

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 5200.30

100-100000-100000

P.R.C.

00000595

MICROFILMED

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 5200.30

100-100000-100000

Sq. FI-457-HI
21 Oct 44 - Nov 44 X

21 Oct 44 - Nov 44

3767-209

RESTRICTED

UNIT HISTORY

457TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, SE

Activation 21 October 1944 to 30 November 1944

P.R.C.

ORGANIZATION

The 457th Fighter Squadron, SE, was activated as part of the 506th Fighter Group, SE, at Lakeland Army Air Field, Lakeland, Florida, on 21 October 1944.

Activating orders authorized the squadron 63 officers and 249 enlisted men and provided that cadre personnel be provided by the III Fighter Command, to which the unit was assigned. (1)

Enlisted personnel were drawn from III Tactical Command, III Bomber Command, and III Fighter Command.

Commanding Officer is Malcolm G. Watters (2); Executive Officer, Capt. Sydney Sher (3); Operations Officer, Capt. Duan G. Anthony (4); Assistant Operations Officer, 1st Lt. Vincent A. Gaudiani Jr. (5); Adjutant, 1st Lt. Donald H. Reese (6); Intelligence Officer, Capt. Norman

- (1) Par 1, GO 29, Hq. III Ftr Cnd Drew Field, Fla. 21 Oct 44 Exhibit A
- (2) Par 1, Personnel Memo 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla 28 Oct 44 Exhibit B
- (3) Par 5, SO 20, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 20 Nov 44 Exhibit C
- (4) Par 1, SO 6, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44 Exhibit D
- (5) Par 22, SO 10, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Lakeland, Fla, 5 Nov 44 Exhibit E
- (6) Par 73, SO 8 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 1 Nov 44 Exhibit F

- 1 -

RESTRICTED

00060595

3767-209

RESTRICTED

J. Powers (7); Assistant Intelligence Officer, 2nd Lt. James N. McDonough (8); Personal Equipment Officer, 2nd Lt. Charles B. Williams Jr. (9); Communications Officer, 2nd Lt. Forest R. Shafer (10); Armament Officer, 2nd Lt. Charles A. McCallick (11); Mess, Supply, and Transportation Officer, 2nd Lt. Lawrence E. Brennan (12); Engineering Officer, 1st Lt. Daniel P. Murphy (13); Ordnance Officer, 1st Lt. James L. Schwendeman (14); Assistant Armament Officer, 2nd Lt. Ronald W. Schultz (15); Assistant Engineering Officer, 2nd Lt. Jack S. Fein (16); Surgeon, Captain Theodore P. Paprocki (17); Flight Commander "A" Flight, 1st Lt. Abner M. Aust Jr. (18); Flight Commander "B" Flight, 1st Lt. Max S. Weill (19); Flight Commander "C" Flight, 1st Lt. Jack H. Folsom (20); Flight Commander "D" Flight, 1st Lt. J.W.L. Benbow (21).

MISSION

The Squadron's mission is to train for very long range fighter activities in active theatres - according to information received from the III Fighter Command by the Commanding Officer of the 506th Fighter Group. There has been, however, no formal confirmation of this information.

- (7) Par 11, SO 8, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla 1 Nov 44 Exhibit F
- (8) Par 9 SO 8, Ibid
- (9) Par 10 SO 7, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 31 Oct 44
- (10) Par 12 SO 8, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 1 Nov 44
- (11) Par 17 SO 6 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44 Amended Par 16 SO 9.
- (12) Par 23 SO 16 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 14 Nov 44
- (13) Par 4 SO 12 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE LAAF, Fla. 8 Nov 44
- (14) Par 17 SO 8 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 1 Nov 44
- (15) Par 19 SO 6 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44
- (16) Par 3 SO 8 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 1 Nov 44
- (17) Par 26 SO 6 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44
- (18) (19) (20) (21) Par 1 and Par 2 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE LAAF, Fla 29 Oct 44

- 2 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

PERSONNEL

On 30 November 1944 the unit's strength was 65 officers and 262 enlisted men.

Many enlisted men originally sent to the squadron failed to pass the overseas examination.

Acquainting men down from Tactical and Bomber Commands with the P-51's of this organization is a problem gradually being overcome by training and practice.

Many of the pilots had no experience flying P-51's before coming to this organization. Some of the pilots have newly come from Combat Crew Training Stations.

Flying personnel have been divided into four flights-- each commanded by its own most experienced pilot.

There have been some changes in key officer personnel since the date of organization that should be noted here, Captain James L. Lee, the original Assistant Operations Officer (22) was transferred on the 11th of November (23); Major Ralph E. Carroll, the original Executive Officer (24), was transferred on the 21st of November; 1st Lieutenant Abe H. Cohen was trans -

- (22) Par 2 SO 6 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44
- (23) Par 2 SO 306 Hq LAAF, Fla. 11 Nov 44
- (24) Par 8 SO 7 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, BAAF, Fla. 31 Oct 44
- (25) Par 6 SO 313 Hq LAAF, Fla. 21 Nov 44

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

ferred from his duties as Mess, Supply and Transportation Officer (26) on 11 November 1944 (27).

SUPPLY AND EQUIPMENT

Shortages of equipment and supplies, owing to lack of availability or slowness of procurability have hampered the work of almost every department.

OPERATIONS

From its activation to 20 November 1944, the 457th Fighter Squadron flew 2,360 hours (243 hours more than any other squadron in the Group). Two accidents, causing major damage to planes, occurred. Neither involved injury to personnel.

The main problems in Operations arose from lack of a training directive, newness of personnel and quality of aircraft.

After assessment of pilot's capabilities and establishing of a training level, long range cross-country flights, tactical and combat flights and instrument flights were flown. Emphasis was placed on long range escort missions.

To the Squadron were assigned 26 P-51 airplanes (six P-51A's; seven P-51B's; nine P-51C's; and four P-51D's) and four BT-13 B's. Most were transferred from the 4501st AAF Base Unit (SG), Lakeland,

(26) Par 10, SO 6 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44
(27) Par 1, SO 306, Hq LAAF, Fla. 11 Nov 44

- 4 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Army Air Field and Hillsborough Army Air Field, Tampa, Florida. Some has as many as 1,500 hours in the air.

On 22 November 1944, 2nd Lt., Curtis B. Wortman flying a P-51C made an emergency wheels-up landing attributed to faulty maintenance. The throttle linkage bolt worked loose in flight, causing loss of power. Apparently, the crew chief and maintenance crew did not safety or check for safetying of the throttle linkage nut. Major damage to the props, engine and flaps resulted.

To prevent future accidents of this nature, all maintenance personnel and crew chiefs were cautioned as to the seriousness of carelessness and faulty maintenance. The crew chief was reduced to the grade of private and recommended for transfer (28).

On 27 November 1944, 2nd Lt. W. E. Saks, flying a P-51C airplane, attained about 15 feet of altitude at take-off, then noticed white smoke coming from the exhaust and felt a sudden loss of power. Deciding that he could not keep the aircraft airborne or safely land within the field limits, he cut the throttle, retracted his landing gear, lowered his flaps, and made a belly-landing, approximately 250 yards beyond the runway. Major damage to the wings, propeller, engine and landing gear resulted (29). Apparently, the pilot had insufficient reason to discontinue his flight. Immediate investigation

- (28) 457th Ftr Sq Accident Report, 22 Nov 44--P-51 C6 42-103736
(29) 457th Ftr Sq Accident Report, 27 Nov 44--P51C10 42-103805

- 5 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

showed all temperatures normal. Thorough investigation of the engine showed no cause for loss of power.

Pilots have been cautioned against the unnecessary slow application of the throttle at take-off and the advantages of attaining higher manifold pressure during the first part of the take-off run has been reemphasized.

GUNNERY

THOUGH a few pilots have not been getting the hits expected of them, ingeneral, the 457th Fighter Squadron has achieved a very creditable efficiency in gunnery.

Equipment is in excellent condition owing to the careful, vigilant work of the armament section.

There has been a shortage of tracer ammunition, however.

ENGINEERING

Enthusiastic cooperation of crews has overcome the handicaps that confronted the engineering department when about three-fourths of its personnel reported for duty, unfamiliar with P-51 planes. Failure of engines resulting from worn parts has been the biggest problem. When received, some of the planes had as many as 1,500 hours in the air, which taxed the vigilance and efforts of the men who "Keep 'em flying". The supply of parts and tool kits has been inadequate. Many parts have been procured from the salvage yard.

- 6 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

COMMUNICATIONS

High in efficiency but far below T/O strength has been the story of the communications section personnel. Lacking are three radio operators, a CNS operator, a vehicle or maintenance man, switchboard operator, a teletype mechanic, and a clerk-typist.

Parts have been sufficient to keep radios on a 24 hour basis but parts to train men in higher echelon work have been unavailable at Base Signal Supply. However, facilities for training squadron personnel have been set up at Group Communications.

The communications equipment, as far as the condition of equipment is concerned, is rather mediocre. One-third should have been salvaged before this. This throws an added burden on maintenance and reduces the time for training.

The communications section provides a part of the power which is used by other departments in the squadron.

ORDNANCE

Though enthusiastic and cooperative, the majority of ordnance personnel came to the squadron lacking proper training. About 30 per cent of them have a good knowledge of ordnance equipment.

The section is also handicapped by being far below T/O

- 7 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

strength.

Procuring tracer ammunition in sufficient quantities is an unsolved problem. That ammunition has been received without being linked has caused difficulties. The ordnance section has been having trouble getting proper tools. But the resourcefulness in use of available tools has reduced this problem to a minimum importance.

ARMAMENT

Most of the men in the armament section came to the squadron unfamiliar with the characteristics and peculiarities OF P-51's pertinent to their work. Through long hours of acquiring experience,--even on Sundays--their cooperation has been excellent.

When received, the armament equipment, generally, was in very poor condition. Gun barrels were old. Replacements were needed.

Getting supplies has been difficult. Personnel have had to design some of their own tools. They have about 25 tool kits. Forty could be used easily.

These handicaps have increased maintenance time and cut into training time.

MEDICAL

Immunization and immunization records of many enlisted men had not been kept up to date prior to their reporting to this squadron. This has added a needless burden to the squadron's medical department.

- 8 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

INTELLIGENCE

In spite of being handicapped by difficulty in procuring lumber and canvas, the intelligence section completed construction of its combination classroom, reading room, situation room and office.

Pilot's ground school classes were held in Aircraft Recognition, Gunnery, Combat Tactics, Chemical Warfare, First Aid, and prevention of Venereal Disease.

Sharing equipment and training materials with other squadrons added to the difficulty in arranging schedules.

COMMANDING OFFICER

Major Malcolm G. Watters, Commanding Officer, came to the 457th Fighter Squadron, from Venice Army Air Field, Venice, Fla. where he commanded Squadron T, 337th Base Unit, OCTS (F).

He saw overseas service from March to November, 1942, in Panama. There he was a Flight Commander for the 14th Fighter Squadron, engaged in interception work.

With the 14th, Major Watters gained experience as a wingman, element leader, Operations Officer and Commander. Assigned to the squadron shortly after receiving his commission on 12 December 1941, he remained with it until its deactivation at Venice Army Air Field in March 1944. He had become a First Lieutenant on 26 September 1942, Captain on 18 January 1943 and Major on 26 February 1944.

9 -
RESTRICTED



MAJOR MALCOLM C. WATTERS
COMMANDING OFFICER
457TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, SE
30 November 1944

- 10 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Born in Savannah, Ga., 24 September, 1920, he is a graduate of Sebring High School, Sebring, Fla., and was a student in Florida Southern College, Lakeland, Fla., before entering the army as an aviation cadet on 26 April 1941.

Major Watters is the son of Mr. and Mrs. V. G. Watters, Sebring, Fla. He is married.

- 11 -

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

APPENDIX

Exhibit A--Par. 1, GO 29, Hq III Ftr Cmd Draw Fld, Fla. 21 Oct 44

Exhibit B--Par. 1, Personnel Memo, 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 28 Oct 44

Exhibit C--Par. 5, SO 20, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 20 Nov 44

Exhibit D--Par. 1, SO 6, Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 29 Oct 44

Exhibit E--Par. 22, SO 10 Hq 506th Ftr Gp, SE, LAAF, Fla. 5 Nov 44

Exhibit F--Par. 73 SO 8 Hq 506th Ftr GP, SE, LAAF, FIA. 1 Nov 44

Exhibit G--III Ftr Cmd Regulation Number 50-100

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 29)

HEADQUARTERS III FIGHTER COMMAND
Office of the Commanding General
Drew Field, Florida
21 October 1944

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in letter Headquarters Third Air Force, File 3AF 321 (19 Oct 44) AC, subject "Activation of 506th Fighter Group", dated 9 October 1944, the following T/O units are activated effective 21 October 1944 at Lakeland Army Air Field, Lakeland, Florida, as shown:

Unit	T/O and E	Authorized Strength		
		Off	WO	EM
Sq. 506th Fighter Gp, SE	1-12, 22 Dec 43, C-1, 26 Feb 44	27	1	70
457th Fighter Sq, SE)	1-27, 22 Dec 43,	63	0	249
458th Fighter Sq, SE)	C-1, 26 Feb 44,			
462nd Fighter Sq, SE)	plus 2 x Col 37			

- The above units are assigned III Fighter Command.
- Priority ratings for control item of equipment will be A-5D-1.
- Automatic issue of equipment will not apply.
- Equipment will be in accordance with Table of Organization and Equipment referred to in paragraph 1. Shortages will be requisitioned in the usual manner.
- Cadre personnel will be furnished by the Commanding General, III Fighter Command.
- Obligation of appropriate allotments published in Section II, Circular No. 15, WD 1944, to extent necessary, is authorized by letter cited in paragraph 1, hereof.

By command of Brigadier General BLACKBURN:

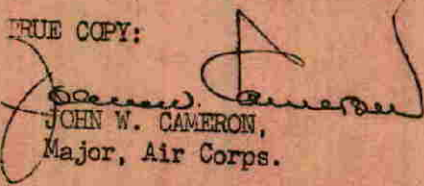
E. P. GAINES
Colonel, General Staff Corps
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Howard J. Gephart
/t/ HOWARD J. GEPHART
1st Lieutenant, Air Corps
Acting Assistant Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION: "A" plus: 20 cys CG, AAF (Attn: Publications Branch, Management Control, Administrative Services Division).

TRUE COPY:


JOHN W. CAMERON,
Major, Air Corps.

RESTRICTED

Exhibit A
- 1 -

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS

506th Fighter GroupSE
Lakeland Army Air Field

PERSONNEL MEMO:

Lakeland, Florida

28 October 1944

E X T R A C T

1. Maj 2161 Malcolm G. Watters 0432241 AC Hq 506 Ftr Gp (SE)
Lakeland AAF Fla is reld fr asgmt thereto and is asgd 457th Ftr Sq
506 Ftr Gp (SE) Lakeland AAF Fla. EDCMR 28 Oct 44

By order of Colonel HARPER:

JOHN W. CAMERON,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant

TRUE COPY:

Norman J. Powers
Norman J. Powers
Capt., Air Corps

Exhibit B

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
506th Fighter Group SE
Lakeland Army Air Field

SPECIAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER)

Lakeland, Florida,
20 November 1944.

EXTRACT

5. HRC Par 2 SO 284 Hq DMF Tallahassee Fla dtd 14 Nov 44
CAPT 2260 SYDNEY SHER O1 002 339 AC is asgd to 457th Ftr Sq 506th
Gp SE Lakeland AAFld Lakeland Fla. EDGMR 20 Nov 44.

By order of Colonel HARPER:

JOHN W. CAMERON
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

TRUE COPY:

Norman J. Powers
Norman J. Powers
Capt. Air Corps

Exhibit C

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS 506TH FIGHTER GROUP SE
Lakeland Army Air Field

Office of the Group Commander

SPECIAL ORDERS)

Lakeland, Fla.
29 Oct 1944

NUMBER 6)

EXTRACT

1. The fol Off's AG Hq 506th Ftr Gp SE Lakeland AAF Fla are
reld fr asgmt thereto and are asgd to 457th Ftr Sq, 506th Ftr Gp Lakeland
AAF Fla. EDGMR 29 Oct 44.

CAPT 2161 DUAN G ANTHONY 04380000

By order of Colonel HARPER:

JOHN W. CAMERON
Major, Air Corps
Adjutant

TRUE COPY:

Norman J. Powers
Norman J. Powers
Capt. Air Corps

Exhibit D

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS 506TH FIGHTER GROUP SE
Lakeland Army Air Field

Office of the Group Commander

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 10)

Lakeland Florida
5 Nov 1944 .

EXTRACT

22. HRC Par 7 SO 197 Hq VAAF Venice Fla dtd 31 Oct 44 1ST LT
1055 VINCENT A GUADIANI JR 026011 AC is asgd to 457th Ftr Sq 506th
Ftr Gp SE Lakeland AAF Fla. EDCMR 2 Nov 44.

By order of Colonel HARPER:

JOHN V. CAMERON
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

TRUE COPY:

Norman J. Powers
Norman J. Powers
Capt., Air Corps

Exhibit E

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS 506TH FIGHTER GROUP SE
Lakeland Army Air Field

Office of the Group Commander

SPECIAL ORDERS)

Lakeland, Florida
1 Nov 1944.

NUMBER 8)

EXTRACT

73. HRC Par 11 SO 197 Hq VAAF VENICE Fla dtd 31 Oct 44 1ST
LT 2110 DONALD H REESE 0581118 AC is asgd to 457th Ftr Sq 506th Ftr Gp
Lakeland AAF Fla. EDCMR 2 Nov 44.

By order of Colonel HARPER:

JOHN W. CAMERON
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

TRUE COPY:

Norman J. Powers
Norman J. Powers
Capt., Air Corps

Exhibit F

RESTRICTED