews and maintainers, already deployed in the Pacific for the exercise "Giant Warrior '90" remained there to support Operation DESERT SHIELD. More crews joined them.



**Figure 16. Tornado of 26 April 1991 rips through McConnell.**

Others deployed as well; everyone from base weather to medical personnel traveled downrange to support operations in Southwest Asia. From Team McConnell, over two hundred troops from 10 different specialties deployed before September ended. The newly minted Family Support Center (FSC) went to work with the "Waiting Spouses" program. Without a dedicated building, the FSC had an attendance of 50-75 family members per week with one meeting reaching 125

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<sup>31</sup> *Lineage and Honors History, 355 Wing, OHR. Lineage and Honors History, 388 Fighter Wing, OHR.*

participants. Known today by a variety of monikers from the “Nintendo War” to the “100 Hour War,” Operation DESERT STORM was a watershed event in Team McConnell history.<sup>32</sup>

On 26 April 1991, a tornado devastated McConnell AFB. The twister destroyed 102 base housing units and 9 major facilities including the base hospital as it traveled from southwest to northeast. Despite the colossal property damage, there were 16 reported injuries and no deaths. Because of the tornado, the base quickly became a frenzied beehive of construction. Three years



**Figure 17. Emerald City (now the Robert J. Dole Community Center) under construction sometime in 1993.**

after the devastating storm, the Emerald City opened its doors (Fig. 16). This community center contained a library, education center, bowling center, officer and enlisted clubs and other services; making it the first of its kind.

In mid-1992, the 384th became the 384th Bomb Wing (BW).

At the same time, the Air Force restructured the major commands. The 384 BW moved from the inactivated SAC to the newly activated Air Combat Command (ACC); while the 384 ARS separated from the wing and joined the new Air Mobility Command (AMC), where it remained at McConnell AFB as an associate unit.

The Air Force announced additional changes to the base in May of 1992. The Kansas Air National Guard (the 184th Fighter Group), long a resident of McConnell, converted from F-16s to the B-1B bomber and became the 184th Bomb Group. In January 1994, the 22 ARW arrived and assumed the role as host wing, moving without personnel and equipment from March AFB,

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<sup>32</sup> Lt Garcia, Mike, “Military Representative Briefs Wichita Leaders on Effect of Iraqi Crisis,” *Contrails*, September 28, 1990, OHR. See also, SSgt Brown, Randolph D. Jr., “Interview With 384th Bombardment Wing Commander Colonel John C. Mangels,” April 1, 1991, OHR and SSgt Brown, Randolph D. Jr., “Interview With Family Support Center Director, Mr. Roy E. Milam,” March 7, 1991, OHR.

California. The 384 BW became the 384th Bomb Group until the unit transferred all of its Lancers to the Kansas Air National Guard before inactivating on 30 September 1994.

On 1 January 1995, the 931st Air Refueling Group (ARG) joined Team McConnell. The Air Force Reserve associate unit provided aircrews while the 22d furnished maintainers and aircraft. Since 1996, McConnell served as the test site for the PACER CRAG avionics



**Figure 18. TSgt Craig McElroy from the 22 SFS performs entry control duties at a location in Iraq during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, 2003.**

modernization program. The next year, the base became the test unit for the multi-point refueling system. In the same year, the Republic of Singapore's Air Force chose McConnell over two other American bases to train their KC-135 aircrews and maintenance. In 2002, as part of a plan to reduce and consolidate the Air Force's B-1 fleet, the 184th Bomb Wing's B-1s transferred to other bases. In September 2002, the 184th took on a new mission flying KC-135s and was officially designated the 184th Air Refueling Wing.

This officially established McConnell as the sole base in the U. S. Air Force where all three components, Active, Guard and Reserve supported the same mission together in a pure “Mirror Force” concept.<sup>33</sup>

With the devastating terrorist attacks on the World Trade center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, Team McConnell faced even greater challenges that extend into current operations. Acknowledged as America’s premier air refueling team, the 22d, 184th and the 931st, took to the skies supporting an abundance of operations including Operations’ ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM, FREEDOM’S SENTINAL and RESOLUTE SUPPORT. Team McConnell conducted multiple presidential support missions, refueling routine training flights and deploying



hundreds of personnel and several thousand short tons of equipment overseas to aid contingency operations. In April 2014, Headquarters Air Force gave notice that the 22 ARW and McConnell Air Force Base would be the first Air Force combat unit to receive the new KC-46A Pegasus tanker. A 16-building construction project worth \$267 million to support the new aircraft kicked off two months later. Finally, on 25 January 2019, the first two KC-46A tankers arrived at McConnell; thus carrying on the legacy of this air-refueling juggernaut settled in the Air Capital of the world. McConnell Air Force Base has come a long way; from the days of landing monoplanes in hayfields to transforming into America's foremost air refueling authority, the professionals of Team McConnell have a rich history and a proud future. We Are A/R!



**Figure 19. McConnell's first KC-46A Pegasus lands on the flight line Jan 25, 2019, at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. The Kc-46 will serve alongside the KC-135 Stratotanker at McConnell and supply critical aerial refueling, airlift and aeromedical evacuations at a moment's notice for America's military and allies.**

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<sup>33</sup> Johnston, *Red Raiders*, 22 – 23.

**Appendix 1**  
**22 ARW Lineage and Honors**



Shield: Azure, a cougar's left gamb erased pale wise, claws to base.

Significance: Blue shield with the gold cougar's gamb are in the colors of the Air Force and signifies armed power.

The Motto: DUCEMUS (Latin for “We Lead”).

Emblem approved for the 22d Bombardment Group on 19 June 1941 and the 22d Bombardment Wing on 28 June 1951.

**Honors/Awards/Decorations**

Earned by 22d Bombardment Group and bestowed to the 22d Bombardment/Air Refueling Wing

**Service Streamers**

Global War on Terrorism, Service, 2016

**Foreign Decorations** (bestowed)

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

**Distinguished Unit Citations** (bestowed)

Papua, New Guinea: 23 July 1942-23 January 1943

New Guinea: 5 November 1943

**Campaign Streamers** (bestowed)

World War II American Theater:

    Antisubmarine, 1941-1945

World War II Asiatic-Pacific Theater:

    East Indies 1942

    Papua 1942-1943

    Bismarck Archipelago 1943-1944

    New Guinea 1943-1944

    Leyte 1944-1945

    Luzon 1944-1945

    Southern Philippines 1945

    Western Pacific 1944-1945

    Air Offensive, Japan 1942-1945

    China Defensive 1942-1945

    China Offensive 1945

    Air Combat AP 1941-1945

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

Grenada, 1983

**Meritorious Unit Awards**

1 August 2009 – 31 July 2010	1 August 2013 – 31 July 2014
1 August 2010 – 31 July 2011	1 August 2014 – 31 July 2015
1 August 2011 – 31 July 2012	1 August 2016 – 31 July 2017
1 August 2012 – 31 July 2013	1 August 2017 – 31 July 2018

**Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 April – 1 October 1967 & 1 February – 1 March 1968	1 August 1999 – 31 July 2000
25 March – 1 May 1968	1 August 2000 – 31 July 2001
1 July 1969 – 30 June 1970	1 August 2002 – 31 July 2004
1 September 1970 – 30 June 1972	1 August 2005 – 31 July 2006
1 July 1978 – 30 June 1980	1 August 2006 – 31 July 2008
1 July 1981 – 30 June 1983	1 August 2008 – 31 July 2009
1 July 1987 – 30 June 1989	1 August 2015 – 31 July 2016
1 July 1989 – 30 June 1991	
1 July 1994 – 31 May 1996	

**Lineage\***

**Group**

Established as 22d Bombardment Group (Medium) ----- 22 December 1939  
 Activated----- 1 February 1940  
 Redesignated as 22d Bombardment Group (Heavy) ----- February 1944  
 Redesignated as 22d Bombardment Group (Very Heavy)----- April 1946  
 Redesignated as 22d Bombardment Group (Medium)----- July 1948  
 Inactivated----- 16 June 1952  
 Redesignated as 22d Air Refueling Group (Heavy) ----- 31 July 1985 (inactive)  
 Redesignated as 22d Operations Group -----29 August 1991  
 Activated----- 1 September 1991

**Wing**

Established as 22d Bombardment Wing (Medium) ----- 28 July 1948  
 Activated----- 1 August 1948  
 Redesignated as 22d Bombardment Wing (Heavy) ----- 15 March 1963  
 Redesignated as 22d Air Refueling Wing----- 1 October 1982

\* Rather than simply re-designating combat groups, Headquarters USAF bestowed the histories and honors of inactive combat groups upon the similarly designated combat wing, while active combat groups retained their honors. As long as the 22d Operations Group is assigned to the 22d Air Refueling Wing, or if it is inactivated, the 22 ARW holds bestowed honors earned by the original 22d Bombardment Group prior to 1 July 1948 while the Operations Group carries forward the unit's lineage.

**Appendix 2**  
**22d Bombardment Group Commanders**

Lt Col Ross F. Cole ----- February 1940  
Lt Col John L. Moore ----- April 1940  
Maj Lewis M. Merrick----- 20 February 1941  
Maj Mark L. Lewis\* ----- October 1941  
Lt Col Millard L. Haskin ----- 10 December 1941  
Lt Col Dwight Divine II ----- 19 May 1942  
Lt Col George R. Anderson ----- March 1943  
Lt Col Roger E. Phelan ----- June 1943  
Col Richard W. Robinson\* ----- February 1944  
Col Leonard T. Nicholson----- 21 January 1945  
Lt Col James E. Sweeney ----- 24 September 1945  
Lt Col Charles W. Johnson ----- 7 October 1945  
Maj John E. Pryor ----- 17 October 1945  
Col Joseph F. Carroll ----- June 1946  
Lt Col Alvin J. H. Mueller ----- January 1947  
Col Francis L. Rivard ----- October 1947  
Col Walter E. Arnold ----- 19 December 1947  
Lt Col Paul L. Barton ----- 7 June 1948  
Lt Col Jack J. Catton ----- July 1950  
Col Francis W. Nye ----- February 1951  
Col Ernest C. Eddy ----- March 1952

\* Killed in performance of duties

**Appendix 3**  
**22d Bombardment/Air Refueling Wing Commanders**

Col Leslie G. Mulzer-----	1 August 1948
Col Joe W. Kelly -----	3 January 1949
Col Joseph H. Davidson-----	10 May 1949
Col George McCoy-----	14 June 1949
Col William L. Lee-----	19 August 1949
Col Wiley D. Ganey-----	4 January 1950
Col Howell M. Estes, Jr. -----	5 July 1950
Col James V. Edmundson-----	10 February 1951
Col John B. Henry, Jr. -----	14 March 1952
Col Ernest C. Eddy-----	17 December 1952
Col John B. Henry, Jr. -----	8 January 1953
Col William F. Coleman -----	9 July 1954
Col Lloyd H. Dalton, Jr. -----	10 October 1954
Col Pinkham Smith -----	11 February 1956
Col Leon Stann -----	20 August 1957
Col Edward W. Scott Jr.-----	30 August 1957
Col William F. Savoie -----	29 April 1960
Col George Pfeiffer, Jr.-----	November 1961
Col John F. Harvey-----	15 June 1965
Col Mitchell A. Cobeaga-----	3 January 1967
Col Lester E. Gunter -----	31 July 1968
Col Lawrence W. Steinkraus -----	28 April 1969
Col Glenn R. Sullivan -----	16 January 1970
Col Michael Perrone -----	31 May 1972
Lt Col Samuel Tyson -----	13 June 1972
Col Donald A. Jensen-----	3 July 1972
Col Michael Perrone -----	16 December 1972
Col Jerome F. O'Mally -----	1 June 1973
Col Ernest J. Stirman -----	25 September 1973
Col Guy D. Perham -----	1 April 1974

Col Harry L. Brown ----- 28 February 1975  
Col Stanford E. Brown ----- 4 August 1975  
Col Lawrence E. Pennington ----- 12 January 1977  
Col Hansford T. Johnson ----- April 1979  
Col Charles C. McDonald ----- February 1981  
Col Donald L. Ashley ----- July 1982  
Col Terry D. Murphy ----- May 1984  
Col Ronald J. Tribo ----- July 1985  
Col James R. Brown ----- January 1987  
Col James S. Savarda ----- August 1987  
Col Paul F. Gill ----- December 1988  
Col William P. Cobb ----- March 1991  
Brig Gen Albert D. Jensen ----- March 1992  
Col Stephen R. Lorenz ----- 19 July 1993  
Maj Gen Charles H. Coolidge, Jr. ----- 4 January 1994  
Col Lawrence H. Stevenson ----- 12 August 1996  
Col Michael Gould ----- 16 April 1998  
Col John F. Gaughan II ----- 29 January 1999  
Col Frederick F. Roggero ----- 21 April 1999  
Col Ronald R. Ladnier ----- 22 June 2001  
Col Michelle D. Johnson ----- 14 June 2002  
Col Cathy C. Clothier ----- 24 June 2004  
Col Donald J. Halpin ----- 21 February 2006  
Col James C. Vechery ----- 8 February 2008  
Col James W. Crowhurst ----- 2 July 2009  
Col Ricky N. Rupp ----- 21 June 2011  
Col Joel D. Jackson ----- 31 May 2013  
Col Albert G. Miller ----- 12 February 2015  
Col Joshua M. Olson ----- 18 July 2017  
Col Richard C. Tanner ----- 21 June 2019

## Appendix 4

### 22d Bombardment/Air Refueling Wing

#### Senior Enlisted Advisors and Command Chief Master Sergeants

CMSgt Ocie L. Snider. ----- January 1976 – January 1978  
CMSgt Austin G. Kerin ----- January 1978 – September 1978  
CMSgt Donald C. Malcolm----- September 1978 – March 1980  
CMSgt James E. Ames ----- March 1980 – September 1980  
CMSgt John J. Mathews ----- September 1980 – May 1987  
CMSgt Frank Mitchell----- May 1987 – April 1990  
CMSgt Ruby G. Wright ----- April 1990 – July 1993  
CMSgt Bonnie Binzer ----- July 1993 – September 1993  
CMSgt John A. Snoddy ----- September 1993 – January 1994  
CMSgt Benny P. Heald----- January 1994 – October 1995  
CMSgt Herb V. Williams, Jr.----- January 1996 – May 2000  
CMSgt Kirk Whitman ----- May 2000 – October 2002  
CMSgt John R. Harris ----- December 2002 – June 2005  
CMSgt Todd Salzman ----- August 2005 – May 2007  
CMSgt Peggy J. Savage ----- July 2007 – July 2008  
CMSgt Michael A. Hedum----- July 2008 – January 2009  
CMSgt Timothy B. Horn ----- March 2009 – June 2010  
CMSgt Michael H. Edwards----- June 2010 – March 2012  
CMSgt Kaleth O. Wright----- May 2012 – February 2014  
CMSgt Michael A. Morris ----- February 2014 – July 15  
CMSgt Shawn M. Hughes ----- July 15 – May 2017  
CMSgt Leon O. Calloway----- June 2017- August 2018  
CMSgt Jamie L. Capps ----- August 2018 – February 2019  
CMSgt Melissa H. Royster----- June 2019 – Present



## Appendix 5 Group/Wing Assignments

### Group

Mitchell Field, New York ----- 1 February 1940  
 Langley Field, Virginia ----- 14 November 1940  
 Muroc, California ----- 9 December 1941  
 Brisbane, Australia ----- 25 February 1942  
 Ipswich, Australia ----- 7 March 1942  
 Townsville, Australia ----- 7 April 1942  
 Woodstock, Australia ----- 5 July 1942  
 Iron Range, Australia ----- 29 September 1942  
 Woodstock, Australia ----- 4 February 1943  
 Dobodura, New Guinea ----- October 1943  
 Nadzab, New Guinea ----- January 1944  
 Owi, Schouten Islands ----- 17 August 1944  
 Leyte, Philippines ----- 15 November 1944  
 Anguar, Philippines ----- 26 November 1944  
 Samar, Philippines ----- 21 January 1945  
 Clark Field, Philippines ----- March 1945  
 Motobu, Okinawa ----- 15 August 1945  
 Clark Field, Philippines ----- November 1945  
 Kadena AB, Okinawa ----- 15 May 1946  
 Smoky Hill (Schilling AFB), Kansas ----- May 1948  
 March AFB, California ----- May 1949  
 Inactive ----- 16 June 1952 – 1 September 1991  
 March AFB, California ----- 1 September 1991  
 McConnell AFB, Kansas ----- 1 January 1994

### Wing

Smoky Hill (Schilling AFB), Kansas ----- 1 August 1948  
 March AFB, California ----- 10 May 1949  
 McConnell AFB, Kansas ----- 1 January 1994

## Appendix 6 Group Designations

<b>Pre-1952</b>	<b>Cold War Era</b>	<b>Present</b>
Combat Group	Operations Group	
Air Base Group	Support Group	Mission Support Group
Supply & Maintenance Group	Logistics Group	Maintenance Group
USAF Hospital/Clinic		Medical Group*

\* For a brief period following the founding of the independent Air Force medical organizations held numeric designators. Eventually, Air Force Medical units obtained what became their more traditional designations such as, “USAF Hospital” or “USAF Clinic.” By the late 1980s, these organizations took the numeric designator of their parent wings. Beginning in the early 1990s medical organization underwent another change when they adopted the “Objective Medical Group” and established an organizational structure meant to emulate Air Force group organization and split subordinate group functions into any number of squadrons based on size of the medical group in question.

**Appendix 7**  
**Commanding Officers of Wichita/McConnell Air Force Base**

**3520th Combat Crew Training Wing (Air Training Command)**

Colonel Henry Spicer ----- 5 June 1951 - 1 November 1953  
Colonel Louis E. Coira ----- 1 November 1953 - 16 July 1954  
Colonel Lawrence C. Coddington----- 16 July 1954 - 7 April 1958  
Brigadier General Kenneth O. Sanborn ----- 7 April 1958 - 1 July 1958

**4347th Combat Crew Training Wing (Strategic Air Command)**

Brigadier General Kenneth O. Sanborn ----- 1 July 1958 - 15 July 1959  
Colonel Don O. Tower ----- 15 July 1959 - 25 May 1962  
Colonel Charles W. Bagstad----- 25 May 1962 – 15 June 1963

**42d Strategic Aerospace Division (Strategic Air Command)**

Major General Kenneth O. Sanborn ----- 15 July 1959 - 1 July 1960  
Colonel Norton H. Van Sicklen ----- 2 July 1960 - 1 July 1962  
Brigadier General Murray A. Bywater ----- 1 July 1962 - 1 July 1963

**835th Air Division (Tactical Air Command)**

Colonel Olin E. Gilbert----- June 1964 - June 1965  
Colonel Edwin A McGeough----- June 1965 - June 1966  
Colonel Robert L. Cardenas ----- June 1966 - June 1969

**381st Strategic Missile Wing (Strategic Air Command)**

Colonel George Von Arb----- 1 March 1962 - 11 January 1965  
Colonel Julius Pickoff ----- 11 January 1965 - 19 August 1967  
Colonel Theodore J. Michel ----- 19 August 1967 - 30 September 1970  
Colonel James A. Bryant ----- 30 September 1970 - 27 May 1972  
Colonel Bobbie G. Guthrie----- 27 May 1972 - 18 June 1973  
Colonel Eugene J. Shattuck, Jr. ----- 18 June 1973 - 19 July 1974  
Colonel Jimmy F. Scott----- 19 July 1974 - 7 May 1976  
Colonel Donald F. Gaylor----- 7 May 1976 - 12 May 1978

Colonel John F. Hampton ----- 12 May 1978 - 19 January 1979  
Brigadier General Elmer T. Brooks-----19 January 1979 - 30 October 1981  
Colonel Richard A. Sandercock-----30 October 1981 - 21 July 1983  
Colonel Jay W. Kelly -----21 July 1983 - 4 June 1985  
Colonel Barry M. Teitler ----- 4 June 1985 - 8 August 1986

**388th Tactical Fighter Wing (Tactical Air Command)**

Colonel Richard E. Banbury ----- 1 October 1962 - 30 September 1963  
Colonel Olin C. Gilbert----- 1 October 1963 - 8 February 1964

**23d Tactical Fighter Wing (Tactical Air Command)**

Colonel Olin C. Gilbert-----8 February 1964 - 16 August 1964  
Colonel Edmund B. Edwards ----- 17 August 1964 - 11 July 1965  
Colonel Durwand E. Bower----- 12 July 1965 - 8 October 1967  
Colonel Max T. Deall-----9 October 1967 - 27 August 1968  
Colonel James T. Hartinger----- 28 August 1968 - 14 June 1970  
Colonel Walter D. Druen, Jr. ----- 15 June 1970 - 20 October 1971  
Colonel Garry A. Willard, Jr.----- 1 October 1971 - 27 April 1972

**355th Tactical Fighter Wing (Tactical Air Command)**

Colonel Edward A. McGough-----3 September 1963 - 2 August 1965  
Colonel William H. Holt ----- 2 August 1965 - 4 August 1966

**91st Air Refueling Squadron (Strategic Air Command)**

Second Lieutenant Robert J. Miller-----7 April 1971 - 2 May 1971  
Lieutenant Colonel Ira S. Godwin ----- 2 May 1971 - 16 May 1971  
Colonel Harold R. Austin ----- 16 May 1971 - 30 November 1971

**384th Air Refueling/Bombardment Wing (Strategic Air Command)**

Colonel Harold R Austin ----- 1 December 1971 - 11 May 1973  
Colonel Ray C. O'Neal ----- 11 May 1973 - 31 August 1974  
Colonel John A. Bradford----- 31 August 1974 - 24 February 1977  
Colonel Marion S. Hardin----- 24 February 1977 - 27 June 1978

Colonel James C. Hughes ----- 27 June 1978 - 16 June 1980  
Colonel Gerald A. Blake ----- 16 June 1980 - 29 June 1981  
Colonel Basil D. Gregorios ----- 29 June 1981 - 21 July 1983  
Colonel Richard A. Steeves----- 21 July 1983 - 5 May 1986  
Colonel Patrick P. Caruanaq----- 5 May 1986 - 18 June 1987  
Colonel Phillip J. Ford----- 18 June 1987 – 23 January 1989  
Colonel Charles T. Robertson ----- 23 January 1989 – 13 February 1990  
Colonel John C. Mangels----- 13 February 1990 – 16 July 1992  
Colonel Edgar A. Ott ----- 16 July 1992 – 4 August 1993  
Brigadier General Charles R. Henderson ----- 4 August 1993 – 31 December 1993

**22d Air Refueling Wing (Air Mobility Command)**

Major General Charles H. Coolidge, Jr.----- January 1994 – 12 August 1996  
Colonel Lawrence H. Stevenson ----- 12 August 1996 – 16 April 1998  
Colonel Michael Gould----- 16 April 1998 – 29 January 1999  
Colonel John F. Gaughan II----- 29 January 1999 – 21 April 1999  
Colonel Frederick F. Roggero ----- 21 April 1999 – 22 June 2001  
Colonel Ronald Ladnier ----- 22 June 2001 – 14 June 2002  
Colonel Michelle Johnson ----- 14 June 2002 – 24 June 2004  
Colonel Cathy C. Clothier----- 4 June 2004 – 21 February 2006  
Colonel Donald J. Halpin ----- 21 February 2006 – 8 February 2008  
Colonel James C. Vechery ----- 8 February 2008 – 2 July 2009  
Colonel James W. Crowhurst----- 2 July 2009 – 21 Jun 2011  
Colonel Ricky N. Rupp ----- 21 June 2011 – 31 May 2013  
Colonel Joel D. Jackson ----- 31 May 2013 – 11 February 2015  
Colonel Albert G. Miller ----- 12 February 2015  
Colonel Joshua M. Olson ----- 18 July 2017  
Colonel Richard C. Tanner----- 21 June 2019

**Appendix 8  
Team McConnell Weapons Systems**

<b>McConnell's Active Duty Aircraft/Missiles*</b>			
<b>Model</b>	<b>Popular Name</b>	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Dates</b>
B-47	Stratojet	Boeing	5 Jun 1951 – 1 Mar 1963
LGM-25C	Titan II	Martin-Marietta	1 March 1962 – 8 Aug 1986
F-100C	Super Sabre	North American	1 Oct 62 – Nov 1963
F-105D	Thunderchief	Republic	Nov 1963 – 30 Jun 1972
U-6A	Beaver	DeHavilland	Dec 1963 – Sep 1966
AT-33	Shooting Star	Lockheed	Dec 1965 – 1969
T-39	Saberliner	North American	1 Dec 1965 – 1973
UH-1F	Iroquois	Bell Helicopter	Apr 1971 – Dec 1975
KC-135A	Stratotanker	Boeing	Apr 1971 – 5 Aug 1985
HH-1H	Iroquois	Bell Helicopter	Jan 1976 – Jul 1986
T-37	Tweet	Cessna	1 Oct 1979 – Jul 1982
T-38	Talon	Northrop	1975 – 1 Oct 1979 1986 – 1991
B-1B	Lancer	Rockwell	4 Jan 1988 – 1 Jan 1994
KC-135R	Stratotanker	Boeing	2 Jul 1984 - Present
KC-46A	Pegasus	Boeing	25 Jan 2019 – Present

<b>McConnell's Air National Guard Aircraft</b>			
<b>Model</b>	<b>Popular Name</b>	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Dates</b>
BC-1A	Texan*I	North American	4 Aug 1941 – Sep 1946
C-47	Skytrain	Douglas	4 Aug 1941 – Sep 1946
L-1	Vigilant	Vultee	4 Aug 1941 – Sep 1946
P/F-51	Mustang	North American	Sep 1946 – Dec 1951 1953 – Jun 1954
F-84	Thunder Jet	Republic	Dec 1949 – 1954
F-86	Sabre Jet	North American	Jan 1958 – 1961
F-80	Shooting Star	Lockheed	Jun 1954 – Jan 1958
F-100	Super Sabre	North American	Apr 1961 – March 1971
F-105	Thunder Chief	Republic	March 1971 – 1980
F-4D	Phantom	McDonnell Douglas	Aug 1979 – March 1990
F-16	Fighting Falcon	General Dynamics	Jan 1987 – Jul 1994
B-1B	Lancer	Rockwell	Jul 1994 – Aug 2002
KC-135	Stratotanker	Boeing	May 2002 – 2007

\* This does not include Kansas Air National Guard or other Air Reserve Components.

\*\*The manufacturers used the “Texan” nickname many times, most recently with the Raytheon (Beechcraft) T-6 series Texans currently in use as joint trainers by the Navy and USAF. This

aircraft was one of several near identical models of the BC-1 aircraft. “BC” stands for “Basic Combat.”

**Appendix 9**  
**Major Units Assigned To McConnell**

184th Tactical Fighter Group (redesignated 184th Bomb Wing in 1994), now the 184th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas Air National Guard	Aug 41 - present
Army Air Field, Materiel Command	Oct 42 – Sep 45
4156th Army Air Field, Base Unit	Sep 45 – Oct 46
District Engineer, Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District	Oct 46 – 5 Jun 51
3520th Combat Crew Training Wing, Air Training Command	5 Jun 51 – 15 Jun 58
42d Strategic Aerospace Division, Strategic Air Command	15 Jul 59 – 1 Jul 63
4347th Combat Crew Training Wing, Strategic Air Command	1 Jun 58 – 15 Jun 63
381st Strategic Missile Wing, Strategic Air Command	1 March 62 – 8 Aug 86
388th Tactical Fighter Wing, Tactical Air Command	1 Oct 62 – 8 Feb 64
835th Air Division, Tactical Air Command	Jun 64 – Jun 69
23rd Tactical Fighter Wing, Tactical Air Command	21 Jul 64 – Jun 72
355th Tactical Fighter Wing, Tactical Air Command	Jul 64 – Oct 65
91st Air Refueling Squadron, Strategic Air Command (absorbed by the 384 ARW)	Apr 71 – 1 Dec 72
384th Air Refueling Wing (redesignated Bomb Wing in 1988), Strategic Air Command, (transferred to Air Combat Command in 1992)	1 Dec 72 – Jan 94
819th Civil Engineering Squadron, Heavy Repair (RED HORSE), Strategic Air Command	Dec 73 – Apr 79
Detachment 6, 37th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Military Airlift Command	Dec 74 – Jul 86
Detachment 3, 47th Flying Training Wing, Air Training Command	Dec 74 – 31 May 86
Operating Location E, 12th Flying Training Wing, Air Training Command	1 Jun 86 – 1 Jul 91
2155th Communications Squadron, Air Force Communications Command (redesignated the 2155th Information Systems Squadron in 1984; redesignated 2155th Communications Squadron in 1986)	2 Oct 77 – 1 Sep 91
931st Air Refueling Group, (Associate), (Redesignated Air Refueling Wing on 5 March 2016), Air Force Reserve Command	31 Jan 95 – present
22d Air Refueling Wing, Air Mobility Command	1 Jan 94 – present



**Appendix 10**  
**Glossary of Operations Since First Persian Gulf War**

NORTHERN WATCH	The combined task force, operating out of Incirlik AB, Turkey enforcing the northern no fly zone over Iraq.
SOUTHERN WATCH	The combined task force, operating out of Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia, enforcing the southern no fly zone over Iraq.
JOINT ENDEAVOR	Ongoing support for North American Treaty Organization's (NATO) peace keeping forces in Bosnia.
PHOENIX SCORPION	Provided air refueling and airlift for CONUS based fighter and bomber aircraft to reinforce Central Command's deployed forces in the Persian Gulf region.
ENDURING FREEDOM	Invasion of Afghanistan against the ruling Taliban and Al Qaeda forces in retaliation for the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks on 11 September 2001.
NOBLE EAGLE	Combat air patrols over major cities and cultural events as an aspect of homeland defense.
IRAQI FREEDOM	Invasion and liberation of Iraq beginning in 2003.
INHERENT RESOLVE	US military intervention against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria as of 15 June 2014. Covers campaigns in both Iraq and Syria.
FREEDOM SENTINEL	Training, advisory and counter-terrorism mission in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
RESOLUTE SUPPORT	A North Atlantic Treaty Organization-led training and advisory mission in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan since January 2015.