

47th FLYING TRAINING WING

Brief history and lineage and honors



Emblem: Approved 2 January 1973

Description: Per bend Azure and Celest, a lightning bolt issuing from chief bendwise throughout Argent between in sinister chief a stylized wing Or and in dexter base an olive branch Vert; all within a diminished bordure of the fourth.

Significance: Blue and Yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force members. The branch stands for the wing's combined team of military, civilian and contractor personnel who support and sustain the total mission. Students, past, present and future, who graduate to the combat and mobility air forces' ranks are represented by the wing. The light and dark blue refers to operations conducted both day and night. Expeditionary taskings are powerfully and swiftly fulfilled when support and operations personnel combine forces, as represented by the lightning bolt.

WING MOTTO

America's Airpower Starts Here

*Including group and squadron lineage and honors and
Laughlin AFB brief history*

*As of 31 December 2009
47th Flying Training Wing History Office*

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Questions or comments? Contact the:
 47th Flying Training Wing History Office
 Laughlin AFB, Texas

PAST 47 FTW AIRCRAFT



Douglas A-20 *Havoc* (left)
 &
 Douglas A-26 *Invader*



North American B-45 *Tornado*
 &
 Douglas B-66 *Destroyer* (below)



Boeing KB-50 *Superfortress*
 &
 Cessna T-37 “Tweet” (below)



47th FLYING TRAINING WING CHRONOLOGY

- 22 Sep 72 Class 73-03, already in training when the 47th Flying Training Wing (47 FTW) replaced the 3645th Pilot Training Wing, became the first 47 FTW class to graduate.
- 25 Sep 72 Class 74-02 entered training, becoming the first full-47 FTW class. It graduated a year later.
- 6 Aug 73 T-41 flight screening operations ceased at Del Rio International Airport; it moved to Hondo, Texas.
- 11 Feb 74 Instructor Pilots (IPs) started using a newly developed syllabus to train graduates bound for aircraft with low-level flight profiles in low-level instrument/navigation procedures.
- 29 Apr 75 Wing medical and supply personnel traveled to Eagle Pass, Texas and aided victims of a butane tanker-truck explosion.
- 21 Jul 75 Air Training Command (ATC) directed the 47 FTW to implement the Security Assistance Training Program (SATP) syllabus, which increased foreign student training.
- 7 Nov 75 First student soloed under SATP syllabus.
- 31 Dec 75 47th Field Maintenance Squadron's Avionics Branch assumed maintenance responsibilities for simulators.
- 1 Jul 76 HQ ATC implemented an organizational test in the resources complex. It tested the concept of having Comptroller, Supply and Transportation squadrons versus divisions.
- 12 Jul 76 Operations began at Laughlin's first Accelerated Co-pilot Enrichment (ACE) detachment (det); Dyess AFB, Texas. The program allowed Strategic Air Command (SAC) bomber and tanker and Military Airlift Command co-pilots to gain flight time in T-37s or T-38s, greatly reducing training cost.
- 1 Oct 76 Altus AFB, Oklahoma and McConnell AFB, Kansas dets began flying operations in support of the ACE Program.
- 1 Jul 77 Vehicle Maintenance and Vehicle Operations were contracted to Technical Control Management, Inc.
- c. Mar 78 Foreign students who undertook flight training in the T-38 now fell under the Advanced Pilot Training (APT) syllabus utilized by the 86 Flying Training Squadron (86 FTS). It readjusted academic and flying requirements versus US students and called for creation of APT-only flights.
- Apr 79 The wing received updated simulators, which allowed students to practice instrument flying. This saw a reduction in overall flight hours as simulator training increased.
- 28 Nov 79 Iranian students were placed on ineffective status.
- 10 Apr 80 All Iranian students and dependents departed Laughlin for Houston, from where they would return to Iran.
- 1 Jul 80 The 355th Tactical Fighter Wing, Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and 388 TFW, Hill AFB, Utah, were designated as "Buddy Wings." The purpose of the program centered on students and first assignment instructor pilots (FAIP) receiving a true picture of Tactical Air Command's mission.
- 5 Jul 80 Laughlin's first female IP, 2d Lt Cyndhi Hughes, reported for duty at the 85 FTS.
- 17 Jul 80 Link trainer phased out with graduation of last SATP student, 2d Lt Ali ben Sultan of Saudi Arabia.
- 30 Sep 80 To allow for training flexibility between students bound for fighters-type aircraft and those for other aircraft, ATC introduced a Mini-Track into UPT Phase III training. A forerunner to Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training (SUPT), these later evolved into the fighter, attack or reconnaissance and tanker, transport or bomber tracks.
- 25 Feb 81 2d Lt Kimberly Baird became the 47 FTW's first female graduate when she graduated with 46 others as part of Class 81-03.
- 30 Mar 81 Day and dusk presentations became a permanent feature of the computer-generated imagery in both T-50 and T-51 simulators.
- 30 Mar 81 Laughlin Auxiliary Field #1 at Eagle Pass, Texas, was upgraded for use as a contingency dispersal field.
- c. Jul 82 ATC chose the 47 FTW as the test wing for using a micro-computer within maintenance to process data and provide daily maintenance statistics to HQ ATC. ATC implemented the system command-wide by the close of 1982.
- c. 15 Dec 82 Two civilians from the maintenance complex, Edwin E. Brown, Jr. and Richard Pratt, were part of a T-46A design review team.
- 1 Mar 83 ATC announced the 47th would be the T-46 lead beddown wing.
- c. 1 May 83 A new syllabus changed the academic presentation timeline. Previously, students received T-38 academic and physiological training while in Phase II; presentation switched to Phase III.
- 11 Oct 83 The operations complex implemented a test run of the Time Related Instruction Management (TRIM) program. As the first UPT wing to use TRIM, individuals faced numerous discrepancies, which led ATC to push back full implementation date.
- 14 Oct 83 An NBC crew spent the day at Laughlin filming the final of a five-part series on what the Air Force considered the "Right Stuff." NBC was inspired by the book / movie of the same title.

27 Jan 84 Maintainers took advantage of the centralized aircraft support system, which provided electrical power and air supply for aircraft starts and troubleshooting. Technicians no longer relied on select pieces of aerospace ground equipment.

30 Jun 85 ACE Det 1 at Dyess AFB inactivated and Laughlin assigned personnel and aircraft returned to home station.

1 Oct 85 Laughlin transferred responsibility for the ACE det at Altus AFB to the 12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas.

22 May 86 The 47th Field Maintenance Squadron achieved a 100.0 percent J69 spare engine line, a first in the wing's recorded history.

31 May 86 Wing personnel closed their decade-long support to its McConnell ACE Det. The 12 FTW took responsibility.

26 Sep 86 Laughlin became the first base in ATC to receive and use the computer generated imagery system in its simulators, which replaced the high-energy consuming terrain modeling boards.

17 Dec 86 After an agonizing year concerning the future of the T-46A, the 47 FTW suspended plans for the aircraft's beddown at Laughlin.

Jan 87 A-76 cost studies of the wing's maintenance functions began

30 Jun 87 The 47 FTW set an ATC record when it achieved a 100.0 percent Functional Check Flight first time release rate.

18 Oct 87 Members of the 47 FTW took top honors at Torchlight '87, ATC's annual flying and maintenance competition.

20 Nov 87 ATC implemented the 52-week undergraduate pilot training program throughout the command effective with Class 89-02.

2 Jun 88 The Airport Radar Service Area was implemented at Laughlin. The Federal Aviation Administration required all pilots, military and civilian, to maintain two-way radio communications with Laughlin air traffic control in order to resolve potential conflicts between Instrument Flight Rule and Visual Flight Rule traffic.

1 Sep 88 Field Training Detachment 410 inactivated and ended 30 years of training support to Laughlin AFB.

8 Nov 88 The 47 FTW commander received notification that the aircraft maintenance function would convert from a military to a civil service operation. It was deemed civil service provided the most efficient organization (MEO).

20 Feb 89 Implementation of the MEO began. Laughlin was the first ATC UPT wing to convert to civil service.

1 Apr 89 Maintenance and logistics support for the T50/T51 instrument flight simulators converted to contract logistics support.

1 May 89 Construction began on a new auxiliary airfield, located at Spofford, Texas.

20 Aug 89 Aircraft maintenance function conversion was completed.

1 Sep 89 The 47th Field Maintenance and 47th Organizational Maintenance Squadrons inactivated as a result of the conversion.

27 Feb 90 47th Civil Engineering Squadron's Prime BEEF team departed for Charleston, South Carolina to help the city repair damages in the wake of Hurricane Hugo.

2 Apr 90 To prepare for SUPT's implementation, ATC activated three new flying training squadrons at Laughlin--the 39, 84, and 87 FTSs. The 39th was a forerunner of the operation support squadron (it performed many of the same functions), while the 84th conducted Phase II training and the 87th conducted Phase III. Activation of the 39th led to inactivation of the 47th Student Squadron. The 87 FTS was scheduled to conduct T-1A training.

9 Apr 90 Wing commander and the local school district superintendent signed a memorandum of understanding that established a vocational education program to teach basic aircraft maintenance at the high school. The program was dubbed "Grow Your Own."

1 Oct 90 As part of organizational changes throughout the Air Force, the wing gained control of the 2180th Communications Squadron.

28 Jan 91 Spofford Auxiliary Airfield opened for operations.

5 Apr 91 Merit Assignment Ranking System (MASS) implemented. The program allowed students more say in their eventual major weapon system, and rewarded those with higher rankings by providing more selections since they chose first.

26 Apr 91 In preparation for SUPT, ATC dictated classes start every 6 weeks versus 3 weeks; concerns over the track select process led to the change. Class 92-09 was the first to enter under the new system.

16 May 91 Class 91-09 students became the first group eligible for "banked assignments;" pilot production now outpaced needs because of reduced Air Force operational end-strengths.

Jun 91 Twenty Del Rio students graduated from the first "Grow Your Own" class. Of these graduates, 14 were hired.

16 Dec 91 Wing organization changed from a tri-deputy system to an objective wing concept. The 47th Operations Group (47 OG) replaced the deputy commander for operations complex and maintenance fell under the ops group.

15 Jan 92 Wing personnel implemented the ATC voice call sign procedures. The system specified call signs for flights (thereby, aircraft type), whether single ship or formation, dual or solo.

20 Jul 92 Wing personnel took in their first Aviation Leadership Program (ALP) students; three El Salvadorians. Implemented by ATC in 1987, the program's aim was to expose foreign officers with a potential leadership role to a democratic system.

1 Sep 92 Because of delays with SUPT implementation, ATC directed organizational changes. The 84th and 86th inactivated on 1 October and 15 September.

22 Jan 93 Five banked pilots, who'd graduated in May 91, returned for training. Placed in Class 93-07, they trained under a banked pilot-specific syllabus.

Oct 93 Two T96 simulators for T-1A training installed.

18 Nov 93 Laughlin's first SUPT class, 95-02, entered preflight training.

19 Nov 93 47 FTW received first T-1A aircraft, tail number 92-0342.

1 Dec 93 86 FTS activated and gained the T-1A.

24 May 94 First SUPT class entered Phase III; 4 went to the fighter/bomber track and 17 (including reserve and guard students) entered the airlift/tanker track.

6 Jun 94 Capt Keith Gailey and 2d Lt Mark Forkner of Class 95-02 made the first student sortie in the T-1A. Capt Perry Peter was the IP.

17 Aug 94 AETC continued to fine-tune the SUPT system. Starting with Class 95-06, student bound for C-130s completed Phase III training at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas.

2 Sep 94 The wing implemented the Joint SUPT syllabus as Class 95-14 entered preflight training. At an advanced stage of Phase II, the syllabus split out Air Force and Navy training requirements.

8 Sep 94 First T-1A banked pilot requalification class, 95-01, started at Laughlin with nine students in training with the 86 FTS.

28 Sep 94 Laughlin's last UPT class, Class 94-15 graduated.

30 Sep 94 Five students from Class 95-08 traveled to Fort Rucker, Alabama, where they entered Phase III helicopter training, the latest specialized track under SUPT.

c. 1 Sep 94 Maj Mark A. Kyle became the first pilot to graduate from the T-1A program at Laughlin. Kyle, rated reserve pilot with 2,800 hours in the H-3 and H-60 helicopters, would fly the C-130.

1 Oct 94 AETC established an Engine Regional Repair Center (ERRC) at Laughlin to repair J69 and J85 engines. The first phase brought in engines from the 12 FTW at Randolph AFB, Texas.

3 Feb 95 A first occurred at Laughlin when the T-1 was used in a medical evacuation. Faced with an emergency neonatal case that could not be handled locally, medical personnel had to quickly transport the

patient to Wilford Hall Medical Center. Foreseeing such an emergency, Capt Greg Gardner, flight surgeon, had worked on a special stretcher prototype for use in the T-1.

13 Jul 95 President Clinton signed off on the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission to close 79 military installations and realign/shrink 26 others. The recommendation included Reese AFB, Texas, with the other SUPT bases picking up the mission.

27 Mar 96 The results of the A-76 cost comparison of Base Operating Support were announced to the Laughlin workforce. EAST, Inc., of Chantilly, Virginia, received the contract to perform the work for a 5-year period.

12 Jun 96 Last class of banked airlift-tanker pilots entered training at Laughlin; 305 banked pilots trained since September 1994.

27 Mar 97 Starting with Class 98-07, class entry cycle reverted to the 3-week cycle.

1 Jul 97 The ERRC converted to contract after a phase-in period.

Apr 98 Effective with Class 99-01, AETC moved training for bomber track students to the T-1A.

1 Apr 98 The 96 FTS, an Air Force Reserve squadron, activated. The 96th provided instructor pilots to augment the wing's instructor force.

8 May 98 Capt Phillip "Slim" Thompson and his student, 2d Lt Mary J. Harris of Class 99-03, flew the 85 FTS' 1,000,000 T-37B hour.

23 Aug 98 Remnants of Tropical Storm Charley dumped over 10 inches of rain in 15 hours on Laughlin proper, and almost 19 inches in 24 hours in downtown Del Rio. Flooding led to the need for maintenance actions on aircraft, while the student timeline remained behind until 24 Feb 99.

Nov 98 To better prepare students bound for bombers who trained in the T-1A, 87 FTS IPs conducted their first 18-sortie Introduction to Bomber Fundamentals course, which saw students gain insight to bomber tactics and enhanced low level work.

14 Dec 98 A Laughlin T-37, 57-2318, broke a milestone when it surpassed 20,000 hours of flight time in a ceremonial flight marking the occasion. Lt Cols Jason Barlow, 85 FTS commander, and Kevin Keith, 84 FTS commander, flew the sortie.

12 Mar 99 Changes to the MASS; besides input on track selection, students in Class 99-06 up also had a say in their assignment upon graduation. The top 10 percent received their first choice, the remainder chose in class standing.



Floods have affected Laughlin over the years...1958 above / 1998 below



- 21 Apr 99 The 47 FTW and the San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District revalidated a formal "Grow Your Own" training program, bringing the program into its tenth year.
- Oct 99 Besides enlisted controller training, the 47th Operations Support Squadron gained responsibility of officer training under the Officer Training Program (OTP). Altus and Tyndall also conducted the training, but maintained lower operational tempos. Laughlin also had a reduced training timeline -- 5 months.
- 21 Jan 00 The wing ceased ATP training upon graduation of Class 00-04, when four Japanese students graduated with 24 USAF students.
- 2 Feb 00 Starting with Class 01-05, the requirements for the round robin night sorties ceased. This meant the night-flying window changed from a 3-week to 6-week cycle.
- 17 Mar 00 The first OTP class graduated with eight students.
- Apr 00 47 FTW implemented the First Term Airman Center (FTAC).
- 27 Apr 00 Bomber track switched back to T-38s; Class 01-01 first affected.
- 21 Feb 01 Laughlin's Computer Aided Instruction (CAI) officially opened.

- Mar 01 HQ AETC changed in Laughlin's aircraft maintenance status from an MEO to a regular aircraft maintenance organization.
- 26 Oct 01 Wing leaders dedicated the Operations Training Complex (OTC) in honor of Major Rudolf Anderson Jr., a former Laughlin U-2 pilot shot down and killed during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Major Anderson's daughter and one of his two sons attended the dedication ceremony.
- 8 Feb 02 47 FTW IPs reinitiated trips to the Air Force Academy to inform cadets about rated careers.
- 6 Mar 02 Three 87 FTS IPs created a Break-in-Training syllabus for students facing excessive times between SUPT graduation and Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals (IFF). AETC implemented command-wide as the T-38 Graduate Aviation Program.
- 8 Mar 02 Remembering the September 11th victims, wing personnel honored them by displaying the "Let's Roll" nose art on an 87 FTS T-38A *Talon*.
- 7 Apr 02 A storm, centered over the T-37 ramp, dropped 2-inch hail for 10 minutes, damaging 89 T-37s and 25 T-1s of the wing's 108 and 52. The 47 FTW received help from other SUPT and AETC in the form of aircraft, contracts and support.
- 8 Jul 02 First of many; the wing shipped out T-37B 58-1956 to the Aircraft Maintenance and Regeneration Center (AMARC) at Davis-Monthan AFB. This started the wing's T-37B draw-down as it continued preparations for conversion to the T-6A *Texan II*.
- c. 5 Aug 02 47 FTW received certification on initial T-6A operational flight and instrument flight trainers, as well as unit training devices.
- 14 Aug 02 Four 479th Flying Training Group (located at Moody AFB, Georgia) students, 2d Lts Thomas A. Gonzalez, Steven E. McMenamain, Jonathan D. Mueller and Nathanael B. Tolle, started Phase III training with Laughlin's Class 03-06.
- 9 Aug 02 As part of an Air Force directive, the 47 FTW's organizational structure changed. This included pulling aircraft maintenance from under the operations group and standing up the group-equivalent 47th Maintenance Directorate.
- 1 Oct 02 As part of a push to supply combatant command air components' with expeditionary personnel, General Donald G. Cook, AETC Commander, nearly doubled the 47 FTW's air expeditionary force taskings, going from approximately 300 to 600 personnel.
- 15 Nov 02 Wing personnel officially received its first T-6A *Texan II*. The 84 FTS started converting from the T-37B.

- 6 Jan 03 When flight training started after the Christmas break, air traffic and radar approach controllers worked out of their combined facility in the new operations building.
- c. 6 Jan 03 84 and 85 FTS personnel started using Training Integration Management System (TIMS) on a limited basis. All training squadrons would eventually use TIMS.
- 8 Jan 03 Class 04-04, the first 47 FTW class with students identified to train in the T-6A, entered training. Some students used the T-37.
- 10 Feb 03 AETC transferred the Air Traffic Controller OTP to Moody AFB, Georgia. This took some of the burden off the 47 OSS concerning upgrade training, as tower/radar approach controller 3-level manning levels remained well above Air Force and AETC averages.
- 21 Feb 03 2d Lt Donald Hicks, Class 04-04, and his IP, Capt Darrell F. Judy, 84 FTS K Flight commander, undertook the first T-6A *Texan II* training sortie conducted by the 47 FTW.
- 21 Mar 03 2d Lts Sonny D. Baxter and Robert E. West became the first 84 FTS, and thus 47 FTW, students to solo in the *Texan II*.
- 23-27 Jun 03 Wing maintainers from the non-destructive inspection flight tested Kodak and Fuji digital X-ray systems to determine if they offered any advantages over the current film X-ray method.
- 30 Sep 03 Class 04-14 entered Phase II training and consisted of the wing's first full-T-6A class.
- 20 Oct 03 Following the failure of a 47 FTW T-37 FAIP at IFF, the 87 FTS proposed a syllabus that mirrored the earlier break-in-training syllabi, but tailored to T-37 and T-6 FAIPs.
- 22 Dec 03 Personnel occupied the wing's new deployment center. The center combined work centers involved in the deployment process, provided a dedicated location for processing deploying personnel and gave ready access to deployment bags.
- c. 18 Feb 04 AETC leaders announced they'd received an infusion of funds to speed up the T-38C Propulsion Modernization Program (PMP) program, which meant the 87 FTS would gain their PMP T-38Cs 3 years earlier than planned. AETC changed the schedule to mitigate safety risks faced at Laughlin.
- 23 Mar 04 Wing personnel used the new deployment center when they conducted a deployment exercise.
- c. 15 May 04 Continued inclement weather, IP shortages, center runway closure and radar approach control manning/skill-level shortage converged and caused adverse impacts to the training timeline. To make gains, the 84 FTS and 85 FTS, and to a limited degree the 87 FTS, deployed on weekends to gain needed training.

- 27 May 04 To assist redeploying personnel with in-processing, personnel utilized, for the first time, the deployment center. As with out-processing, all relevant agencies came to the center and completed necessary actions versus the individuals having to proceed around the base.
- 16 Aug 04 Lt Col Eric Morgan, Majors Douglas Jenkins and Ron Price and Capt Chris Nemeth started their T-38C transition academic and simulator instruction. These individuals, on 23 Aug 04, traveled to Vance AFB for transition flight training. Upon their return they started to train the remaining core cadre.
- 4 Sep 04 Laughlin's first operational T-38C arrived.
- 7 Sep 04 While the "Tweet" phase-out from the 47 FTW's inventory neared, the phase-in of the T-38C took another step forward. Majors Ron Price, 96 FTS and Douglas Jenkins, 87 FTS, conducted the first T-38C sortie when they flew a low-level route over Big Bend National Park.
- 19 Nov 04 A day after the official T-37B retirement ceremony, 2d Lt David Kluttz, Class 05-10, and his IP, 1st Lt Samuel A. Moore (last T-37B FAIP with the 47 FTW), became the last to fly a T-37B training sortie for the wing. Following the 84 FTS' steps, the 85th would now conduct Phase II training solely in the T-6A.
- 22 Nov 04 Seven Class 05-10 members, the last to fly the T-37B at Laughlin, made more history when they became the first wing students to train in the T-38C.
- 1 Dec 04 The screech has ceased. After over 43 years, 1,000,000 sorties, 1,500,000 hours and 12,500 students from over 40 countries, T-37B operations came to a complete halt when Majors Lon Schmidt and Jorge Nuñez flew the last two "Tweets," 67-0762 and 56-0547, to AMARC at Davis-Monthan AFB.
- c. 10 Jan 05 The 47 OG launched Center-Ops On Line, acquired from Edwards AFB and modified for the SUPT environment. The program merged information from different programs and provided near-simultaneous pilot flight status.
- 1 Feb 05 Members of Class 06-05 became the first Phase I students to enter training with their respective Phase II squadron, the 85 FTS. This move allowed students to gain 3 academic days in Phase I compared to retaining them in the 47 OSS.
- 26 Apr 05 Capt Alicia Palmer and 1st Lt Abram Woody, 87 FTS IPs, flew the wing's first T-38C PMP flight in aircraft 65-0384. The aircraft arrived at Laughlin approximately 2 weeks previously.

20 May 05 Department of Defense officials released the 2005 BRAC recommendations. It called Laughlin to gain 29 aircraft (16 T-6As /13 T-38Cs), 162 full time and 7 drill personnel, and related equipment. The mission gain would consist of additional Phase II students and a portion of IFF.

16-23 Jun 05 Members from the 47th Maintenance Directorate hosted a T-38 phase inspection improvement process in an effort to reduce the inspection length by approximately 6 days. This was the first lean process studied at Laughlin.

19-24 Jun 05 Seven IPs from the 86 FTS, accompanied by two maintainers, flew their T-1A *Jayhawks* to McChord AFB, Washington and took part in Air Mobility Command's Air Mobility Rodeo. The IPs, a mix of FAIPs and those from major weapon systems, flew weather-ship duties and participated in the Operational Support Airlift / Special Air Mission category. This was the first time any T-1A crews participated in the Rodeo.

12 Aug 05 Class 05-13 graduated, and nine of its members became the last to train in the T-38A.

2 Sep 05 The wing's last T-38A, serial number 62-9654, departed Laughlin for the modification line at Randolph AFB.

10 Sep 05 Two 86 FTS IPs airlifted much needed mobile land radios to Keesler AFB, Mississippi. Members from the 81st Training Wing required the radios for command and control following devastation to Keesler's infrastructure by Hurricane Katrina.

4 Jan 06 Members from the 84 FTS and 85 FTS reduced the amount of goes they launched from three to two goes a day, thereby increasing times between goes. This change provided three main benefits: increased debrief/brief times, increased preparation time and decreased aircraft utilization rates.

16 May 06 Three Polish students entered training under syllabus F-V5A-Q(C), *T-38C Qualification (Track I)*. Since the students who trained under this syllabus already completed flight training in their respective countries it reduced the number of academic hours and simulator and flight hours. The students merged in with Class 07-02 students, but graduated earlier.

6 Jul 06 Two students started training under experimental syllabus R-P4A-A, *Undergraduate Remote-Pilot Training*. The syllabus provided the students with T-6A academics and simulator hours, but no actual flight time. Since the students who would undergo this training were not rated, besides instruments they also gained training on such areas as aircraft spin recovery and how to recognize/recover from other

controlled flight departure situations. The students graduated on 1 September 2006.

4 Oct 06 Wing personnel received their first IFF T-38C. While identical to the T-38s used in SUPT, the IFF T-38s had differing maintenance requirements.

4 Oct 06 The first three Track I Polish students graduated. Lieutenant Colonel Om Prakash, Jr., 87 FTS commander, stated the students' positive attitude helped carry them through the course. One, Kapitan (Captain) Pawel Marcinkowski garnered the air-to-air and air-to-ground Top Gun awards at IFF.

1 Dec 06 Staff Sergeant Israel Del Toro, Jr., a Tactical Air Control Party member and Purple Heart and Bronze Star recipient, spoke to wing members about his experiences in Afghanistan and his recovery from injuries caused by an improvised explosive device.

15 Dec 06 After nearly 55 years of publication, the Border Eagle, the official Laughlin AFB newspaper, ceased publication. However, for those who still preferred the hard copy, the publisher of the Border Eagle, the Del Rio News Herald, stated they would continue to publish a paper, titled the Laughlin Herald. Wing personnel maintained certain privileges, but didn't retain editorial oversight.

27 Dec 06 Twenty-five 85 FTS members completed an art project outside the main gate when they finished painting the squadron's emblem and the phrase "check handle down, three green, flaps takeoff" on a patch of bricks, part of a Del Rio welcome sign.

15-18 Jan 07 A severe cold front remained over Val Verde county and shut down daily activities because snow and freezing rain associated with the system caused dangerous driving conditions.

18 Jan 07 General William H. Looney III, AETC Commander, visited Laughlin, where he oversaw the new 86 FTS operations building dedication.

31 Jan 07 Major Robert Steward entered training with FWQ Class 08-05 and the 47 FTW started to conduct all fixed-wing qualification (FWQ) training for the Air Force (previously conducted by the 71 FTW at Vance AFB).

26 Feb 07 An updated T-6 syllabus P-V4A-J, *Joint Primary Pilot Training* became effective today when Class 08-06 entered training. The major change centered on introduction / reintroduction of lag/lead pursuit, pure pursuit and range/aspect formation training.

5 Mar 07 A organizational test concerning the combination of the 47th Mission Support Squadron (47 MSS) and Services Division started today. In order to allay the perception that the 47 MSS took over the Services Division, Major Thomas C. Ballard, 47 MSS commander,

conducted a “merge” ceremony. He directed 47 MSS and services personnel to form two separate formations with their guidons, relinquish their guidons, merge into one formation and take possession of the 47th Force Support Squadron (Provisional’s) guidon, thus creating the idea of one, unified unit.

- 6-8 Mar 07 Lieutenant General Lech Majewski, Polish Air Force Deputy Commander, and five other Polish Air Force leaders visited Laughlin AFB. The purpose of the visit centered on Polish student’s performance under syllabus F-V5A-Q(C), *T-38C Qualification (Track I)* as compared to American and other foreign students’ performance.
- 14 Mar 07 In order to maintain air traffic controller manning levels above the emergency service level (the point at which controllers closed some airspace) Colonel Petersen forwarded a request to keep 24 controllers for at least 3 years.
- 11 Apr 07 As part of the 47 MSS and Services Division’s test merger, AETC activated the 47th Force Support Squadron (Provisional) to give the test unit its own identity.
- 25 Apr 07 The last four students from the 479th Flying Training Group entered Phase III training with Class 08-01. The first Moody students entered training on 14 August 2002. In all, 297 479th students completed Phase III training with the 47 FTW.
- 26 Apr 07 Lt Cols Gregory C. Johnson and James Walker (the future 434th Fighter Training Squadron commander and director of operations, respectively) made the first IFF continuation training sortie that originated from Laughlin.
- 23 May 07 Instructors from the 434th Fighter Training Squadron (434 FTRS) flew their first sortie over McMullen range.
- 11 Jun 07 The first IFF class, 07-JB, entered training. Technically, the students, Captain Brad W. Caywood and First Lieutenant Albert J. Chang, were initially taught by Detachment 1, 47 OG personnel, who later became part of the 434 FTRS.
- 18 Jun 07 Although nearly a year had passed since the demise of a planned development adjacent to Laughlin, Del Rio residents continued to keep a watchful on areas that could affect Laughlin’s future. Base officials remained silent, just as they did during earlier discussions between Del Rio officials and the developer, since they could not know what impacts the development would have, if any.
- 29 Jun 07 While AETC reintroduced T-1A team out-and-back sorties in April 2005, students from Class 08-04 onward would not undertake the event since AETC withdrew the event from syllabus P-V4A-G/

F-V5A-Q, Change 3, released in May 2007. The deletion of the sortie, along with resultant academics reductions, resulted from little value gained with the out-and-back compared to the challenges in preparing students for the event. As Lieutenant Colonel David G. Stamos, 86 FTS commander at the time, stated:

... to do a team sortie the students required three different types of landing currencies. In order to get those currencies we had to take away instrument approaches from other sorties. Time is the resource I’m losing, plus one whole instructional sortie was lost just for two students to fly one approach to a full stop at some airfield.

- 10-11 Jul 07 Afghanistan National Army Air Corps Commander Major General Mohammad Dawran, who received pilot and cosmonaut training under the Soviets, toured Laughlin AFB. He made the visit to gain information on the US pilot training model so Afghanistan could regenerate their pilot training capabilities.
- 18 Jul 07 Students from the 434 FTRS used McMullen range for the first time.
- 19 Jul 07 The 434 FTRS activated and came under control of the 47 OG. The squadron conducted IFF and instructed recent specialized undergraduate pilot training graduates bound for fighters.
- 22-27 Jul 07 Four instructor pilots from the 86 FTS competed in the Air Mobility Command Rodeo, held at McChord AFB, Washington. Unlike 2005, when the 86 FTS was the sole T-1 representative (and first flying training wing representative ever) and participated in the special airlift category, the 12 FTW (Randolph AFB, Texas), 14 FTW (Columbus AFB, Mississippi) and the 71 FTW (Vance AFB, Oklahoma) all sent teams this year. The 86 FTS team took first place in the T-1 category.
- Aug 07 Instructors from the 85 FTS conducted a small group tryout and instructed students from Class 08-06 in tactical formation work. The four-sortie block was in addition to standard SUPT syllabus sorties and occurred at the request of AETC leaders so they could gage how to incorporate the block in an upcoming T-6 syllabus update.
- 21 Aug 07 Throughout the summer inclement weather affected training. Although students flew the sorties, weather aborts caused early returns and resulted in ineffective sorties. While the 84 FTS and 85 FTS had a surge capability to make the sorties up and weather rarely impacted the 86 FTS, the 87 FTS had to take other options to make gains on the student training timeline. Squadron leaders washed back between five and seven students from Classes 07-14 through 08-02.

- 11 Sep 07 Colonel Edward M. Minahan, 47 FTW commander, authorized personnel to wear the desert camouflage utility and flight suits to help remind the base populace that the wing directly supported the global war on terror by supplying personnel to the combatant commanders, as well as emphasizing to the student pilots their future role in the Air Force.
- 13 Sep 07 While flying squadrons in the combat and mobility air forces reported their readiness and manning status (along with other data) via SORTS, no such program existed for higher headquarters commanders to check on a flying training unit's ability to successfully conduct flying training. Because of this, General William J. Looney III, AETC Commander, directed AETC Operations and Training Division personnel to start collecting data to provide him just such information.
- 1 Oct 07 As part of another consolidation effort, the 47th Communications Squadron shut down its network control center help desk and transferred the mission to AETC's consolidated help desk, which provided service to all AETC units, regardless of location.
- 1 Oct 07 With base housing now overseen by Pinnacle-Hunt as part of an Air Force-wide housing privatization effort, the 47th Civil Engineer Squadron's Housing Flight went away.
- 1 Oct 07 Class 09-01 became the first undergraduate pilot training class in over 40 years not to undergo parasail training as AETC leaders elected to remove it from the T-6 Joint Primary Pilot Training syllabus.
- 9 Oct 07 AETC leaders announced Patriot Excalibur would become the command-sponsored go/no-go program.
- 22 Oct 07 In a far-reaching change to the airlift-tanker track undertaken in the T-1, AETC released an updated P-V4A-G/F-V5A-Q syllabus earlier in the month. Instead of the traditional basic formation, air refueling familiarization and formation airdrop familiarization blocks, students from Class 08-09 onwards would undergo a core block that taught competencies that applied to both airdrop and aerial refueling, and following that underwent a specialized airdrop or air refueling block, depending upon their assignment.
- 9 Nov 07 Major Steward became the wing's first fixed-wing qualification student to graduate since the wing took over all FWQ training. He went on to fly KC-135s with the 126th Aerial Refueling Wing.
- 5 Dec 07 AETC leaders modified the student pilot assignment system for the T-38 track. Previously, wing leaders had to provide students with a fighter assignment when no bomber seats were available, although indications showed they should go to a crew aircraft. Now, 3 weeks

- before assignment night, leaders reviewed the students' performance to that time and if they deemed a crew aircraft was appropriate they attempted to gain a bomber assignment. If the 47 FTW did not receive a bomber slot, they could go to the other SUPT wings in an effort to work a swap. If this failed, they could fall back and request the student receive an assignment to another Air Combat Command crew aircraft.
- 24-26 Jan 08 Two 86 FTS IPs flew their T-1A to Edwards AFB, California, where they supported the Air Force Test Pilot School's (TPS) Qualitative Evaluation Program. The program allowed TPS students (both pilots and engineers) to put into practice what they had learned to date in their course by programming and executing test programs.
- 16 Mar 08 Wing leaders approved a plan that allowed the 12th Reconnaissance Squadron personnel, who operated the RQ-4A *Global Hawk* out of Beale AFB, California, to use Laughlin as a divert base during a series of six flights schedule to start on 17 March 2008 and run for the next year.
- 4 Apr 08 2d Lt Clayton M. Pasco, Class 08-07, became the first 47 FTW student to receive a non-specific aircraft (NSA) assignment. (Air Force Special Operations Command used the NSA.) Prior to the class' drop night on 21 March leaders from the 27th Special Operations Wing traveled to Laughlin and gave a brief to allow students to make an informed decision concerning the aircraft they requested.
- 7 Apr 08 19 AF leaders directed all flying training units under them to start using a new procedure to report programmed flying training deviations. The change came in an effort to get an accurate view of the training timeline, that is, see how far behind or ahead the student's were compared to where they should be.
- 24 Apr 08 Students from Class 09-01 who entered the fighter/bomber track in the 87 FTS trained under a heavily revised syllabus, P-V4A-A, *T-38C Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training*. It added two mini-tracks, fighter/first assignment instructor pilot and bomber/intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.
- 25 Apr 08 Wing members implemented a mission immersion program that provided Airmen (E-1 to E-3) a tour of key operational facilities, access to aircraft and discussion time with IPs. Developed by MSgt Emmanuel R. Scott from the 47 OSS, the program's intent was to "...immerse newcomers into Laughlin's SUPT program through a sharp/clear view of the major support areas..." and to stress that it took everyone's efforts, regardless of specialty, to ensure the wing successfully executed its mission. Participation eventually grew

from Airman new to Laughlin to include all ranks from Company Grade Officers and below.

- 15-16 May 08 Major General Irving L. Halter, Jr., 19 AF commander, visited Laughlin AFB. He provided the graduation speech for Class 08-09 on 16 May, while the previous day he held a commander's call. At the latter he provided information of the Air Force's vision for pilot production, force adjustments and potential new training pipelines.
- 30 Jun 08 FWQ students who entered training from this day forward received instruction spelled out in an updated F-V5A-Q (T-6) syllabus. Numerous changes centered on bringing the syllabus more in line with the joint primary pilot training (JPPT) one in terms of sortie flow, academic training, maneuver information file and prerequisite tables. Aircraft and simulator sortie changes include modeling the initial solo sortie on the JPPT solo while the FWQ syllabus added two formation sorties (up from one) and deleted the second formation simulator sortie. Training length remained the same.
- 6-23 Aug 08 Two break in training students, Capt Duane Vollmer (87 FTS) and 1st Lt Robert P. Morgan (434 FTRS) traveled to Nellis AFB and augmented operations personnel (in a support role) during RED FLAG 08-4.
- 14-15 Aug 08 Lieutenant General Norman R. Seip, 12 AF commander, visited Laughlin AFB. The primary reason for his visit consisted of providing the graduation speech for Class 08-13, but during his visit he also spoke to commanders at all levels about leadership roles and principles and followed up with taking questions about the Air Force's future. He finished with talking to pilots and students, along with other interested individuals, about differing rated personnel issues.
- 15 Aug 08 The 47 FTW's first student selected for an F-22 *Raptor* assignment, 1st Lt Jeremy J. Boudreaux, graduated with Class 08-13. Although selected for an F-22 assignment, it didn't guarantee his advancement. As part of a small group tryout, he still had to complete IFF training and pre-F-22 training in the F-16. Of the 10 students from this group, only 6 would advance. Those who completed IFF and pre-F-22 training, but not selected to attend F-22 training, received F-16 assignments instead.
- 2 Sep 08 SSgts Holli Edgett and Carlos Hernandez attended a luncheon with Del Rio Rotary Club members and spoke about their deployed experiences as Force Protection Escorts. This exchange took place as part of the "Faces of Laughlin" program, implemented to spread

the word about the wing's, and therefore the Air Force's, role in Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM.

- 23 Sep 08 Wing personnel received a request from AETC to provide information on the 47 FTW's ability to support the MC-12 (aka "Project Liberty") mission by means of either hosting an independent group/squadron or gaining an additional training squadron. Without significant infrastructure updates and increased manning the wing would not be able to support the mission.
- 23 Oct 08 General Stephen Lorenz, AETC Commander, visited Laughlin AFB for the first time, to see the 47FTW's pilot training mission.
- 27 Jan 09 General Victor E. Renuart, Jr., Northcom Commander (commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, both at Peterson AFB, Colorado), visited Laughlin AFB. General Renuart provided the graduation speech for Class 09-04.
- 28-29 Jan 09 The first visit of its kind, sitting Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley visited Laughlin AFB.
- 25 Apr 09 Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz attended Laughlin AFB's first Dining Out in 15 years, as the guest speaker.
- 8 May 09 Laughlin AFB hosted FAIPALOOZA for the first time. This event brought in static displays and pilots to help acquaint the First Assignment Instructor Pilots (FAIP's) about the future major weapons systems they might fly in their future. In attendance was Major General Anthony Przybalski, Air Education and Training Command Vice Commander who spoke at the event.
- 8-23 Jun 09 Twelve students and eight instructor pilots were transferred to Laughlin AFB as a result of the fourteen day contractor strike that temporarily halted pilot training at Vance AFB, Oklahoma.
- 2 Sep 09 General Stephen Lorenz, AETC commander visited Laughlin AFB. He met with the 86th Flying Training Squadron members who won the Air Mobility Command Rodeo for the second consecutive year, toured new facilities, and hosted an All Call while at Laughlin AFB.

47th FLYING TRAINING WING HISTORY

In order to keep the history and honors of World War II combat organizations alive, the Air Force, in November 1954, began a program of temporarily bestowing the history and awards of similarly numbered and designated combat groups and wings, the latter starting to appear in 1947. However, a rule existed where if a direct descendent of an Army Air Force unit was active during the same time as an Air Force equivalent, the lineages and honors couldn't be bestowed. Since the 47th Bombardment Wing and 47th Bombardment Group were active at the same time, the wing cannot claim the group's history. Technically, the history of the 47th Bombardment Group is the history of the 47th Operations Group. The Air Force did allow the wing to display the campaign streamers and awards earned by the 47th Bombardment Group.

The 47th Flying Training Wing proudly displays the honors of the 47th Operations Group (formerly the 47th Bombardment Group, Light), for the period of 15 January 1941 to 15 August 1947, which have been temporarily bestowed upon the 47th Flying Training Wing. Temporary bestowal means that the wing may display the 13 streamers representing the 11 campaigns and 2 Distinguished Unit Citations earned by the group before it became a part of the 47th Bombardment Wing, Light, on 15 August 1947.

Established on 20 November 1940, the 47th Bombardment Group (Light), (47 BG) activated at McChord Field, Washington on 15 January 1941. During this time American leaders started preparations for the United States' inevitable entry in the wars raging in Europe and the Pacific, thus, it was common practice during the period to form new groups with members of established units. In this case, the initial cadre of personnel and equipment, including some Douglas B-18A *Bolos*, came from the 17th Bombardment Group, also based at McChord. In turn, new personnel came to the 47th, not only to fill out the headquarters and assigned squadrons, but others simply to get trained and transfer to new units as experienced heads.

On 14 August 1941 the 47th officially transferred to Fresno, California. A short time later it gained its first DB-7s, an export version of the Douglas A-20 *Havoc*. It gained the DB-7s for two reasons. First, the Army Air Force simply needed planes, regardless of whether they had to keep them from the intended customers or not. Second, some of these customers, like France and Holland, had already fallen with the result these aircraft were no longer needed (at least by the French and Dutch).

After the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the 47 BG immediately prepared for and conducted costal patrols off the western US. So grave was the perceived threat that the group gained some LB-30s, an export version of the B-24, bound for England, itself in a struggle for survival. For a few

weeks these patrols continued, with literally the same munitions loaded in December, until the Army alerted the group for movement.

This move took the personnel to Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma in mid-February 1942. Here they received factory-fresh A-20s. In memoirs, some pilots and gunners recounted how they believed they would be going to the Pacific since they fitted shackles for torpedoes to the aircraft. These soon came off and conventional bomb racks went back on, and the move to the east coast started, reaching Greensboro, North Carolina, circa 18 July 1942. Here members started final preparations for overseas movement, including training in low-level attacks and support to ground units. At last, orders came down for transfer to a combat zone.

Movement commenced on 1 September 1942, with the official date for departure set as 18 October 1942. This is because of the types of transportation and routes used to shift the 47th. First, some personnel boarded trains for movement to New York City, from where they sailed across the north Atlantic; a thrilling adventure, no doubt, during the height of the U-Boat scourge. Others ferried the group's A-20s. In fact, the 47th Bombardment Group was one of the first units to go across as a group, instead of in small elements as previously done. Yet others traveled the southern route, both by air (through South America to Africa) and sea.

However, the weather by this time proved a hindrance, as the route in use went across the Canadian province of Labrador, took members to Greenland, Iceland and then Scotland. Shortly after crews completed their crossing the route was shut for the winter. These crews stayed in England at Bury St. Edmunds, and later Horham (located in the East Anglia region of Britain). The exact reason for the stay in England is unknown, but since the 47th eventually went to North Africa as part of Operation TORCH, the Army Air Force probably pre-positioned them there for quicker movement once ground forces gained sufficient ground to establish airfields. It also allowed 47th personnel to talk to British and American crews already involved in combat.

Operation TORCH commenced on 8 November 1942, and served two purposes. First, it put Rommel's Afrika Korps in a pinch between Allied forces in French Morocco and those in Egypt/Libya. This would then tie up additional German forces and take some pressure off the Russians, who had been demanding the Allies start a second front. About 80 members of the 47 BG took part in the initial landing of the invasion, and when Allied forces scraped out enough land, group personnel established a base at Mediouna, French Morocco on 15 November 1942.

Three days later the aircraft started to arrive from England and eventually engaged in combat, while replacements for those lost on the crossing came across the southern route. Crews and planners quickly discovered the low-level tactics they used brought about high casualties since it placed the aircraft within the range

of almost any weapon. As a result, despite the ongoing operations, Twelfth Air Force leaders requested the British supply some bomb sights and personnel to train bombardiers. Since the 47th was not manned with the latter, it solicited volunteers from within the group to train in the newly required position.

By December 1942, advances called for the group's forward movement. As was common in North Africa (and later in Italy), the 47th Bombardment Group's four squadrons (the 84th, 85th, 86th and 97th Bombardment Squadrons, with the currently assigned 85th and 86th Flying Training Squadrons drawing their lineage and honors from the similar numbered bomb squadrons) operated from different bases. This movement continued for the remainder of the conflict, with group personnel using 20 different bases during their stay in Europe. As action continued, the combination of tactics, training, slow replacements, parts shortages and, most likely, exotic diseases all started to take their toll.

While Twelfth Air Force leaders tried as much as possible to limit the 47th's operations and allow them to train in medium-altitude operations and gain much needed rest and repairs, the ground action prevented much of this. Thus, crews continued to attack various enemy targets, including tanks, convoys, bivouac areas, troop concentrations, supply dumps, roads, pontoon bridges, rail lines, and airfields. The vise put on the Germans and Italians started to take its toll, and General Irwin Rommel devised a plan to throw the Allies out of Western Africa and relieve the pressure.

On 14 February 1943, the Afrika Korps started to drive west. Detecting a weak spot in the American lines at the Kasserine Pass, Rommel personally led the attack on 19 February 1943. The situation became dire, but the Americans quickly altered their tactics. The 47th, though undermanned and under-supplied, flew 11 missions on 22 February to attack the advancing armored columns, helping to stop the enemy's offensive.

Cooks, supply and administrative personnel either stood guard or helped load and fuel aircraft. Members reported being able to see flashes and hear the artillery, so close the enemy came. Crews took off and completed some missions in as little as 15 minutes. One member who took part in this action, a pilot with the 86th Bombardment Squadron, would go on to other things and eventually have a base named after him; Lt Glen W. Edwards, who was decorated for a skip-bombing method he developed. For this action at Kasserine Pass, the group earned its first Distinguished Unit Citation, a citation awarded for extraordinary valor in action.

This repelling of the Germans turned the tables completely against the Axis forces in Africa. While it didn't spell the immediate end, continued pressure and the ability to gain air supremacy made it next to impossible for the Germans and Italians to receive supplies. On 13 May 1943 hostilities in North Africa ceased. The Allies now looked to the eventual invasions of Sicily and Italy, with the 47th Bombardment Group having a role.

Part of this included the taking of Pantelleria, an island held by the Italians about halfway between Tunisia and Sicily. Starting on 8 May 1943, and continuing for the next 34 days, 47th crews contributed to the dropping of 6,200 tons of bombs. Shortly before Allied troops landed, the Italians surrendered to air power. Besides Pantelleria, group crews mounted strikes against Sicily and Italy, and participated in the respective invasion of each by supporting ground troops, striking enemy targets in the rear, and on at least one occasion providing top cover for supply ships. As US forces gained sufficient space in Italy, the 47 BG moved across the Mediterranean and established its base on Malta on 21 July 1943, its first in Sicily on 9 August and its first in Italy on 24 September.

The push up Italy proved slow. This was not because of the Americans' inability or will to fight; Italy was considered a secondary front and therefore did not receive the forces like elsewhere. And just as important, topography played a large part, with the Germans using the high ground to slow advances. This also made missions difficult, since 47th crews needed accuracy to knock out specific targets. To gain this, they flew lower, sometimes between mountain peaks, to press their attacks. The 47th Bombardment Group's support to ground operations continued. As the war progressed, the German's diminished ability to provide air cover, combined with the cut rail and road lines, with much credit going to the 47th, forced the Wehrmacht to move forces and supplies at night.

To deny the Germans the safety of darkness, the 47th Bombardment Group joined up with three night fighter squadrons (the 414th, 416th and 417th) in June 1944 to conduct night work. (Besides the night fighter squadrons, the 57th and 86th Fighter Groups supplied assets as well. The night fighter squadrons were autonomous units and usually reported to a named/numbered air force.) It's not clear whether the crews initially acted in hunter-killer teams where the night fighter crew acquired targets and guided the 47th crews to the attack; if crews received information from partisans; if they operated singly; or a combination of these. In addition to the push up Italy, crews provided support to Yugoslavian partisans in their attacks on German forces there, and provided forces for the invasion of Southern France in August and September 1944.

In early 1945 the group received its first A-26s. Within a short while, some personnel, most noticeably Lt Col Reginald Clizbe, the 47th's deputy commander, devised a method that allowed crews to bomb blind in bad weather or at night. Utilizing tracking information from a ground radar station that overlooked the Po Valley in northern Italy, Lt Col Clizbe and some technicians modified a Link trainer plotter, then integrated it with the radar and a Norden bombsight.

Bombardiers deployed to the radar site fed the aircraft's location (tracked by the radar) to the plotter, which simulated aircraft movements, then relayed this data to the bombsight. Feeding in variables to the sight, personnel sent the information to the applicable 47th A-26C crew. Initial operations showed some deficiencies, pilots reporting they couldn't tell if they were drifting off-course and reported long

drops because of the delay between the drop light coming on and toggling the bomb switch, but members fine-tuned the system and overcame these problems.

The 47th demonstrated valor in action once again between 21 and 24 April 1945 when, in bad weather, at night and over rugged terrain, the group maintained operations for 60 consecutive hours, destroying enemy transportation in the Po Valley (probably in large part because of the above technique they developed) to prevent the organized withdrawal of German forces. For this action the group earned its second Distinguished Unit Citation.

A little over a week later, on 2 May 1945, the 47th flew its last combat mission. While on a night interdiction mission Lt Marion Akers of the 86th received orders to return to base after the remaining German forces in Italy surrendered. Five days later the Germans unconditionally surrendered, with Victory in Europe being announced the next day, 8 May 1945.

However, the possibility of combat for the 47th Bombardment Group was far from over. The Japanese fought on, and it seemed an invasion of Japan would be required. Because of the 47th's pioneering night work, the group seemed a prime candidate for shipment to the Pacific. On 14 July 1945, they arrived at Seymour Johnson Field, North Carolina, where they picked up new A-26Cs equipped with equipment for night work. Fortunately for the crews and ground personnel, the Japanese surrendered on 15 August 1945, bringing the Second World War to an end.

Unlike numerous other groups, the 47th didn't inactivate, probably in part to their experience in nocturnal operations. In fact, the group's designation changed to 47th Bombardment Group, Light (Night Attack) on 1 May 1946. During this time the group moved between Texas and Louisiana, where they participated in exercises, conducted firepower demonstrations and trained others in night interdiction work. On 15 August 1947 the 47th Bombardment Wing, Light (the 47th Flying Training Wing's predecessor) activated at Biggs Army Air Field, Texas, and became the group's higher headquarters.

The 47th Bombardment Wing (47 BW) trained and provided instruction in night tactical operations, conducted firepower demonstrations, and participated in tactical exercises between 1947 and 1949. On 19 November 1948, the wing moved to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, and it was here the wing became the first to receive the North American B-45A *Tornado*, the first operational jet bomber in the Air Force. Delays in delivery, new technology and aircrew and maintenance training issues led to problems with getting the wing operational. However, budgetary constraint within the Department of the Air Force (and the Department of Defense as a whole) led to the Air Force inactivating the 47 BW on 2 October 1949.

The growing Cold War, including the start of the Korean War, reversed the shrinking defense budgets. Tactical Air Command activated the 47 BW once again

at Langley AFB, Virginia, on 12 March 1951. The wing trained in light bombardment operations in the B-45 aircraft and became proficient with special weapon delivery. Crews also provided combat crew training in the B-26 aircraft and operated the USAF Air Crew School (Light Bombardment and Tactical Reconnaissance, Night Photographic).

Because of increased concern over the possibility of Soviet aggressions in Europe, the Air Force directed the 47th to move to Sculthorpe, England, while at times select squadrons operated from RAF Alconbury. For the next 7 years the wing performed tactical training operations, mainly special weapons delivery, in B-45 aircraft in support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, which provided deterrence to possible Soviet aggression. Between 7 May 1954 and 1 Dec 1956 the wing had the 19th Tactical Reconnaissance, Night Photographic, Jet Squadron, equipped with RB-45Cs, attached. (This meant they came under operational and tactical control of the 47th but administrative control of their assigned wing.) Crews from the 19 TRS flew mission near or over sensitive territory to collect vital intelligence. The 47th also supplied aircraft, in British markings, and support to Royal Air Force crews for the same mission. During this time, the wing was redesignated the 47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical.

In 1958, the wing transitioned from the B-45 to Douglas B-66 *Destroyer*, the last tactical jet bomber designed, and carried on the same mission. For a brief period, from 15 March 1960 to 22 June 1962, the wing gained the 420th Air Refueling Squadron (Tactical), which flew the Boeing KB-50J *Superfortress*. By now, advances in weapon design meant fighters could carry a wider range of munitions. This factor, plus the increasing lethality of the Soviet air defense system, spelled doom for tactical bombers, and on 22 June 1962 the Air Force inactivated the 47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical.

On 1 September 1972, Air Training Command (ATC) activated the 47th Flying Training Wing at Laughlin AFB, Texas. It took up the mission, undergraduate pilot training, of the discontinued 3646th Pilot Training Wing, which had been the host unit at Laughlin since 1962.

For the next 20 years the actual pilot training system changed little, however, things on the edges did evolve. In 1973 the wing ceased pilot screening with their T-41s and removed the aircraft from their inventory. In 1978 ATC altered the way they trained foreign pilots. While the 47th had previously trained those from Allied countries, the numbers increased with the introduction of the Security Assistance Training Program, which called for students to go through Phase II training in the T-37, and select students to continue with Phase III training. In September 1979, ATC updated the program, and all foreign students entered normal UPT classes. A flight simulator complex opened to enhance student training in 1979. Finally, in 1980, ATC introduced the mini-track system to Phase III training. A forerunner of things to come, it placed a greater emphasis on low-

level training for students slated for fighters, bombers and reconnaissance aircraft and provided flexibility for students bound for the remaining aircraft.

In 1983, ATC announced the 47 FTW would be the first unit to receive the T-46A, the next generation trainer selected to replace the T-37B. Wing personnel worked issues to bed down the T-46A, including mock-up inspections. The aircraft offered a pressurized, air-conditioned cockpit, along with an anti-g system and more economic operations. However, continued issues with the design, namely airframe weight and fatigue issues, combined with competing programs for funding, led to the cancellation of the program in 1986.

Computer generated imagery for simulators started to replace the old system of terrain boards in 1986. This provided cost savings and increased realism. The operations training complex (named Anderson Hall in 2001) opened its doors in 1988. The complex encompassed student academics, flight training, and administrative requirements for all (at the time) aircraft systems. With this integration, student productivity increased and, in turn, mission efficiency. Closing out the decade, a first occurred at Laughlin in June 1989 when the aircraft maintenance function converted from a military to a civil service operation as a result of a cost analysis study, thus, the 47th Flying Training Wing's maintenance function became the first (and for several years the only) in ATC operated by an all-civil service work force. The government stated civil service provided the most efficient organization, with resultant cost savings.

On 2 April 1990, the operations complex reorganized to prepare the way for specialized undergraduate pilot training (this called for students bound for airlift and tanker aircraft to train on the T-1A, and fighter and bomber pilots to continue with T-38s), projected for implementation at Laughlin in fiscal year 1994. Over the next few years flying training squadrons activated and inactivated at ATC and the wing forged ahead with the change to the training system. Another significant milestone occurred on 28 January 1991, when the 47th opened a new auxiliary airfield, known as "Wizard," at Spofford, Texas; the wing no longer had to lease the field at Eagle Pass. The wing used "Wizard," located 22 miles southeast of Laughlin, for T-37 flying training instruction in both left- and right-hand traffic patterns (and now for T-6A work).

As a result of the Air Force's decision to reorganize into a more effective combat force, the 47th Flying Training Wing restructured as an objective wing, effective 16 December 1991. The restructure brought about the redesignation of the 47th Air Base Group as the 47th Support Group and the 47th Flying Training Wing Hospital as the 47th Medical Squadron. It also resulted in the activation of the 47th Operations Group. Later, in November 1993, the command redesignated the 47th Medical Squadron as the 47th Medical Group. Further changes came in 1992 when ATC implemented new programs and systems and determined single squadrons for Phase II and III would work better than dual squadrons for

each phase. As a result, ATC inactivated the 86th Flying Training Squadron on 15 September 1992 and the 84th Flying Training Squadron on 1 October 1992.

Headquarters USAF, on 1 July 1993, redesignated ATC as Air Education and Training Command (AETC). At the same time, HQ AETC activated Nineteenth Air Force. As with all flying training wings in the command, AETC placed the 47th under Nineteenth Air Force. The 47 FTW took one large step towards implementation of specialized undergraduate pilot training when they received its first T-1A *Jayhawk* on 19 November 1993 and regained the 86th Flying Training Squadron on 1 December. The aircraft was the first new training aircraft in 25 years, and SUPT saw the first major change to pilot training in over 30 years. Students now started to train in basic profiles they would utilize in their operations aircraft. The first class to enter training in the T-1A, 95-02, started Phase III training in May 1994.

An increase to the 47th's training load came about in 1997 after the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, in July 1995, recommended to close Reese AFB, Texas (along with the 78 other military installations). This required AETC to shift Reese's mission to the remaining flying training bases. The increased T-37 student load began to hit the gaining bases and the operational tempo rapidly picked up, with annual student production going from 148 in 1995 to 217 in 1997. In April 1998, as the Air Force faced a pilot retention problem, the 96th Flying Training Squadron, an Air Force Reserve associate squadron, was activated to augment the wing's instructor force in all three aircraft. On 1 October 1998, AETC reactivated the 84th Flying Training Squadron and equipped the squadron with T-37s. The rationale for two Phase II squadrons centered on AETC's concerns over squadron and flight commander span of control, the professional development of the instructor force, and the maximum safe occupancy of flight rooms. Pilot production for 1999 grew to 329.

In 1999, wing leaders started preparations for the addition of the T-6A *Texan II*, which would replace the long-serving T-37 as the Air Force's new primary trainer, and an upgraded T-38. In 2000, the first members from the wing deployed on Air Expeditionary Force deployments; before, they remained out of the deployment cycles.

Between 2002 and 2005 major changes to the wing's aircraft fleet took place. In mid-November 2002 the 47 FTW, via the 84 FTS, received its first T-6A, and shortly thereafter the first T-37B "Tweets" transferred out. The transition took nearly 2 years, when on 19 November 2004, the last T-37B training flight occurred, with the last aircraft transferred off Laughlin a month later. This brought to a close the wing's 32-year association with the "Tweet" (43 for Laughlin). In this time the units at Laughlin flew in excess of 1,000,000 sorties, logged over 1,500,000 hours, and trained over 12,500 students from more than 40 counties.

It was during this time (19 November 2002) the wing welcomed the first 479th Flying Training Group's (based at Moody AFB, Georgia) students to Phase III training when four students (split equally) entered the T-1 and T-38 tracks. As such, pilot production grew once again.

Besides bringing the T-6A on line, wing personnel worked with others in preparation for gaining the T-38C. The C-model conversion saw A-models fitted with a modern avionics and instrument suite that replaced the A-models 1950s-vintage systems. This allowed students bound for fighters and bombers exposure to the avionics they'd see in their operational aircraft, allowing them to carry over more of their training.

In conjunction with the updated avionics, the T-38C would eventually receive up-rated engines as part of the propulsion modification program. While the plan called for equipping the 47 FTW at the end of the refit cycle (sometime in 2008), a combination of increased T-38 take-off weight criteria and the shortest runways and highest summertime ambient temperatures of the four SUPT bases led AETC to revise the plan and provide the re-engined aircraft to the 87 FTS first, the first of which arrived in 2005. Last, as the wing's personnel gained experience with an all "glass-cockpit" fleet, they studied ways the training process could be changed so they could provide a better product to the combat and mobility air forces.

Work to increase training efficiencies continued in 2005. First, the operations group implemented center-ops on line (COOL), a program modified for use in the SUPT environment. COOL pulled information from various sources, allowing IPs and students to access data on a centralized site; the system also presents near-simultaneous information concerning a pilot's flight status. Next, when Class 06-05 started training they entered their Phase II squadron while in Phase I, versus going to the 47th Operations Support Squadron. This action reduced processing time and scheduling conflicts, which gained 3 instructional days. Work continued on the T-38C conversion, with the gaining of PMP C-models and the conclusion of T-38A operations when Class 05-13 graduated. The last T-38A departed Laughlin on 2 September. IPs from the 86 FTS became the first T-1 pilots to participate in Air Mobility Command's Air Mobility Rodeo. They provided weather reconnaissance and partook in the Operational Support Airlift/Special Air Mission category, while later in the year they performed an operational airlift mission by taking land mobile radios to Keesler AFB, Mississippi following Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Other wing individuals traveled to the gulf region to provide support.

In 2006, worked proceeded in earnest on bedding down the Introduction to Fighter Fundamental (IFF) and additional T-6A assets as a result of gaining part of the pilot training mission from the 479 FTG. This included receiving the first IFF T-38C on 4 October 2006. Main areas of interest centered on obtaining a no-drop (electronic scoring) bomb range and additional airspace. Additionally, the 84 FTS

and 85 FTS instituted "2 a day goes." This provided three benefits; longer debrief times for IPs and students, additional time for studies or physical training, and decreased demands for maintainers.

As usually, in 2007 wing members continued to make inputs to improve student training. This included volunteering as AETC's participant in the test merge of the 47th Mission Support Squadron and 47th Services Division into the 47th Force Support Squadron (Provisional). In addition, the wing requested they be allowed to carry a Laughlin-specific merge of the 47th Civil Engineer and Communications Squadrons to gain efficiencies by allowing the combination of similar missions, additional duties and military personnel oversight. (The latter centered on the 47th Communications Squadron its commander billet in 2007.) Last, numerous BRAC actions came to fruition, most notably the start of IFF instruction on 11 June 2007 and Fixed Wing Qualification on 31 January 2007.

Although the 47 FTW didn't gain any new missions in 2008, the pace didn't slow. A growing Break in Training (BIT) for students bound for fighters started to cause challenges, and not because the BIT was something new. Instead, the challenge centered on the anticipated BIT length – anywhere from 9 months to over 1 year. On top of that, AETC leaders stood down the T-38 fleet following two Class-A accidents in the command. By this time, a lower number of fighter assignments given coupled with more graduates from the fighter-bomber track receiving NSA and U-28 (and eventually MC-12 and UAS) assignments led to a lessened pressure for the 87 FTS and 434 FTRS to train students and insure BIT students received a sufficient number of flights. Another change consisted of the "Smooth Flow" program that saw all Air Force Academy and ROTC cadets show up at Laughlin to await their class entry versus being sent to various bases while they waited. At about the same time the Academy grads showed up the 47 OSS stood up the student flight. This flight had all students who were waiting/in training and had completed pilot training assigned to it. The two major reasons for standing up the flight centered on better student oversight and reduced administrative demands on the flying squadron commanders.

In 2009, the pace did not change when the 47 FTW accommodated a transfer of twelve students and eight instructor pilots from Vance AFB, Oklahoma. Vance AFB temporarily halted pilot training when contracted employees participated in the Vance AFB strike. The 47 FTW maintained training standards despite the additions.

Throughout its many changes of jurisdiction, challenges, and missions, the 47th Flying Training Wing and its predecessors continue to contribute significantly to the nation's aeronautical progress and national security. Since it's activation as a flying training wing on 1 September 1972 the 47 FTW has pinned silver wings on over 12,300 pilots. The wing places emphasis on its importance to our nation's security by reminding all military, DoD Civilians, and private citizens daily that *America's Airpower Starts Here.*

47th FLYING TRAINING WING LINEAGE

47th Bombardment Group, Light

Established	47th Bombardment Gp (light)	20 Nov 1940
Activated		15 Jan 1941
Redesignated	47th Bombardment Gp, Light (Night Attack)	1 May 1946
Redesignated	47th Bombardment Gp, Light	22 Aug 1948
Inactivated		2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light

Established	47th Bombardment Wing, Light	28 Jul 1947
Organized		15 Aug 1947
Inactivated		2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical

Activated		12 Mar 1951
Redesignated	47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical	1 Oct 1955
Discontinued and inactivated		22 Jun 1962

47th Flying Training Wing

Redesignated	47th Flying Training Wing	22 Mar 1972
Activated		1 Sep 1972

47th FLYING TRAINING WING HONORS

Campaign Streamers:	Antisubmarine, American Theater	7 Dec 1941-2 Sep 1945
	Algeria-French Morocco	8-11 Nov 1942
	Tunisia	12 Nov 1942-13 May 1943
	Sicily	14 May-17 Aug 1943
	Naples-Foggia	18 Aug 1943-21 Jan 1944
	Anzio	22 Jan-24 May 1944
	Rome-Arno	22 Jan-9 Sep 1944
	Southern France	15 Aug-14 Sep 1944
	North Apennines	10 Sep 1944-4 Apr 1945
	Po Valley	5 Apr-8 May 1945
Air Combat, EAME Theater	7 Dec 1941-2 Sep 1945	
Decorations:	Distinguished Unit Citations	
	North Africa	22 Feb 1943
	Po Valley	21-24 Apr 1945
	Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards	1 Jul 1958-30 Jun 1960
	1 Jan-31 Dec 1973	1 Jan 1976-28 Feb 1977
	1 Jan 1979-30 Apr 1980	1 Apr 1986-31 Mar 1988
	16 Mar 1989-15 Mar 1991	1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993
	1 Jul 1997-30 Jun 1999	1 Sep 2003-30 Jun 2005
1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2007	1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2008	

47th FLYING TRAINING WING COMMANDERS

47th Bombardment Group (light), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light (Night Attack), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light

Maj William A. Schulgen	15 Jan 1941
Lt Col Hilbert M. Wittkop	unknown
Col Frederick R. Terrell	Jan 1942
Col Malcolm Green, Jr.	17 May 1943
Lt Col Kenneth S. Wade	1 Apr 1945
Col Marvin S. Zipp	28 Aug 1945
Col Robert Hughey	23 Nov 1945
Lt Col Broadus B. Taylor	27 Aug 1946
Col Gerald E. Williams	30 Aug 1946
Lt Col Stebbins W. Griffith	5 Jun 1947-2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light

Col William M. Prince	15 Aug 1947
Col Newton Longfellow	Sep 1947
Col Willis F. Chapman	19 Nov 1948-2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light, later 47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical

Col Willis F. Chapman	12 Mar 1951
Col Charles D. Jones	1 Aug 1951
Col David M. Jones	12 Feb 1952
Col John G. Glover	16 Jun 1955
Brig Gen Joseph R. Holzapple	30 Jun 1955
Col John G. Glover	Oct 1956
Col Reginald J. Clizbe	29 Jun 1958
Col Kenneth C. Dempster	19 Jun 1959
Col George H. Kneen, Jr.	1 Dec 1961-22 Jun 1962

STATIONS

47th Flying Training Wing

Col Charles E. Woods	1 Sep 1972
Col Harry Falls, Jr.	8 Jun 1973
Col Lawrence D. Garrison	8 Jul 1975
Col Ralf M. Miller	16 Aug 1977
Col Chris O. Divich	21 Mar 1979
Col Anthony J. Farrington, Jr.	14 Aug 1981
Col Albert A. Gagliardi, Jr.	1 Mar 1983
Col Jeffrey T. Ellis	29 Nov 1984
Col John C. Griffith	2 Jul 1986
Col Joseph S. Bleymaier, Jr.	24 Jul 1987
Col Willard Grosvenor	1 Jun 1989
Col Donald G. Cook	29 Jul 1991
Col Kenneth W. Hess	29 Jul 1992
Col Timothy A. Peppe	17 Aug 1994
Col Gary A. Winterberger	5 Jan 1996
Col Dan R. Goodrich	23 Jan 1998
Col Winfield W. Scott III	14 Oct 1999
Col Scott B. Egginton	5 Dec 2000
Col Erick J. Rosborg	29 Aug 2001
Col Daniel P. Woodward	23 Aug 2002
Col Tod D. Wolters	30 Jul 2004
Col Edward M. Minahan	21 Apr 06
Col John W. Doucette	4 Dec 07
Col Jeffrey R. McDaniels	27 Apr 09

47th Bombardment Group (light), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light (Night Attack), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light

McChord Field, WA	15 Jan 1941
Fresno, CA	14 Aug 1941
Will Rogers Field, OK	c. 16 Feb 1942
Greensboro, NC	c. 16 Jul-18 Oct 1942
Mediouna, French Morocco	18 Nov 1942
Youks-les-Bains, Algeria	7 Jan 1943
Canrobert, Algeria	6 Mar 1943
Thelepte, Tunisia	30 Mar 1943
Ta Kali Airdrome, Malta	21 Jul 1943
Torrente Comunelli, Sicily	9 Aug 1943
Gerbini, Sicily	20 Aug 1943
Grottaglie, Italy	24 Sep 1943
Vincenzo Airfield, Italy	15 Oct 1943
Vesuvius Afld, Italy	c. 10 Jan 1944
Capodichino, Italy	22 Mar 1944
Vesuvius Afld, Italy	25 Apr 1944
Ponte Galeria, Italy	c. 10 Jun 1944
Ombrone Afld, Italy	27 Jun 1944
Poretta Afld, Corsica	11 Jul 1944
Salon, France	7 Sep 1944
Follonica, Italy	18 Sep 1944
Rosignano Afld, Italy	Oct 1944
Grosseto, Italy	11 Dec 1944
Pisa, Italy	24 Jun 1945
Seymour Johnson Field, NC	14 Jul 1945
Lake Charles Afld, LA	c. 9 Sep 1945
Biggs Field (later AFB), TX	20 Oct 1946
Barksdale AFB, LA	19 Nov 1948–2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light

Biggs Field (later, AFB), TX	15 Aug 1947
Barksdale AFB, LA	19 Nov 1948–2 Oct 1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light, later 47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical

Langley AFB, VA	12 Mar 1951–21 May 1952
Sculthorpe RAF Station (later RAF Sculthorpe), UK	1 Jun 1952–22 Jun 1962

47th Flying Training Wing

Laughlin AFB, TX	1 Sep 1972
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47th Bombardment Group (light), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light (Night Attack), later 47th Bombardment Group, Light

Douglas B-18 <i>Bolo</i>	1941-1942
Consolidated B-24 <i>Liberator</i>	1941-1942
Consolidated LB-30 <i>Liberator</i>	1941-1942
Douglas DB-7 <i>Havoc</i>	1941-1942
Douglas A-20 <i>Havoc</i>	1941-1945
Douglas A (later B)-26 <i>Invader</i>	1945-1947

47th Bombardment Wing, Light

Douglas B & TB-26 <i>Invader</i>	1947-1949
North American B-45 <i>Tornado</i>	1949

47th Bombardment Wing, Light, later 47th Bombardment Wing, Tactical

North American B-45 <i>Tornado</i>	1951-1958
North American Douglas B-26 <i>Invader</i>	1951-1952
North American RB-45 <i>Tornado</i>	1954-1956
Douglas B-66 <i>Destroyer</i>	1958-1962
Boeing KB-50 <i>Superfortress</i>	1960-1962

47th Flying Training Wing

Cessna T-41 <i>Mescalero</i>	1972-1973
Cessna T-37 "Tweet"	1972-2004
Northrop T-38 <i>Talon</i>	1972-
Beechcraft T-1 <i>Jayhawk</i>	1994-
Beechcraft T-6 <i>Texan II</i>	2002-

It was common practice well into the 1960s to provide wings with various aircraft to transport parts and personnel between bases within the theater of assignment, to provide liaison to higher headquarters, or act as proficiency or transition aircraft, such as for pilots coming from reciprocating-engined bombers to jet engined bombers. Therefore, no more than one or two of these types at any one time would typically be assigned to a wing. During the period of 1948 to 1962 the type of support aircraft the 47th used consisted of the C-47, T-6, T-11, B-26, L-5, C-45, F-84, T-33, L-20, C-119 and T-29.



Jack Thomas Laughlin was born September 17, 1914 in Del Rio, Texas, the youngest of Mr. and Mrs. Jack T. and Anna M. Laughlin's four children. He attended public schools in Del Rio and, in May 1932, graduated from Del Rio High School. For the next 2 years Laughlin worked with University of Texas and Smithsonian Institute archaeological excavation crews in Indian caves in the Seminole and Pecos Canyons in Val Verde County. Later, he enrolled in the University of Texas and earned a bachelor degree in business administration in 1938.

During his years at the UT, he spent much of his time in the Anthropology Department. He worked in the laboratory on the weekends and in the field in the summer. After getting his degree in 1938, he was made the supervisor of an archaeological laboratory in San Antonio. Here he received artifacts from many areas in Texas, and was responsible for restoring, classifying, and cataloging these for use in the University of Texas Museum.

How, with a background and interests so far removed from the military, did Laughlin come to be flying a B-17, halfway around the world from Del Rio, on that January day in 1942 when he lost his life? Fraternity brothers in Lamda Xi say that Jack had shown an interest in flying for several years and joined the Army Air Corps Aviation Cadet Program in September 1940. Edward Ryan, who wrote a series of articles about his and Jack's experiences in flight school, said in the June 1941 issue of the "Twenty-Thirtian," "These last few months we've been learning. Now that we know how to fly, we're all of us ready to fly our heads off for the good old United States. All the government has to do is send us our orders."

And the orders came not long after that article was written. Laughlin had since completed flying training at several California bases. On April 27, 1941, he was awarded his wings at Stockton and assigned to heavy bombardment duty at Fort Douglas, Utah. Lt Laughlin returned to California long enough to marry the lovely Mary Fundulakis who he'd met while at Mather.

In December 1941, Laughlin headed west with a contingent towards Java. However, Japanese gains throughout the entire western Pacific Ocean area saw them re-routed east. The last letter written by Lieutenant Laughlin was postmarked in Africa, January 24, 1942. Five days later his B-17 *Flying Fortress* was lost over the Makasser Straits--his first combat mission.

Lieutenant Laughlin never saw his daughter Jackie, born to his widow in the Station Hospital at Randolph Field, Texas, on August 14, 1942.

LAUGHLIN CHRONOLOGY

- 4-5 May 42 Army engineers agreed that a site seven miles east of Del Rio, Texas, selected by the city's Chamber of Commerce Aviation Committee, would be suitable for a flying school.
- Aug 42 Army Air Force Advanced Flying School, Del Rio activated.
- 26 Sep 42 Mission changed: Army Air Forces Bombardier School, Del Rio. Complement consisted of 28 officers and enlisted men.
- Dec 42 The mission changed yet again, to B-26 transition training.
- Jan 43 First B-26s arrived. In fact, the station *claimed* that it possessed the original B-26 airplane, "Gran Pappy," which trained many pilots and broke the station's record flying time in one month, with a total of 210 hours.
- 1 Feb 43 Transition training began. Classes, composed of pilots and co-pilots, were small and had irregular start dates. Training lasted about four and a half weeks.
- 3 Mar 43 The Army Air Forces Transition Flying School, Medium Bombardment, graduated the first class of 23 students.
- 28 Mar 43 Army Air Force officials renamed the station as Laughlin Army Air Field in honor of Lt Jack T. Laughlin, the first Del Rio native to lose his life in aerial combat; his first mission over Java.
- Jan-Mar 44 An experimental class of 50 cadets, graduates of basic flight school, trained on AT-23 aircraft (trainer version of the B-26).
- 9 Dec 44 The first two A-26 aircraft arrived on station in support of conversion training. Army Air Force leaders planned to replace the A-20 and B-26 with the A-26.
- May-Jun 45 Conversion program from B-26 to A-26 training inaugurated.
- 8 May 45 Victory in Europe (V-E) Day.
- 2 Sep 45 Victory in Japan (V-J) Day; World War II ended.
- 30 Sep 45 The last 300 men depart Laughlin Field as the base prepared for inactivation.
- 30 Oct 45 Station inactivated. Assigned to the Corps of Engineers; subsequently leased to local ranchers for goat grazing.
- 1 May 52 Air Force needs to expand flying training. Air Training Command (ATC) activated Laughlin and assigned it to Flying Training Air Force, Waco, Texas. ATC activated 3645th Pilot Training Wing (Basic Single Engine) to conduct training using T-28 and T-33 aircraft. While instruction was scheduled to start in Aug 52, facility construction delays caused slippages, now set for November.

- 1 Oct 52 Mission changed to advanced fighter pilot training in the F-84. Concurrent with the change in mission, the 3645th became a Flying Training Wing (Fighter) and the base was transferred to Crew Training Air Force.
- 19 Feb 53 First class under the fighter pilot program entered training. A shortage of gunnery ranges, aircraft, and instructors delayed the start of the program.
- 29 Apr 53 First class of jet fighter pilots completed the combat readiness fighter-bomber course.
- 27 Jul 53 Korean Armistice signed.
- 24 Aug 54 Laughlin was designated a permanent installation.
- 1 Sep 55 Laughlin transferred from the Crew Training Air Force to Flying Training Air Force after a change in its mission to basic single-engine pilot training in the T-33. The first students arrived from Williams AFB, Arizona. (In these days, the Air Force used specialized tracks and performed one portion of training at a specific base. For example, a student completed primary at Hondo AB and basic training at Laughlin [single-engine] or Reese AFB [multi-engine], before moving on to advanced training.)
- 1 Nov 55 HQ ATC, Scott AFB, Illinois, transferred jurisdiction, control and accountability of the Eagle Pass Auxiliary Field from Laredo AFB to Laughlin.
- 20 Dec 55 Last class of combat crew fighter students (Phase I) graduated.
- 1 Apr 57 ATC transferred control of Laughlin to Strategic Air Command (SAC) to provide a home for the 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW) (Light). ATC would later inactivate the 3645th Pilot Training Wing.
- 13 Apr 57 Class 55M became the last class to complete the basic single-engine course and graduated on 27 April.
- 11 Jun 57 The 4080th's first U-2s arrived at Laughlin.
- Jul 57 RB-57D-1 aircraft added to the 4080 SRW inventory.
- Apr 58 Construction started on 500-unit Capehart Housing Project. Streets on base were named in honor of leaders in aviation, in addition to outstanding cadets assigned to Laughlin who had lost their lives in training missions.
- 18 Aug 59 Noncommissioned Officer Preparatory School established.
- 15 Jun 60 SAC inactivated the 4025th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron and sent the squadrons' RB-57s aircraft to other squadrons or the storage depot at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

24 Oct 60 President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Secretary of State Christian Herter visited Laughlin when the President met with Mexican President Lopez Mateos. The two Chiefs of State signed a treaty which culminated in the construction of the Amistad Dam on the Rio Grande.

9 Jan 61 Mr. Clarence L. "Kelly" Johnson, chief designer of the U-2, and other key Lockheed individuals visited Laughlin AFB.

30 Mar 61 The Defense Department announced that Laughlin was one of 52 bases and installations identified for closure.

31 Jul 61 Laughlin's closure postponed; the 4080 SRW's announced move to Davis-Monthan was delayed, while the base would gain a portion of the undergraduate pilot training (UPT) program from Laredo AFB, Texas.

16 Oct 61 3645th Pilot Training Wing (PTW) activated at Laughlin with two officers and three airmen assigned. Plan was to "phase one-half of the Laredo AFB, Texas, training into Laughlin and to transfer command jurisdiction from SAC to ATC."

16 Oct 61 The first T-37, tail number 56-3564, transferred from Laredo AFB to Laughlin. In all, Laughlin received 41 T-37Bs and 13 T-33As from Laredo, Sheppard, Moody, Vance, and James Connally AFBs.

20 Nov 61 Twenty-three students entered training with Class 63-D.

15 Feb 62 ATC redesignated the 3645 PTW as the 3646 PTW.

1 Apr 62 Command jurisdiction of Laughlin transferred from SAC to ATC.

Jul-Dec 62 The helicopter section was integrated into the fire protection program.

Aug 62 Construction of a training device, dubbed "Suspended Agony," was completed, which taught students to control the direction of their drift while manipulating the parachute risers.

14 Oct 62 Major Richard S. Heyser, a 4080th U-2 pilot, obtained the first conclusive evidence of the Soviet build-up in Cuba.

27 Oct 62 A 4080 SRW pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson, Jr., was declared missing in action over Cuba by the Defense Department.

7 Nov 62 Major Anderson of the 4028th Strategic Reconnaissance Weather Squadron was buried with full military honors in Greenville, South Carolina.

7 Dec 62 Class 63-D, the first class at Laughlin AFB since ATC reassumed jurisdiction, graduated 18 pilots.

10 Dec 62 The Eagle Pass runway opened for touch-and-go landings for T-37 aircraft. Lt Col F.M. Thomas was first to land.

Mar 63 A fully transistorized voice code trainer was installed to train student pilots in radio voice procedures and Aural and Visual Code. At that time, the trainer was the only commercially constructed voice code procedure trainer in the UPT program.

12 Jul 63 Last U-2s left Laughlin.

15 Jul 63 ATC chose the 3646 PTW to test an experimental UPT syllabus for 10 classes. The course consisted of 45 weeks / 210 hours of flying vice 55 weeks / 262 hours. Class 64-X1 became the first class to receive this training. To implement the "X" course, ATC accelerated classes 64-C through 64-H.

Aug 63 Local flying area expanded to approx 15,000 sq mi.

12 Oct 63 The Laughlin golf course opened for limited play.

12 Feb 64 Permanent runway supervisory unit was opened. It was the first of its kind in the Air Force.

1 Apr 64 Computer-controlled pay for Laughlin's Airmen started.

28 May 64 Laughlin's first T-38, which phased out the T-33A, arrived on base and was named "City of Del Rio." The T-38 officially became a part of the UPT program in Feb 65.

1 Aug 64 The base began operation of Lakeview resort for the benefit of military personnel and their dependents.

4 Sep 64 First two production T-38 aircraft received.

24 Sep 64 Laughlin assisted in local flood relief. Helicopters rescued 33 local civilians.

8 Feb 65 Class 66-A started UPT; the T-38 officially entered the UPT program.

11 Jun 65 Laughlin provided assistance to flood victims at Sanderson, Texas.

9 Aug 65 Class 67-A became first Laughlin class to enter T-41 training. This training program became Primary Phase I of the revised UPT program and required students to successfully complete the phase prior to moving on to the T-37. A civilian contractor conducted the training at Del Rio International Airport.

Mar 66 Laughlin's airmen were freed from kitchen police duties as civilians took over the job.

22 Mar 66 Laughlin began a program of para-sail parachute training.

8 Jul 66 Laughlin officially adopted a continuous flow aircraft launch concept. Devised and initiated by Wing Operations Division, it replaced the mass-launch plan. Aircraft launched at 3-minute intervals; eliminated "busy" and "lull" periods.

3 Dec 66 President Lyndon B. Johnson visited Laughlin AFB and Ciudad Acuna, Mexico.

4 Nov 68 3646th Pilot Training Wing flew 100,000 consecutive accident-free hours

8 Sep 69 President Richard M. Nixon visited Laughlin to dedicate Amistad Dam along with Mexican President Gustavo Diaz Ordaz.

1 Oct 71 Laughlin's Social Actions Office was opened.

1 Sep 72 47th Flying Training Wing (FTW) replaced the 3646th as Laughlin's host unit.

16 Sep 76 Laughlin was named as an alternate for base closure.

30 Mar 77 The Secretary of the Air Force closed Webb AFB, Texas and Craig AFB, Alabama, Laughlin kept open.

9 Oct 77 Airfield construction began to accommodate a new aircraft parking plan.

19 Oct 77 Hospital personnel moved into their new facility. Dedication of the hospital was scheduled for 1 Dec 1977.

22 Nov 78 Section I of the Flight Simulator building was completed and accepted by the Air Force.

13 Dec 79 Major General Charles F. Cleveland from ATC unveiled a bronze plaque dedicating the Instrument Flight Simulator building in memory of Chief Master Sergeant Daniel P. Jarvis.

2 May 81 Laughlin's new recreation area at Lake Amistad was officially opened.

13 Aug 82 Grand opening of the new Base Exchange. General Murray, AAFES Commander was here to dedicate the facility.

1 Nov 82 Correctional custody program started at Laughlin.

20 Mar 84 Ribbon cutting ceremony held for Laughlin's new Temporary Lodging Facility.

1 May 84 The "Avenue of Flags" opened up in front of the wing headquarters building along Liberty Ave. Up to 100 flags could be flown on special occasions, but generally the 50 state flags flew on a regular basis.

15 Jun 84 Dedication ceremonies held for the new enlisted dormitory, Ricks Hall. The wing dedicated the new structure, Building 255, to the memory of Philip A. Ricks, one of Laughlin's most devoted supporters.

17-21 Sep 84 Representatives of Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc. visited Laughlin to identify any hazards associated with waste disposal sites.

27 Jun 85 Ground broken on academic training facility for student pilots.

Apr 89 Congress designated Laughlin AFB as a remote facility for Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) purposes, the only facility so designated in ATC. This designation allowed more appropriated fund support (100 percent funding) for MWR activities.

26 May 89 Ribas-Dominicci Plaza was named in honor of Major Fernando Ribas-Dominicci. Major Ribas, the F-111 pilot killed in an April 1986 Libyan raid, graduated with Laughlin UPT Class 77-05.

28 Jan 91 The auxiliary airfield at Spofford, Texas, opened for T-37 touch and go landings. The wing canceled its lease at Eagle Pass.

1 Oct 94 Air Education and Training Command (AETC) established an Engine Regional Repair Center (ERRC) at Laughlin to repair AETC's J69 and J85 engines.

13 Jul 95 President Clinton signed off on the recommendation of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) to close 79 military installations and realign or shrink 26 others. The recommendation included Reese AFB, Texas.

July 95 Laughlin became the first Air Force base to purchase and test a computerized bird hazard abatement system...the bird scare cannon system.

29 Aug 96 The last Airman Leadership School (ALS) class graduated and the school closed because of a lack of eligible personnel at Laughlin. Future classes would be taught by ALS instructors TDY from the 12 FTW on an as-needed basis.

1 Oct 96 Laughlin's hospital converted to a clinic. A study determined inpatient services could be purchased at a lower cost than to deliver those services on base.

Mar 97 Construction began on a 7-foot high, chain link perimeter fence to prevent illegal immigrant traffic from entering Laughlin.

1 Jul 97 The ERRC converted to a contract operation.

30 Sep 97 The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office ceased full-time operations at Laughlin.

23 Aug 98 Tropical Storm Charley dumped over 10 inches of rain in 15 hours on Laughlin proper and almost 19 inches in 24 hours in downtown Del Rio. The city recorded nine deaths as the San Felipe Creek crested 20 feet above flood stage in the dark of night.

15 Jan 99 The enlisted annex, nameless since the collocation of Laughlin's two clubs, officially opened under its new name, "Club Amistad."

Apr 00 Laughlin's First Term Airman Center opened for business. Instructors reinforced lessons learned in basic and technical training while providing airman information about their new duty station.

28 Sep 00 The Honorable F. Whitten Peters, Secretary of the Air Force, and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Frederick J. Finch visited Laughlin. They conducted tours, held an enlisted call and discussed issues with base personnel.

- 13 Apr 01 Because of additional downsizing in the medical field, Laughlin leaders reached an agreement with the Val Verde Medical Center to provide emergency ambulance service for Laughlin residents.
- 26 Oct 01 On the 39th anniversary of Major Rudolf Anderson Jr.'s death in the Cuban Missile Crisis, Laughlin dedicated the Operations Training Complex in his honor. Major Anderson's daughter and one of his two sons attended.
- 8 Mar 02 Olympic bobsledder Silver medalist, and Del Rio, Texas, native Todd Hays visited Laughlin and received an orientation flight on an 86 FTS T-1A *Jayhawk*.
- 7 Apr 02 A storm, centered over the T-37 ramp, dropped hail over 2-inches in diameter for up to 10 minutes, damaging 89 T-37s and 25 T-1s of the wings 108 and 52, respectively.
- 6 Jan 03 When flight training started after the Christmas break, air traffic and radar approach controllers worked out of their combined facility in the new operations building. The scheduled date for initial occupancy had been December 2001.
- 18 Apr 03 Security forces personnel announced plans to bring back Project Ride Along, which allowed military and civilians alike to go on patrol with 47 SFS personnel so they could see what the security forces' details entail
- 16-17 Jul 03 Afforded ample warning, the base populace prepared for the remnants of Hurricane Claudette. By the time it reached Laughlin, Claudette had diminished to a tropical storm, but winds still gusted to 43 knots. Damage centered on broken tree limbs, one uprooted tree, and minor damage to two hangars.
- 15 Nov 03 Work started on a 9-month, five-phase project to replace Laughlin's aircraft parking ramp. The condition of the ramp posed an increased foreign object damage risk to 47 FTW aircraft and prevented reception of heavy-weight aircraft.
- 22 Dec 03 First personnel moved into the wing's new deployment center. The center provided the wing with a dedicated location for processing, combined work centers involved in the deployment process and provided ready access to deployment bags.
- 6 Jan 04 Department of Defense officials announced the start of the BRAC 2005 process. Wing personnel began to collect data and make inputs.
- 30 Jan 04 Club Amistad reopened following a renovation.
- 17 Feb 04 The new lodging facility, which replaced a building built over 40 years ago, opened its doors.

- 26 Apr 04 Two tornados touched down on Laughlin, but their location away from people or facilities meant little, if any, damage to infrastructure.
- 5 May 04 The center runway reopened for operations today after a nearly 6-month long project that resurfaced and improved drainage off the runway.
- 27 May 04 Wing personnel utilized the deployment center to in-process 13 security forces personnel returning from a deployment. All relevant agencies came to the center to complete necessary actions there versus having the individuals proceed around the base.
- 21 Jun 04 A microburst, with wind speeds up to 70 knots (80 miles per hour) occurred over portions of the base. While it caused no injuries, it caused damage to trees, structures and property.
- 17 Jul 04 Personnel occupied the new hazardous material pharmacy.
- 1 Nov 04 Security forces personnel completed their move into their new facility. It placed all operations under one roof and improved secure storage.
- 10 Nov 04 With no capacity to grow and an increased emphasis on fitness, the vision for a new fitness center came to a close when wing leaders conducted an opening ceremony for Laughlin's new fitness center, which housed an in-door pool and rooms sufficient for squadron-level group workouts.
- 23 Dec 04 Work started on the outer runway repair project so the contractor could complete maintenance to taxiway Golf before training started following the holiday break.
- 17 Jan 05 Contractors from Sectek-Dyncorp started pulling gate and visitor control duties (including pass, vehicle registration and identification issue). The wing entered the contract in order to reduce stress on the 47th Security Forces Squadron (47 SFS) following the withdrawal of Army National Guard support in 2004. Concerning the contractors, their abilities and assistance, Major Aeneas R. Gooding, 47 SFS commander, stated "They're well trained; most of them have previous military and/or law enforcement backgrounds and they've got good leadership."
- 16 Apr 05 Approximately 20,000 people visited Laughlin during Air Amistad 05, which included aerial demonstration by Air Force jets, civilian demonstration teams and the Thunderbirds.
- 1 May 05 Miranda Lambert, a rising country-western singer, conducted a concert at Laughlin as part of the Spirit of America Tour. Afterwards, she signed autographs.
- 1 Aug 05 Construction started on a new unaccompanied officer's quarters that will eventually house 56 students. A unique feature of the building

- is its use of a geothermal heating/cooling transfer system. Pipes well buried in the ground use the earth's constant temperature to heat or cool room air as applicable, saving on future energy consumption and costs. Depending upon the energy source, it could also lower generator plant emissions since it wouldn't have to generate as much power.
- 23 Sep 05 Seventy personnel and eight H-60 type helicopters arrived at Laughlin, either to escape Hurricane Rita's path or to preposition for anticipated recovery efforts.
- 28 Apr 06 In a typical case of cooperation between base and civilian law enforcement agencies, agents, officers and drug detection dogs conducted a general sweep on the base to check for illegal drugs. Because of the large number of civilians that work on the base, along with the proximity to the Mexican border, interaction between the various agencies, including Air Force Office of Special Investigation's Detachment 410, remains constant.
- 16 Jun 06 Seventy-five children "deployed" as part of Laughlin's Junior XL Warrior Day. A team from the Family Support Center created the event so dependent children could see firsthand what one, or both, of their parents experienced as they prepared to deploy. Events included "enlisting," going through a processing line where they were issued a desert t-shirt, identification card and dog tags. Once processed, they "deployed" to the picnic ground.
- 14 Aug 06 Congressman Henry Bonilla, Texas 23d District, visited Laughlin and cut the ribbon at the Wing Headquarters, which also contained the Air Force's first Emergency Control Center (which replaced the emergency operations center) and consolidated emergency call center (law enforcement desk and fire station) within the force protection operations center. The collocation and updating of these functions brought the wing closer to conforming to National Incident Management System criteria and consisted of the first facility with these functions in AETC, if not the Air Force.
- 11 Jan 07 Major General Irving L. Halter, Jr., Nineteenth Air Force commander, officiated at the new Single Officers' Quarters (SOQ) ribbon cutting ceremony. Army Lieutenant Colonel John, who represented the Army Corps of Engineers, also attended the ceremony. The opening of the facility allowed renovations to start on the older SOQ units
- 18 Jan 07 General William H. Looney III, AETC Commander, visited Laughlin, where he oversaw the new 86 FTS operations building dedication.
- 15 Mar 07 After serving the evening meal, the Chaparral Dining Facility closed its doors, marking the first time in over 54 years there hadn't been a dining facility on base. The closure centered over the contract costs versus the number of enlisted personnel on meal cards the facility actually serviced; in other words, it became too expensive to operate for the number of people dependent upon the facility.
- 1 Oct 07 With base housing now overseen by Pinnacle-Hunt as part of an Air Force-wide housing privatization effort, the 47th Civil Engineer Squadron's Housing Flight went away.
- 6 Dec 07 Laughlin's main gate shut down so modifications to the vehicle inspection area and placement of an emergency barricade could be undertaken. Since only the west gate could be used from 6 December on, prior to shutting the main gate for modifications civil engineers created a temporary truck inspection station to ease congestion at the gate.
- 14 Feb 08 Wing members made their first step towards the goal set out in Executive Order 2007-01-24, which required all Department of Defense installations to have at least 7.5 percent of energy consumption powered by renewable sources, when they tied in six wind turbines, mounted on the simulator building (Bldg 328), to Laughlin's power grid. This allowed any base facility to use the generators' power.
- 19 Feb 08 After an approximate 2-month closure to allow contractors to make improvements, the main gate reopened for traffic.
- 25 Dec 08 Col. John Doucette, 47 FTW commander, welcomed Airman 1st Class Remario Barley of the 47th Security Forces Squadron and his family into Laughlin's first fully renovated military family housing unit.

LAUGHLIN AFB BRIEF HISTORY

With the onset of war on 7 December 1941, the citizens of Del Rio wanted to do their part. As such, they contacted the Army and stated they believed the Del Rio area would be an ideal site for an airfield. Engineers traveled to the border town twice, and while on the second trip they hadn't ruled out locating a base by Del Rio, civic leaders didn't detect any enthusiasm either. Much to their surprise, the Army Air Force announced, in April 1942, they found a suitable area 7 miles east of Del Rio and promptly made arrangements to acquire the land. Construction started on 2 July 1942 and Army leaders announced on 28 October the base was ready for occupation.

Even though not ready for operations, the War Department activated an advanced flying training school in the August 1942 timeframe, but on 26 September 1942 changed the mission to bombardier training. By December 1942 this again switched; the station became a B-26 *Marauder* transition school. To show how much things have changed since then, when the initial cadre of instructors arrived they had to gather all the flight manuals they could find, study them, and then teach themselves to fly the *Marauder*. This proved a highly risky endeavor, as the B-26 initially proved itself a dangerous aircraft to fly because its wing loading meant a high stall speed, with resultant disasters if inexperienced crews lost an engine, especially on takeoff.



Mechanics work on a B-26 engine during a chemical defense exercise.

Army Air Force officials designated the base as Laughlin Army Air Field on 3 March 1943, while a little over 3 weeks later, on 28 March, the Army dedicated the base in honor of First Lieutenant Jack Thomas Laughlin, the first native of the Del Rio community who lost his life during World War II in an aircraft. Laughlin was a B-17 pilot killed on his first mission, over Java, on 29 January 1942.

B-26 training continued into early 1945, but by then transition training switched to the Douglas A-26 *Invader*,

which would be replacing both the B-26 and Douglas A-20 *Havoc*. While the war in Europe ended in May 1945 a need still existed for A-26 crews in the Pacific, but within days of the Japanese surrendering on 6 August 1945 the announcement came Laughlin would close within a month. The Army retained ownership of the land but leased the property to ranchers for goat grazing.

Following the end of World War II, tensions between the Soviet Union, its allies and the west grew. Russia shut down land access to Berlin in 1948, they exploded an atomic bomb in 1949 and North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950. Combined with this, the United States was a key member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, formed in 1948. As the US expanded its forces once again and supplied its European and Asian allies with equipment via the military aid program, the need arose to increase pilot training. The Air Force placed Laughlin, now an Air Force Base, on active status in May 1952 and assigned it to Air Training Command (ATC), which subsequently assigned the base to Flying Training Air Force. At the same time, ATC established the 3645th Pilot Training Wing to provide basic training in single-engine aircraft, not only for Air Force pilots, but those from allied countries as well. In October 1952, before the training started, ATC transferred the base to Crew Training Air Force and redesignated the wing as the 3645th Flying Training Wing (Fighter).

The 3645th's mission now consisted of providing jet fighter combat operations (gunnery and weapons delivery) training in the T-33, F-80 and F-84. While this brought Laughlin into the jet age, the base infrastructure remained a decade behind. The civilian personnel and commissary were located at the Val Verde county airport (located opposite Highway 90 from the base), air traffic controllers worked out of a C-47 parked on the ramp and the wind and dust played havoc, especially with people working out of the numerous tents erected until permanent facilities were completed.

In February 1953 the first class, 53-7, started training at last. However, a shortage of weapon ranges plagued the program, and in April ATC announced initial jet transition and combat training (gunnery) would continue at Laughlin and the second phase (weapons delivery) would move to Luke AFB, Arizona. This meant the transfer of all F-84s from Laughlin.

Slightly over 2 years later, in September 1955, Laughlin again came under the control of the Flying Training Air Force and switched missions with Williams AFB, Arizona. This is because Williams had ready access to weapon ranges, while Laughlin's access had become more restricted. The 3645th started basic single-engine pilot training in the T-33, with eventual designations as a Combat Crew Training Wing and Pilot Training Wing.

Changes continued. On 1 April 1957, the Air Force transferred Strategic Air Command's 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Light, from Turner AFB, Georgia to Laughlin, while Air Training Command inactivated the 3645th. The 4080th deployed aircraft and personnel around the world and provided high altitude reconnaissance and meteorological gathering (the latter for operational weather forecasting), conducted signal and electronic intelligence flights and collected air samples from nuclear above-ground tests using the Lockheed U-2A and the Martin RB-57D *Canberra*. The 4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Light, was redesignated the 4080th Strategic Wing on 15 June 1960.

Wing personnel played an important role during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Using Central Intelligence Agency U-2Cs, and operating from Florida, Major Richard S. Heyser brought back the first photographic evidence of the Soviet missile build-up in Cuba on 14 October 1962. The next morning, Major Rudolph Anderson, Jr. shot photographs of similar sites, giving the US conclusive proof of Soviet long-range missiles in Cuba. On 27 October, Major Anderson became the only casualty of enemy action during the Cuban Missile Crisis when the Cubans (or Russians) shot down his U-2 near Banes, Cuba, with an SA-1 surface-to-air missile.

In 1961, the USAF announced that Laughlin's mission would expand to include an ATC undergraduate pilot training (UPT) program. Plans called for approximately one-half of the student load at Laredo AFB, Texas, to transfer to Laughlin AFB. Air Training Command activated the 3645th Pilot Training Wing at Laughlin in October 1961 to prepare for the phase-in of students and aircraft. Beginning in October 1961, the first of 41 Cessna T-37s (used for primary flight training) arrived, the majority from Laredo AFB, and the first UPT class arrived on 20 November 1961. T-33s arrived later from numerous locations. Since that time, the pilot training mission has continued non-stop.



A 4080th pilot has his pressure suit tested prior to a flight.

Effective 15 February 1962, ATC redesignated the 3645th as the 3646th Pilot Training Wing; command of Laughlin passed from SAC to ATC on 1 April 1962 (the 4080th Strategic Wing remained as a tenant unit). In December 1962, the auxiliary airfield at Eagle Pass, Texas, opened for touch and go landings for the T-37 aircraft; this aided in reducing traffic congestion at Laughlin. Finally, on 1 April 1963, the 4080th moved to Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

Many other changes took place at Laughlin as the years went by. In February 1964, the 3646 PTW installed a permanent runway supervisory unit, the first of its kind in the Air Force. That year ATC also phased in the Northrop T-38 *Talon* (the first class entered training on 8 February 1965) to Laughlin's UPT and phased out the T-33. In 1965 ATC also introduced the Cessna T-41 *Mescalero* to UPT.

Operated from Del Rio's International Airport by civilian instructors, this training identified students in need of additional help, and reduced the number of eliminates from primary and advanced training.



Laughlin's main gate during the early to late 1960s

During the next few years there remained little change in the UPT system, other than the introduction of automated scheduling and para-sailing; the latter acquainted students with the proper handling of parachutes. The wing also adopted the continuous flow aircraft launch concept using three runways. This process spread the launching and recovering of aircraft throughout the

flying day. Probably the biggest events of the 1960s consisted of President Lyndon B. Johnson's visit on 3 December 1966 (when he traveled to Ciudad Acuna, Mexico and signed an agreement concerning the construction of the Lake Amistad Dam), followed by President Richard M. Nixon's visit on 8 September 1969 when he dedicated the dam.

On 1 September 1972, ATC inactivated the 3646th Pilot Training Wing and activated the 47th Flying Training Wing (FTW). Although the name changed, the mission did not. The ensuing years continued to bring change at Laughlin.

In 1973, T-41 training ended. Training of foreign students continued, and in September 1979 ATC integrated international student training into regular undergraduate pilot training. A flight simulator complex opened at Laughlin to enhance student training the same year, and in 1986 the simulators converted to computer generated imagery, providing cost savings and training realism. On the aircraft maintenance side, in June 1989 responsibility for upkeep of the wing's fleet switched from military to civil-service.

Changes abounded in the 1990s. Starting on 2 April 1990, the operations complex reorganized to prepare the way for specialized undergraduate pilot training (SUPT), projected for implementation at Laughlin in 1994. Another significant milestone occurred on 28 January 1991, when the 47 FTW opened a new auxiliary airfield, known as "Wizard," at Spofford, Texas. This meant the wing no longer had to lease the field at Eagle Pass. In 1993, the 47 FTW received its first T-1A *Jayhawk* in preparation for implementing SUPT.

LAUGHLIN AFB UNITS

The first new training aircraft in over 25 years, pilots bound for the airlift and tanker community would receive advanced training on this aircraft, while those for bombers and fighters continued to use the T-38. In May 1994, the first SUPT class entered Phase III, or the advanced stage, or training. Finally, in 1995 the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommended the closure of 79 military installations, including Reese AFB, Texas. This action required AETC's remaining flying training bases, to include Laughlin and the 47 FTW, to pick up Reese's training load.

As the base entered the new century, changes still occurred, but at a reduced rate. Construction of new facilities abounded, repair to the infrastructure came about and reorganization to the force structure started. Because of projected pilot shortages, the 47 FTW started to accept students from the 479th Flying Training Group, based at Moody AFB, Georgia, on 14 August 2002 for Phase III training.

Another major upgrade to the 47 FTW's fleet started on 15 November 2002 with the arrival of the first T-6A *Texan II*, which offered advances in lower operating costs and improved comfort and avionics; the T-6A fully replaced the T-37B by 1 December 2004. (Student training in the T-6A commenced in February 2003, while T-37B training ceased in November 2004.) The wing also received its first T-38C in September 2004, while the first class to train in the aircraft entered Phase III in November.

Following release and approval of the BRAC report in 2005 called for further changes at Laughlin. This included gaining a portion of the Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals (IFF) mission and moving Fixed Wing Qualification (FWQ) training from the 71 FTW at Vance AFB, Oklahoma. It also meant an end to students arriving from Moody AFB for Phase III training. Additionally, 47 FTW members started training select foreign students (Pakistani and Polish, who were already rated pilots) in the T-38 to prepare them for F-16 training in the US. In 2006, the transition year between announcement and implementation, work progressed on the IFF beddown, while two students underwent a test syllabus that prepared them for operating the MQ-1 *Predator*. The plan called for a specialized unmanned aerial system training pipeline, but the CSAF cancelled the program before the two completed MQ-1 training at Creech AFB, Nevada. Finally, in 2007 the IFF and FWQ missions started, while in 2007 and 2008 special test took place at Laughlin concerning organizational structures of select support squadrons.

Laughlin's mission has remained the same since 1962--training top quality military pilots. Beginning with the first class of undergraduate pilot training in 1955, silver wings have been pinned on over 16,000 pilots. Throughout its many changes of jurisdiction and missions, Laughlin has contributed significantly to the nation's aeronautical progress and national security, and will continue to do so in the future. *America's Airpower Starts Here.*

Army Air Forces Bombardier School, Del Rio	
3645th Pilot Training Wing	
(Later, Flying Training Wg, later Combat Crew Training Wg, later Pilot Training Wg)	23 May 1952-15 May 1957
4080th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing	
(Later, Strategic Wg)	1 Apr 1957-1 Jul 1963
2108th Communications Squadron	
(Later, 2108th Information Systems Sq, later 2108th Communications Sq)	1 Jan 1965-30 Sep 1990
3646th Pilot Training Wing	16 Oct 1961-31 Aug 1972
47th Flying Training Wing	1 Sep 1972-Present
3646th Resource Management Squadron	1 Jan 1978-1 Jul 1981

Note: Squadrons and groups assigned to the above referenced wings are not listed. The squadrons listed are done so because of their uniqueness and also because they weren't assigned to one of the above (the 2108th Communication Squadron came under 47 FTW control on 1 Oct 1990).

AIRCRAFT UTILIZED at LAUGHLIN AFB

PRINCIPAL AIRCRAFT

Martin B-26B / B-26C / AT-23B <i>Marauder</i>	1943-1945
Douglas A-26B / C <i>Invader</i>	1945
Lockheed F-80A / B / C <i>Shooting Star</i>	1953
Republic F-84D / E <i>Thunderjet</i>	1953-1954
Lockheed TF-80C / T-33A <i>Shooting Star</i>	1952-1958
Martin RB-57D <i>Canberra</i>	1957-1960
Lockheed U-2A	1957-1963
Lockheed T-33A <i>Shooting Star</i>	1961-1965
Cessna T-37B "Tweet"	1961-2004
Northrop T-38A <i>Talon</i>	1964-2005
Cessna T-41A <i>Mescalero</i>	1965-1973
Beechcraft T-1A <i>Jayhawk</i>	1993-
Beechcraft T-6A <i>Texan II</i>	2002-
Northrop T-38C <i>Talon</i>	2004-

It was common practice well into the 1960s to provide wings with various aircraft to transport parts and personnel between bases, to provide liaison to higher headquarters or act as proficiency or transition aircraft. Typically, no more than five or six would be assigned at any one time to a wing.

UNOFFICIAL LOGO



To help celebrate Laughlin's 40th anniversary, 47 FTW officials chose the XL design submitted by Mr. John Stein, a former PA Officer. The wing adopted the XL as the 47 FTW's tail markings. The design, signifying 40 in Roman numerals, also represents the wing's commitment to "XL"ence. The logo is registered with the State of Texas as a cattle brand.

47th Bombardment Group and subordinate squadron emblems from World War II



47th Bombardment Group



84th Bombardment Sq



85th Bombardment Sq



86th Bombardment Sq



97th Bombardment Sq