

## **Brief History of the 393rd Bomb Squadron**

No squadron played a more dynamic role in achieving a decisive victory in World War II and in the maintenance of a lasting peace than the 393d Bomb Squadron (BS).

The proud history of this unit began with its constitution as the 393d Bombardment Squadron (BMS) on February 28, 1944 by the Army Air Forces (AAF). The AAF then activated the 393 BMS on March 11, 1944 and assigned it to the 504th Bombardment Group at Dalhart Army Air Field (AAFld), Texas, with Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Classen as the first commander.

Originally, the 393 BMS was equipped with B-17s, however, fate intervened when Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, Jr., selected the newly formed unit to participate in a very special mission. On September 14, 1944, the squadron moved to Wendover Field, Utah, and began training on the massive B-29.

Colonel Tibbets took formal command of the 393d on October 8, 1944, and on December 17, 1944, following creation of the 509th Composite Group (CG) by the Army Air Forces, became overall commander. The 393d was assigned to the 509th with Colonel Classen as commander.

Training on the B-29s continued and on April 26, 1945 the squadron moved to its overseas home on North Field, Tinian, the Marianas. Soon after officially arriving at the field on May 30, 1945, the 393 BMS began flying a series of missions consisting of two or three B-29s each carrying one large, orange colored bomb they dropped on targets throughout Japan. These projectiles added realism to the missions as they emulated the flight characteristics of an atomic bomb.

By early August 1945, the 509 CG and 393 BMS were ready to complete their secret mission. In the early morning hours of August 6, 1945, Colonel Tibbets took off from North Field flying the B-29 the Enola Gay. The aircraft flew over Hiroshima, Japan, and released the first atomic bomb. Within seconds, a huge mushroom cloud engulfed the city.

Even after this startling show of power, the Japanese Empire still refused to surrender. Hence, three days later, another 393 BMS B-29 took off loaded with a second atomic bomb. Major Charles W. Sweeney, 393 BMS Commander, flew the B-29 Bock's Car, over Nagasaki to deliver another devastating blow. A few days later, the Japanese sued for peace.

The squadron remained at North Field until October 17, 1945 when the 509th returned to the United States and proceeded to their new home, Roswell AAFld (later Walker AFB), New Mexico. Because of its expertise with the atomic bombs, the unit became the core organization of the newly created Strategic Air Command (SAC), on March 21, 1946. The squadron remained at Roswell until the 509th CG was directed to Kwajalein, Marshall Islands in 1946, for Operation Crossroads, an atomic explosion test. Although the squadron did not drop the bomb, it waited in reserve as a back-up to its sister squadron, the 715 BMS.

After the squadron returned to Walker AFB, it continued to fly and train in B-29s until 1952 when the 393d welcomed a new aircraft, the B-50 and was reassigned directly to the 509th Bombardment Wing. In 1955, the unit pioneered a new chapter when it began receiving SAC's first all-jet bomber, the B-47.

In 1958, the 393 BMS, along with the 509th Bombardment Wing, moved with personnel and equipment to Pease AFB, New Hampshire. Seven years later, in 1965, SAC announced the squadron would be inactivated following phase-out of the B-47s from the Air Force. However, fate intervened when SAC decided to keep both the 393d and the 509th active and replace the aging B-47s with B-52s. The squadron officially received its first B-52 on March 23, 1966.

In November 1966, several crews and aircraft from the 393d deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam. While there, the squadron's representatives participated in Vietnam ARC LIGHT operations. An urgent need for the bombers in the war prompted SAC to deploy all 393 BMS crews and aircraft to Andersen again in April 1968. During the six-month stay, the squadron participated in many bombing missions. A year later, SAC issued another call and once more the 393d aircraft and personnel went to Southeast Asia.

At this time, SAC announced the 393d had been selected as the command's first FB-111A squadron. In preparation for arrival of the medium bomber, the squadron released its last B-52 on November 19, 1969. During flight line ceremonies on December 16, 1970, the 393d received its first FB-111 at Pease AFB.

For the next several years, 393 BMS crews and aircraft pioneered tactics for the FB-111A deployment of the Short Range Attack Missile. In the mid-1980s, the squadron helped the 509 BMW win virtually every major bomber award in Eighth Air Force and SAC. These achievements included winning SAC's Bombing/Navigation Competition for three consecutive years (1981-1983).

In the late 1980s, when SAC announced the retirement of the FB-111s from its inventory, the future of the 509th and its squadrons was once more cast in doubt.

However, on November 30, 1988, SAC determined that the 509 BMW would move to Whiteman AFB, Missouri, to become the Air Force's first B-2 Stealth Bomber unit. The command further directed the 393 BMS to become the first operational B-2 squadron in the Air Force.

In preparation for this distinction, SAC inactivated the 393 BMS on September 30, 1990. On March 12, 1993, the Air Force renamed the squadron the 393d Bomb Squadron, and on August 27, 1993, activated it at Whiteman AFB as part of the 509th Bomb Wing Operations Group. Over the next several months, the 393d prepared for another rendezvous with history when, on December 17, 1993, the first B-2 Advanced Technology Bomber, nicknamed the "Spirit of Missouri," arrived at Whiteman.

Over the next several years, as more B-2 aircraft were added to Air Force inventory, the 393d played an important role in bringing the bomber on line. That concept became a reality on January 1, 1997 when the Air Force declared the 509th (and the 393d) ready to assume a conventional bombing role. Four months later, on April 1, 1997, the squadron's efforts again paid dividends when the Air Force decreed Initial Operational Capability for the 509th and the B-2.

Within two years, members of the 393d again proved their mettle as the unit tasted combat for the first time in almost 30 years. On March 24, 1999, the 393d Tigers played a key role in taking the B-2 into its first combat engagement when two of the aircraft attacked targets as part of Operation ALLIED FREEDOM in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. The 393d BS participated in and supported the attacks until the end of hostilities in May 1999.

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the 393d Tigers were called upon to fight in the War on Terrorism as a part of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. In that Operation, Tigers flew the longest combat sortie to date, 44.3 hours, a world record, and kicked down the door for follow-on forces as a decisive weapon in attaining the Combined Forces Commanders campaign objectives.

The following year, on February 1, 2002, the 393d Tigers were the first unit to deploy two B-2s to Nellis AFB, Nevada to participate in Red Flag 02-02, an exercise designed to increase combat readiness, capability and survivability of participating units by providing realistic training in a combined air ground and electronic threat environment. Returning to Red Flag on February 3, 2006, the 393d BS was integrated with coalition forces from Australia and the United Kingdom with assets from all branches of service.

The combat readiness of the 393d BS was again tested on March 21, 2003, when the Tigers led the way at the start of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, flying an unprecedented 6-ship of B-2s the first night, and sustained operations for the duration of the air campaign from a forward location in Southwest Asia and Whiteman AFB, Missouri. This marked the first combat deployment of the B-2, a historic event which accelerated the decision to declare the weapon system Fully Operational Capable in December 2003.

Since the incorporation of the B-2 into Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) normal bomber rotation, the 393d BS has been deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam several times. The February 2005 mission fulfilled an AEF tasking for the first time and provided a formidable bomber presence for U.S. Pacific Command. During a two-month deployment to Andersen which began on April

27, 2006, the 393d participated in 24-hour long duration sorties in support of exercise Polar Lightning, integrating for the first time with the F-22 and executing the AF's Global Strike Task Force concept. Additionally, the Tigers joined the Navy and Marines in Valiant Shield 2006 with over 300 aircraft and 28 naval vessels, the largest exercise since the Vietnam War.

Thus, the 393 BS, one of the most historic units in the Air Force, continues to be prepared to put Bombs ... On Target and provide a team of preeminent war fighters, first in defense of America!

### Commanders of the 393 BMS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date Assigned</b>
Lt Col Thomas J. Classen	28 Apr 44
Col Paul W. Tibbets, Jr.	8 Oct 44
Lt Col Thomas J. Classen	17 Dec 44
Lt Col Charles W. Sweeney	3 May 45
Lt Col Virgil M. Cloyd	1 Jul 46
Lt Col Phillip Y. Williams	1 Jun 48
Lt Col Robert B. Irwin	3 Sep 48
Lt Col Phillip Y. Williams	15 Oct 48
Lt Col J.I. Hopkins	3 Jan 49
Lt Col Phillip Y. Williams	20 Jan 49
Lt Col Jack D. Nole	3 May 49
Lt Col Phillip Y. Williams	13 Jun 49
Lt Col William S. Martensen	30 Jun 49
Lt Col Wilbur B. Beezley	31 Oct 51
Lt Col John O. McFalls, Jr.	24 Feb 52
Lt Col Wilbur B. Beezley	3 Mar 52
Lt Col Howard E. Jackson	1 Jul 52
Lt Col John O. McFalls, Jr.	9 Sep 52
Lt Col Glen R. Hempleman	31 Oct 52
Lt Col John O. McFalls, Jr.	31 Dec 52
Lt Col Raymond F. Johnson	30 Sep 53
Lt Col Frederic N. Millen	31 Dec 53
Lt Col Glenn F. Stephens	31 Aug 55
Lt Col Milton J. Jones	1 Jul 56
Lt Col Lindsey M. Silvester	22 Apr 58
Lt Col Russell A. Downey	18 Aug 59
Lt Col Clyde L. Grow	16 Dec 60
Lt Col Robert E. Johnson	25 Jul 61

Lt Col Paul A. Wiles	1 Aug 63
Lt Col John F. Mauck	30 Apr 65
Lt Col John C. Mead, Jr.	20 Mar 66
Lt Col John D. Mash	12 May 68
Lt Col Miles G. Murphy	15 May 69
Lt Col Robert G. Voelker	11 Dec 72
Lt Col Robert Krieder	1 Jun 73
Lt Col Donald K. Nims	1 Jul 74
Lt Col John P. Hopper	1 Apr 76
Lt Col Charles J. Searock, Jr.	11 Feb 77
Lt Col Kenneth B. Keskinen	15 Dec 77
Lt Col Paul M. Matthews	20 Jul 79
Lt Col Charles R. Waterman	26 Nov 80
Lt Col Jerrold P. Allen	18 Jan 81
Lt Col Richard N. Goddard	3 Sep 82
Lt Col John W. Mentz	21 Feb 84
Lt Col David M. Jameson, Jr.	19 Aug 85
Lt Col Fay J. Pledger, Jr.	25 Oct 85
Lt Col Jerry A. Gossner	3 Jun 87
Lt Col Bernard B. Burklund, Jr	19 Aug 88-3 Aug 90

393 BS Commanders

(Squadron not manned: 3 Aug-30 Sep 90 & Inactivated on 30 Sep 90)

(Activated on 27 Aug 93)

Lt Col Richard Y. Newton III	27 Aug 93
Lt Col Jonathon D. George	2 Aug 95
Lt Col Gregory A. Biscione	5 Aug 96
Lt Col Eric N. Single	16 Jun 98
Lt Col Eric E. Theisen	23 Jun 00
Lt Col Gavin L. Ketchen	10 Jun 02

Lt Col Steven L. Basham	02 Jun 04
Lt Col Paul W. Tibbets IV	13 Apr 06
Lt Col John M. Vitacca	3 Oct 07

### **393 BOMB SQUADRON HONORS**

During its more than half-century existence, the 393 BS has received many awards and campaign streamers for its accomplishments. Among those honors are:

#### **Campaign Streamers**

Air Offensive, Japan 1942-1945  
 Eastern Mandates 1943-1944  
 Western Pacific 1944-1945

#### **Service Streamers**

American Theater

#### **Decorations**

#### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Award**

1 Apr-1 Oct 68  
 1 Jul 77-30 Jun 79  
 1 Jul 81-30 Jun 82  
 1 Jul 82-30 Jun 84  
 1 Jul 88-30 Jun 90  
 1 Jun 95-31 May 97  
 1 Jun 97-31 May 99  
 1 Jun 99-31 May 01  
 15 Mar-26 Apr 03 (w/"V" Device)  
 1 Jun 03-31 May 05

#### **Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/Palm**

5 Mar-14 Oct 69



## 393D BOMB SQUADRON

### EMBLEM



### BLAZON

On a disc Argent, a circle Vert fimbriated Or in fess point charged with a mushroom shaped atomic cloud issuant from a blast in base Argent detailed Sable charged with an arrow in base pointing to dexter Or surmounted by a tiger's head Proper, eyed of the first, armed of the second and langued Gules, all within a narrow border Black.

Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "393D BOMB SQ" in Black letters.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The snarling tiger indicates that the squadron fulfills its mission with determination and fearlessness. The blast and atomic cloud signify the squadron's history as a member of the 509th Composite Group, the first US Air Force unit with atomic capability. The arrow is symbolic of insignia used by the unit during World War II. It means "Follow Me."

**Approved:** 15 Jul 1957 (K 7984); replaced emblem approved on 19 Dec 1944 (9925 A.C.). Revised unit emblem approved 12 Jul 2007.