



History

of the



354th Fighter Wing



and

Eielson Air Force Base





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Contents

354th Fighter Wing.....	3
World War II.....	3
Myrtle Beach Air Force Base.....	3
Southeast Asia.....	4
DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM.....	5
Carl Ben Eielson.....	6
Eielson Air Force Base.....	7
Eielson Air Force Base Chronology.....	11
354th Fighter Wing Commanders.....	29
Eielson AFB Commanders.....	30
354th Fighter Wing Command Chiefs.....	31
Eielson AFB Command Chiefs.....	32
Aircraft Assigned to Eielson AFB.....	33
18th Aggressor Squadron History.....	35
353rd Combat Training Squadron History.....	37
354th Fighter Wing Emblems.....	38
354th Operations Group Emblems.....	39
354th Maintenance Group Emblems.....	40
354th Mission Support Group Emblems.....	41
354th Medical Group Emblems.....	42



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Fighter Wing

The 354th Fighter Wing has a long and illustrious history. Since its constitution in 1942, the Wing's flying units have seen action in World War II, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf. From the skies over Germany to the sands of Iraq, the 354th has performed with distinction.

World War II

Activated at Hamilton Field, California on November 15, 1942, the 354th Fighter Group (354 FG) trained in P-39 aircraft there and at other Army airfields for nearly a year. In October 1943, the 354 FG moved to Greenham Common, England.



Lt Cols Glenn Eagleston and Jack Bradley brief crews before a mission over Germany in April 1945. Eagleston scored 18.5 aerial victories during the war and Bradley scored 15.

The first group to use the new P-51 Mustang, the 354 FG commenced combat action in December 1943. From then through the end of the war, the Pioneer Mustang Group wreaked havoc on the German Luftwaffe; altogether, pilots of the 354 FG scored 599.25 combat victories. Lieutenant Colonel Glenn Eagleston was the leading ace, downing 18.5 aircraft. For a four-month period in late 1944 and early 1945, the 354 FG flew P-47s and switched its focus from escort and air superiority to fighter-bomber missions, strafing and dive-bombing enemy targets in Belgium, France, and Holland. Its efforts during the war earned the 354 FG two Distinguished Unit Citations and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm. After

VE-Day, the group served with the army of occupation until February 1946 when it was transferred back to the United States and inactivated.

Myrtle Beach Air Force Base

On September 26, 1956, the Air Force resurrected the unit as the 354th Fighter-Day Wing and activated it on November 19, 1956 at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina. Colonel Francis S. Gabreski became the wing's first commander. The wing was redesignated the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing (354 TFW) on July 1, 1958.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



On October 18, 1957, the 354 FW emblem, which is still in use today, was approved. The blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations, and yellow to the sun and excellence of personnel in assigned tasks. The diagonal stripes represent the components of the Wing. They symbolize a singleness of purpose to accomplish the Wing's mission – supremacy in the air. The red Pegasus is indicative of the fleetness and swift striking power of the Wing in battle. The crossed swords represent the tenacity, aggressiveness, and singular determination of the Wing for victory in combat. They also indicate preparedness, implying the Wing is ready to accomplish the objective.



Colonel Francis S. Gabreski
The first 354th TFW Commander
November 19, 1956 – July 12, 1960

Initially flying RF-80 aircraft, and by 1959 F-100 Super Sabers, the 354 TFW remained at Myrtle Beach until mid-1968. During that span, the wing's flying units deployed to the Dominican Republic for that country's crisis in 1965 and to Japan and Spain as replacement units for those involved in Vietnam. In 1966, one of its units deployed to South Vietnam, leaving the 354 TFW with a single flying squadron, the 355th Tactical Fighter Squadron, which left for Southeast Asia in April 1968.

From mid-1968 until June 1970, the 354 TFW served at Kunsan AB, South Korea, as host-wing for rotating Air National Guard F-4 squadrons. It returned without personnel or equipment to Myrtle Beach on June 15, 1970, charged with combat crew training in T-33s and with becoming proficient in A-7 aircraft.

Southeast Asia

Two years later, in 1972, the wing split into rear and advance echelons, the latter commencing combat operations from Thailand in October 1972. The 354 TFW earned the Presidential Unit Citation for its service from October 1972 through April 1973. It recombined at Myrtle Beach in 1974.



**354 FW A-7Ds on the flight line at Korat AB,
Thailand**



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



DESERT SHIELD/STORM

Three years after returning from Vietnam, the 354 TFW converted to A-10 aircraft in 1977. For over a decade it conducted routine A-10 training missions, to include numerous deployments and exercises. That routine came to an abrupt end in August



Capt Geoff (Left) and Capt Johnson (right)

1990 when the 354 TFW deployed as one of the first units in the Persian Gulf to support Operation DESERT SHIELD. When Operation DESERT STORM's air war began in January 1991, wing pilots initially flew against early-warning radar and Scud missile sites. The 354 TFW also flew search and rescue missions; Captain Paul Johnson earned the Air Force Cross when he and Captain Randy Goff, also of the 354 TFW, rescued a downed Navy pilot 200 miles inside Iraq. As the conflict evolved, the wing turned its attention to deep interdiction missions and the Iraqi Republican Guard. Finally, when the ground war commenced in late February, the 354 TFW performed the mission it had been trained to do before the war - close air support.

By any account, the devastation was considerable. By the end of the conflict, A-10s throughout the theater destroyed over 950 tanks, 900 artillery pieces, and two helicopters in air-to-air combat. Despite this rout, the victory was not without cost to the wing. Captain Steve Phyllis died while protecting his downed wingman, Lieutenant Bob Sweet. Later captured by the Iraqis, Sweet was repatriated after the war.

The 354 TFW returned home from the Gulf in March 1991, and was redesignated the 354th Fighter Wing (354 FW) in October of that year. Shortly after returning from DESERT STORM personnel learned that due to a recent Base Realignment and Closure review Myrtle Beach was on the closure list. Two years to the month after returning from war the 354 FW inactivated and the base closed; however, the wing would not remain inactive for long.

Less than five months later, on August 20, 1993, the 354 FW replaced the 343d Wing at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Air Force Chief of Staff General Merrill McPeak ordered the change as part of a service-wide effort to preserve the lineage of the Air Force's most honored wings.



Colonel Sandy Sharp, 354 TFW Commander leads the wing out as they return to Myrtle Beach after DESERT STORM



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Carl Ben Eielson



Carl Ben Eielson

Born in Hatton, North Dakota in 1897, Eielson served in World War I with the US Army Signal Corps' aviation section. A month before he was to depart for France, the war ended. He earned Second Lieutenant bars in March 1919, and was discharged the same day.

For several years thereafter, Eielson alternated between barnstorming and college life. He dropped both, temporarily it turned out, and in 1922 moved to Fairbanks to teach high school. Aviation continued to beckon, and that same year he became the sole pilot for the Farthest North Aviation Company, an enterprise he and several local businessmen founded. After obtaining a surplus Army aircraft in the United States, Eielson soon began making regular commercial flights from Fairbanks. His cargo included supplies, mail, and passengers.

In 1924, the company received a postal contract from the government. After a crash, the contract was terminated and Eielson returned to military service. He was stationed at Langley Field, Virginia for most of 1925 before moving back to North Dakota and working as a bond salesman.

Arctic aviator Hubert Wilkins gave the erstwhile aviator another chance in late 1925, when he asked Eielson to pilot an expedition across the North Pole. After two unsuccessful attempts in 1926 and 1927, the pair succeeded in 1928, flying from Barrow, Alaska to Spitsbergen Island north of Norway. It was the first flight from North America to Europe over the North Pole. As such, it brought Eielson lasting fame. The feat earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross and the 1928 Harmon Trophy for the greatest aviation exploit of the year. Later in 1928, Eielson would also fly Antarctic routes with Wilkins.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Eielson returned to Fairbanks in early 1929 and helped found Alaska Airways Incorporated. On November 9, 1929, at the age of 32, Carl Ben Eielson along with his mechanic Earl Borland died while flying across the Bering Strait to Siberia in an attempt to rescue both crew and cargo of the ice-bound ship, the Nanuk. An international team of rescuers did not locate the wreckage until January 1930. Eielson is buried in Hatton, North Dakota.

Eielson Air Force Base



26-Mile Field, circa 1945

On June 7, 1943, the Western Defense Command ordered construction of a new airfield near present-day Ft Wainwright, then an Army airfield named after Major Arthur Ladd. Because of its hazard-free approaches and relatively flat terrain, surveyor reports indicated a site a little more than twenty miles southeast of Ladd Field to be the best in the vicinity for military aviation. The field would become known as “Mile 26” because of its proximity to a US Army Signal Corps telegraph station and a Richardson Highway milepost marker using the same designation.

A month later, contractors and civilian crews from Ladd Field started laying out the new airfield. Actual construction began on August 25, 1943. Crews built two parallel runways, 165 feet across and 6625 feet long. Other facilities included an operations building, housing for 108 officer and 330 enlisted personnel, and a ten-bed dispensary. The garrison and airfield totaled about 600 acres. Completed on October 17, 1944, the 14-month project cost approximately eight million dollars.

Operational uses of Mile 26 were few. Ladd Field served as the debarkation point for the Alaska-Siberia Ferry Route of the Lend-Lease program and was the hub of activity. Lend-Lease aircraft would occasionally land at Mile 26, but there are no indications any Lend-Lease aircraft ever used the airfield to take off for Russia. Then when the war ended Mile 26 closed.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



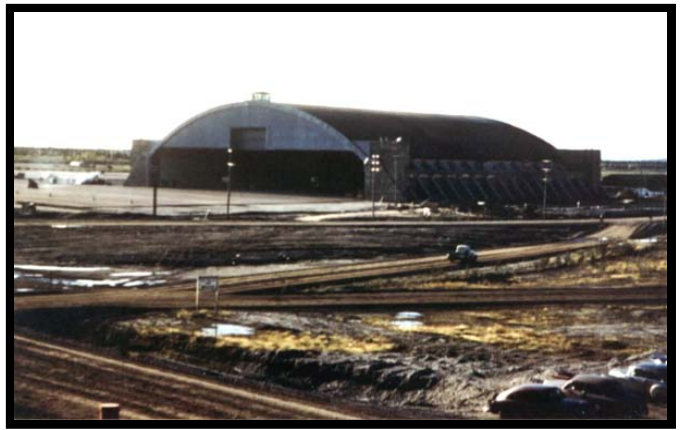
The base reopened in September 1946, once again as a satellite of Ladd Field. A year later, however, it moved from under the shadow of Ladd Field when the Alaskan Air Command assumed organizational control. Also in the fall of 1947, Colonel Jerome B. McCauley assumed duties as commander. The primary missions of Mile 26 were to support Arctic training for USAF tactical and strategic units, as well as defend the base itself.



5010 ABW emblem (first approved on March 5, 1959)

Headquarters USAF General Order 2, dated January 13, 1948, redesignated Mile 26 as Eielson Air Force Base. Slightly more than three months later, on April 1, the Eielson AFB Wing (Base Complement) was formed. The host-unit subsequently would be dubbed the Eielson AFB Bomb Wing, and finally, in January 1949, the 5010th Wing. Colonel John L. Nedwed, the third commander of the base since it fell under Alaskan Air Command fifteen months before, became the first to head the 5010th. For the next 34 years, the 5010th was alternately known as the Wing, Composite Wing, Air Base Wing, and lastly, Combat Support Group, served as host-unit at Eielson.

Construction boomed at Eielson during the 1950s. Many of the facilities still in use today were built at that time - Amber Hall, the Thunderdome, the old Base Exchange, Commissary, Gymnasium, Theater, some of the schools, and many of the dormitories, just to name a few.



Thunderdome under construction (1951 – 1954)

In July 1960, the Strategic Air Command stationed the 4157th Combat Support Group (later Strategic Wing) at Eielson. The 6th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (6 SRW) replaced the 4157 SW in March 1967 and became responsible for all KC- and RC-135 operations. The 6 SRW remained at Eielson AFB until 1992. Other significant tenant units at the base included the 58th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (WRS) "Pole Vaulters" and the 65th Fighter Squadron of World War II fame.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



343 Tactical Fighter Wing emblem

A new chapter for the base began October 1, 1981 when the 343d Composite Wing replaced the 5010th as Eielson's host unit. Flying squadrons assigned to the new wing included the 25th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) and the 18th Fighter Squadron (18 FS). The 25 TASS, at Eielson since 1971, flew O-2A and OV-10 aircraft until its inactivation in 1989; the newly assigned 18 FS operated A-10s until converting to F-16s in 1991.

In 1984, the 343d Composite Wing was redesignated a Tactical Fighter Wing. Seven years later, in 1991, it was redesignated as the 343d Wing. Also that year, the 343d gained a second flying unit, the 11th Tactical Air Support Squadron 11 TASS), which flew OA-10s.

On August 20, 1993 the 354th Fighter Wing (354 FW) replaced the 343d Wing. No personnel or equipment were affected by the change. Prior to its deactivation, the 343d was the oldest surviving air combat unit in Alaska, with a lineage dating back to the Aleutian Campaign. The 18 FS, whose history also dated back to World War II, remained active, but the 355th Fighter Squadron replaced the 11 TASS. Also changing names was the 3rd Fighter Training Squadron, which became the 353rd Fighter Squadron (later Combat Training Squadron). The designation change was due to the fact that the 353 FS and 355 FS had long associations with Eielson's new host unit.



Joint United States, Canadian, and Russian Exercise SAREX 94

Within the first year of its arrival the 354 FW hosted an arctic combat search and rescue exercise between the United States, Canada, and Russia. Ironically, these were the same countries that took part in the search and recovery efforts following the fatal crash of Carl Ben Eielson and his mechanic, Earl Borland, in 1930 as they were attempting to rescue the crew and cargo of the stranded Nanuk.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



168 Air Refueling Wing emblem

Another vital part to the mission of Eielson involves the 168th Air Refueling Wing (168 ARW), which is currently responsible for all KC-135 operations. The 168 ARW traces its roots back to the 437th Bombardment Squadron (Medium), originally activated at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, in June of 1942. The 437th served in the European and Pacific theaters during World War II, earning the French Croix de Guerre (with Palm) for action over Italy and France during April-June 1944, Presidential Unit Citations for operations over Rome and Florence in 1944, and nine combat streamers for campaigns in which it flew. In May 1946, the 437th was redesignated as the 168th Bombardment Squadron (Light) and assigned to the Illinois Air National Guard. Over the next decade the unit was redesignated several times as it received various types of aircraft. In May 1958, the 168th's aircraft and personnel were assigned to other units and the unit was inactivated. Nearly thirty years later, in 1986, the unit was reactivated as the 168th Air Refueling Squadron and assigned to the Alaska Air National Guard at Eielson AFB. In 1990 it was redesignated as a group and in 1996 the unit became the 168th Air Refueling Wing.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Eielson AFB Chronology

June 11, 1944 – An L-5 Sentinel was the first aircraft to land at Mile 26.

August 1947 – Although his main objective was a look at Ladd Field, General Hap Arnold toured Mile 26 in anticipation of the arrival of operational units.

March 6, 1949 – The 375th Reconnaissance Squadron was the first operational squadron assigned to Eielson AFB.



Aircraft assigned to the 58 WRS

February 21, 1951 – The 58th Reconnaissance Squadron (Medium, Weather) replaced the 375th. The unit earned the nickname “Pole Vaulters” for their frequent trips over the North Pole. The unit primarily flew WB-29 aircraft however, it transitioned to WB-50 aircraft shortly before it inactivated in 1958.

September 7, 1951 – Three people died in a C-47 crash about five miles southeast of the base. It was the first fatal accident involving an aircraft assigned to Eielson.

January 11, 1952 – A C-47 crashed 40 miles southeast of Ft. Yukon village. The crash site was not found until July 1952. Evidence indicated at least two of the crewmembers survived the crash, but perished in the bitter cold. Captain Ernie Walker, a Special Services officer, was on board the aircraft. In November 1953, Eielson’s newly built theater was dedicated in his honor.



The Ernie Walker Theater

January 23, 1952 – Eielson AFB published its first base newspaper and held a base wide contest to name it. Two weeks later, First Lieutenant Hal Pressman won the contest and the newspaper was named “Mile 26 Post.” Over the years the name has changed to The Eielson Friendly Times, The Eielson Times, The Goldpanner, The Arctic Sentry, and to its current name The Polar Press.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



January 25, 1952 – What was believed to be the biggest single dormitory facility in the Air Force opened. Originally dubbed the 750-man barracks, the building would later be known as Ptarmigan Hall. In 1970, it was renamed Amber Hall in honor of the nineteen member crew of an RC-135, call sign Rivet Amber, which crashed the previous year in the Bearing Sea. For many years the facility served as a dormitory and office spaces but today it is the home of the 354 FW headquarters.



750-man barracks under construction (Amber Hall)



Lt Jean Mills

July 1952 – Second Lieutenant Jean Mills was Eielson's first Woman in the Air Force (WAF). Lt Mills was assigned to the Food Services Squadron while at Eielson AFB.

December 12, 1952 – Eielson AFB officials approved plans to rename Boundary and First Avenues as Broadway and Flightline Avenues, respectively. Many other streets assumed the names we know them by today, including Kodiak, Arctic, Wabash, and Central.

May 29, 1954 – Former 8th Air Force Commander and World War II hero General Jimmy Doolittle visited Eielson.

September 25, 1953 – A 58 WRS WB-29 crashed just after takeoff two miles north of the base. Captain Charles F. Baker, a weather observer assigned to the unit, was the only fatality.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



August 30, 1954 – Secretary of the Air Force Harold Talbott dedicated the Baker Field House. Home to a well-equipped gymnasium and a variety of other offices, the \$2.37 million facility was named for Captain Charles F. Baker.

August 1954 – The Eielson “Outlaws” - the name given to all base teams competing in downtown leagues - jumped out to a two-games-to-none lead against the Fairbanks Malamute-Redcaps, then dropped three straight to lose the North of the Range baseball league “World Series.” The Outlaw’s losses included two 9-8, extra inning decisions in games three and four. After a hiatus of many years, Eielson fielded an extra-mural baseball team again in 1995 - and again finished second in the post-season tournament.

January 1955 – During Operation Snowbird, First Lieutenant William Caffrey lost the canopy from his F-86 and his helmet at 32,000 feet. Still 100 miles from base, the 720th Fighter-Bomber Squadron pilot descended until he blacked out from lack of oxygen. After recovering consciousness, the radio-less flyer regained control of the aircraft, only to realize he didn’t know where he was. He eventually found himself near Eielson, and landed the aircraft uneventfully. He suffered only frostbite on his ears and hands.

November 29, 1955 – An F-84 crashed into Eielson family housing, killing fourteen. Seven of the victims were children, including the first triplet’s known to be born in the Fairbanks area. Forty years later, the base dedicated its new Child Development Center to those children.

December 1955—January 1956 – An F-100 and B-52 arrived for cold weather testing. In September 1956, an RB-47 arrived for a 190-day cold weather test. As the Air Force’s northern-most base (except for Ladd), Eielson would host a number of tests over the coming years, most recently the C-17 in 1994 and B-2 in 1996.



F-84 crash, November 1955

April 2, 1956 – Eielson AFB acquired two L-20 Beavers from Ladd Field to support operations at the Blair Lakes bombing range.

August 31, 1956 – A 58th Reconnaissance Squadron WB-50, recently dubbed the “Golden Heart” in honor of the city of Fairbanks, crashed into the Susitna River near Willow. All eleven aboard perished.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



June 29, 1956 – Commander of Strategic Air Command General Curtis LeMay toured Eielson.

December 2, 1956 – The Bob Hope Christmas show performed at the base. Joining Hope were Mickey Mantle, Mitzi Gaynor, Ginger Rogers, Jane Powell, and Les Brown, among others. Hope performed at Eielson two more times throughout the 1950s.

Jan 17, 1957 – A WB-50 assigned to the 58th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron crashed shortly after takeoff approximately three miles north of Eielson AFB. All 12 crewmembers were killed.



Original Eielson monument at the main gate

July 20, 1957 – Sixty years after his birth, Air Force officials, community and state dignitaries, and members of Carl Ben Eielson's family gathered at the base to dedicate a memorial to the fallen Arctic pilot. Originally located just outside the main gate, the memorial's present location is at Heritage Park.

September 9, 1958 – While flying as a relief navigator aboard an SC-47, Major Charles Pennell of Eielson's 11th Aviation Depot Squadron died in a crash at Elmendorf. Pennell Elementary School would later be named after him.

September 11, 1958 – Screen star Mary Martin entertained Eielson personnel. Three months later, the Harlem Globetrotters performed.

February 1, 1959 – Captain Perry Amidon, suspecting the aircraft he was in to be out of control, ejected from the B-58 Hustler at 24,000 feet. The aircraft's pilot thought otherwise however, and landed the aircraft at Eielson a few minutes later. The uninjured Captain Amidon, flew back to base about an hour later in a helicopter.



Pennell Elementary under construction

September 18, 1959 – The base dedicated Taylor Junior High School in honor of Airman Second Class Shelby C. Taylor, who died trying to free a co-worker from a power line at Quarry and Ski Lodge Roads. His work-mate was also killed.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



February 27, 1963 – Airman Second Class and air policeman Roy L. Hursey was killed at his post when a KC-135 from Castle Air Force base plowed through the entry control building and exploded. Air Force officials later speculated that had the explosion taken place fifty feet to either side of the building, it would not have been seriously damaged. The Eielson AFB Main Gate would later be named in honor of A2C Hursey.



Hursey Gate dedication

April 21, 1964 – A WB-47 belonging to Detachment 1 of the 55th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron crashed on takeoff. Three of the five crewmembers died in the accident.

September 30, 1965 – An Eielson helicopter crew rescued two Baptist ministers after their light plane crashed between Nome and Moses Point. Throughout the 1960s, Eielson crews averaged several rescues each year.

November 17, 1967 – The quick response of the 5010th Combat Support Group to the Chena River flood (12–21 August 1967) and the subsequent help provided to Fairbanks and other communities led to the 5010th's third Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



June 5, 1969 – An RC-135, call sign Rivet Amber, assigned to Eielson crashed in the Bering Sea minutes after leaving Shemya Air Force Base in the Aleutian Islands. Nineteen crewmembers died. Amber Hall, the headquarters building at Eielson, was named in honor of the crew a year later.



An RC-135 on take off



Eielson Memorial rededication

August 23, 1969 – Air Force officials, community and state dignitaries, and family members gathered to dedicate the re-built monument to Ben Eielson. The original monument was destroyed by the 1963 crash, which killed A2C Hursey. Among the guests at the rededication ceremony was Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens, who provided the keynote speech.

July 8, 1971 – When Lieutenant Colonel James O. Swanson became commander of the reincarnated 25th Tactical Air Support Squadron, he had a borrowed desk, a telephone, and a promise for nine aircraft and accompanying personnel. It took two months to get the first O-2A “Mosquito,” and the unit’s complement of 14 officers and eight NCOs would not be complete until June 1972. Despite the inauspicious beginning, the arrival of the 25th marked a significant addition to the mission of Eielson, that of air strike control and liaison for ground units stationed in Alaska.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



March 31, 1974 – Captain Carol E. Primson became commander of the newly formed Women in the Air Force Squadron Section. At the time, Eielson was home to 18 female personnel.

June 4, 1974 – The rock group KISS performed at the Baker Field House. The London-based group Savoy Brown headlined the event, alternately described as the area’s “first big taste of the multi-million dollar rock industry” and “the most spectacular concert ever held in Alaska.”

August 16, 1974 – The Comptroller released a study noting a twenty to thirty percent increase in housing costs in the Fairbanks area since pipeline construction began in May 1973. The report anticipated a continuing rise through 1977, when the pipeline was scheduled to be complete.

September 4, 1974 – Eielson and Elmendorf began receiving mail through regular US Mail service. Previously, the Alaskan bases used military post offices (APOs).

December 9, 1974 – An O-2A, assigned to the 25th Tactical Air Support Squadron at Eielson AFB, crashed while on a routine training mission on the Fort Greeley training area near Delta Junction. The pilot and co-pilot were both killed.



Eielson AFB O-2A

March 9, 1975 – A plan to consolidate the officer and enlisted clubs was voted down by members of both clubs. Twenty years later, fiscal realities led to the clubs’ merger at the site of the officer’s club.

May 1975 – Workers began construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System on Eielson AFB.



A portion of the Trans-Alaska pipeline that runs through Eielson AFB under construction



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



November 29, 1975 – President Gerald R. Ford stopped at Eielson en route to China. Accompanied by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Ford was only the second President to visit Interior Alaska and the first to tour Eielson.

December 7, 1975 – All crewmembers died when a KC-135 assigned to Plattsburgh AFB in New York crashed after takeoff from Eielson.

January 15, 1976 – Air Force General George S. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Eielson. Brown was observing “Jack Frost ‘76,” an exercise featuring over 14,000 personnel from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and National Guard.

June 18—19, 1976 – Eielson hosted the 1976 Alaska Special Olympics.

February 1977 – Cold weather testing of the A-10 aircraft took place through the end of the month. As part of the test, the aircraft participated in the “Jack Frost” exercise also hosted by the base.

July 8, 1977 – Eielson firefighting, medical, and support personnel responded quickly to explosions and a subsequent fire at Alaska Pipeline Pump Station 8.

January 1979 – The base instituted a policy requiring that personnel reimburse the government for parkas lost through “simple negligence,” such as leaving it unsecured on a chair or rack. Some personnel took to chaining and padlocking their parkas to coat racks.

January 12, 1979 – Five-hundred Eielson personnel braved sub-zero temperatures to view the Air Force’ newest aircraft, the as yet unnamed F-16, here for cold weather testing.



**Paul W. Airey – First Chief
Master Sergeant of the USAF**

March 27, 1979 – Paul Airey, the first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, spoke at the chartering ceremony for the Last Frontier chapter of the Air Force Sergeant’s Association.

March 15, 1981 – An RC-135 assigned to the 6th Strategic Wing crashed while attempting to land at Shemya Air Force Station, Alaska. Six crewmembers died as result of the crash.

October 1, 1981 – The 343d Composite Wing replaced the 5010th Combat Support Group as Eielson’s host unit.

February 27, 1985 – An RC-135 belonging to Eielson’s 6th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing crashed near Valdez, killing all three aboard. Exactly one month later, a 25th TASS pilot died while flying an Air Warrior mission in California.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



October 25, 1986 – The 168th Air Refueling Squadron of the Alaska Air National Guard activated at Eielson. Later elevated to Wing status, the 168th flew KC-135 aircraft. As the only Arctic-based tanker group in PACAF, the 168th transfers more fuel than any other ANG refueling unit and is a critical component for all Eielson AFB operations and exercises. In 1994, the 168th boasted over 700 full and part time guardsmen. Although the 168th has only been active since 1986, KC-135s have been assigned to Eielson AFB for over 35 years.



KC-135s on the Eielson AFB flight line

November 21, 1988 – PACAF Commander General Merrill A. McPeak (Air Force Chief of Staff a few years later) visited Eielson AFB. Ironically, one of the policies he would implement few years later during his tenure as CSAF would impact Eielson's host unit.

June 17—28, 1991 – Pacific Air Forces premier flying training exercise, COPE THUNDER, came to Eielson. The sudden eruption of Mt Pinatubo on Luzon Island in the Philippines prompted the move. The subsequent closing of Clark AB, COPE THUNDER's home since 1976, brought the exercise to Alaska permanently.



Aircraft on the Eielson AFB flight line for COPE THUNDER



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



August 20, 1993 – The 354th Fighter Wing became the host unit at Eielson AFB when the 343d Wing inactivated. General McPeak ordered the change as part of a service-wide effort to preserve the lineage of the Air Force’s most honored wings.

March 20—26, 1994 – Eielson hosted Arctic SAREX 94, a joint search-and-rescue exercise featuring US, Canadian, and Russian personnel. The first exercise of its kind in the US, Arctic SAREX tested the interoperability of the participating search and rescue units, as well as established military-to-military contacts among the three countries.

July 15, 1994 – Colonel Ronald E. Keys was promoted to Brigadier General, becoming the first of his rank to command Eielson AFB.

April 1995 – Eielson AFB leadership dedicated its newly constructed Child Development Center in honor of the seven children that died on November 29, 1955 when an F-84 crashed into military family housing.



Moose Lake section of housing

February 1996 – Eielson took possession of the first twelve Moose Lake Section “801” military family housing units. In October, French Creek units for enlisted members began to open up. Section 801 housing was privately owned, then leased back to the government. The first 801 housing units in the Air Force were Eielson’s “Cool Homes,” constructed in 1986; the Moose Lake and French Creek homes were the last constructed under the provisions of Section 801 legislation.



B-2 at Eielson for cold weather testing

March 1996 – Eielson hosted a B-2 for cold weather testing. The aircraft returned to Eielson in July for a ceremony where it received its name “The Spirit of Alaska.”

January—March 1997 – The 355th Fighter Squadron deployed to Aviano Air Base, Italy to support Operation DECISIVE EDGE, the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. The deployment marked the first time an Eielson-based fighter unit deployed to a combat environment.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



October—December 1998 – The wing deployed both flying squadrons to Al Jaber AB, Kuwait to support Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. While deployed, the 355 FS also participated in Operation DESERT FOX, becoming the first Alaska-based unit to engage enemy targets since World War II.

March 1999 – Delegations from Japan and the Russian Far East Military district visited Eielson to observe Exercise NORTHERN EDGE activities.

August—December 1999 – The 355 FS deployed to Southwest Asia for a 90-day rotation in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.

July 20, 2000 – Eielson AFB celebrated the grand opening of Heritage Park. Members of the Iceman Team also celebrated the 103rd anniversary of the birth of its namesake, Carl Ben Eielson.

September—December 2000 – Aircraft and personnel from the 18 FS deployed to Incirlik AB, Turkey in support of Operation NORTHERN WATCH.

July 25, 2001 – While participating in a COPE THUNDER exercise a Royal Air Force Jaguar crashed east of Eielson in the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, killing the pilot.

December 2001—March 2002 – The 18th Fighter Squadron deployed to Al Jaber AB, Kuwait in support of Operations SOUTHERN WATCH, ENDURING FREEDOM, and ANACONDA. During the 90-day deployment, the 18 FS generated more than 2,800 flying hours, approximately 790 sorties and maintained a 110 hourly UTE rate, 350% the normal rate. They accomplished this feat in support of a 24-hour flying window. Their missions were a mix of combat, combat support, and training which ranged from day/day, day/night, and night/night sorties.



The men and women of the 354 FW deployed in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



One mission in particular took place in the Shah-i-kot valley of Afghanistan in the early morning hours of March 4. Lt Col Burt Bartley, 18 FS Commander, and his wingman Capt Andrew Lipina, provided Combat Search and Rescue support for a downed MH-47E Chinook on Robert's Ridge (named in honor of Petty Officer First Class Neil Roberts; a Navy SEAL who had earlier fallen from the helicopter). For their efforts that day, Lt Col Bartley was later awarded The Silver Star and Capt Lipina was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross.

December 2001—March 2002 – The 355th Fighter Squadron along with 12 of their A-10s and approximately 130 personnel also deployed to Al Jaber AB, Kuwait in support of AEF taskings. During their three month deployment, the Eielson A-10s flew more than 600 sorties and logged more than 1,580 hours flying combat and combat support missions in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. Personnel and aircraft redeployed to Eielson on March 1, 2002.

March 13—May 3, 2003 – The 18 FS deployed six F-16s and approximately 100 support personnel to Andersen AFB, Guam to participate in homeland security measures in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

March 28, 2003 – Relatives of Carl Ben Eielson, niece Eileen Oscking Eielson Mork along with her two daughters, toured the base. The family donated several copies of news papers dating back to the late 1920 pertaining to their uncles' accomplishments. The articles are maintained in the 354 FW History Office archives.

September 26, 2003 – The Joint Mobility Center (JMC) officially opened.

February 25, 2004 – At approximately 2030, an A-10 aircraft crashed near the Chena Flood Control Project, killing the pilot Capt Jonathan 'Cosmo' Scheer. A memorial service was held on March 1 at the base Chapel.

March 26—October 1 2004 – The 355 FS deployed to Bagram AB, Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. During the deployment, the A-10s flew more than 2,000 sorties and logged more than 7,500 flying hours. The unit dropped approximately 40 bombs, fired in excess of 13,000 rounds of 30 mm ammunition, and expended 70 rockets.



First Air Force assigned Stryker Vehicle

May 5, 2005 – In a ceremony at Fort Polk, Louisiana, the 3 ASOS became the first Air Force unit to receive Army Stryker vehicles. According to Russell Smith, 3 ASOS Commander, "This first ever joint effort between the two services will help serve the Army better by protecting the men and women who guide reconnaissance and attack aircraft during combat operations." The 3 ASOS later became the 16 ASOS realigning under 1 ASOG.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



May 13, 2005 – The Secretary of Defense released the proposed Base Realignment and Closure Committee (BRAC) recommendations and Eielson AFB was on the list. The original recommendation called for Eielson to be drawn down to a warm status, nearly to the point of closure. However, the final decision came later in the year and it called for the departure of all the A-10s. Shortly thereafter, the 354 FW learned of its new mission, RED FLAG–Alaska, and the 18 FS learned that they would be converting to F-16 Aggressors over the next few years.

August 14, 2005 – Members of the 3 ASOS, along with 3,000 Army personnel assigned to the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team participated in a deployment ceremony held at Fort Wainwright. On August 14, twenty 3 ASOS personnel, along with their Stryker vehicles, deployed along side their Army brethren in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The Air Force members were expected to deploy in two separate rotations for six months at a time. On the other hand, the Army soldiers deployed for the entire year. In 2006, while many of the 172 SBCT personnel were preparing to re-deploy back to Alaska, they were extended in Iraq for an additional four months, along with the second rotation of 3 ASOS personnel. The unit was then re-located to the Baghdad area – a much more dangerous part of Iraq.)

January—April 2006 – The 355 FS deployed to Bagram AB, Afghanistan in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The unit flew more than 1,500 combat sorties and 5,000 hours in the skies over Afghanistan. This marked the unit's last A-10 combat deployment.



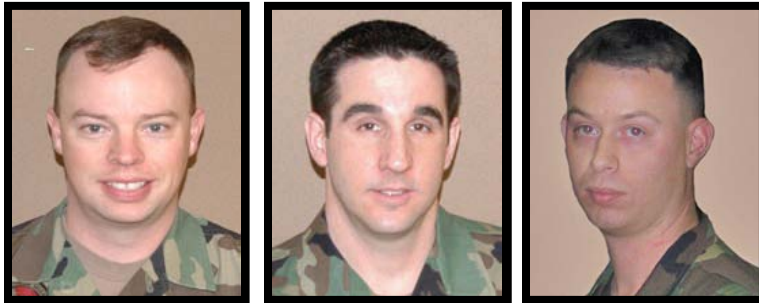
354 FW Warriors deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



February 15, 2006 – Two 355 FS A/OA-10 aircraft departed Eielson enroute to Hill AFB, Utah for scheduled depot level maintenance. A short time later the wing learned that these aircraft would not return to Eielson due to Base Realignment and Closure actions announced prior. This action marked the beginning of the A/OA-10 departure from Eielson AFB.



February 17, 2006 – Three Explosive Ordnance Disposal airmen assigned to the 354th Civil Engineer Squadron earned Bronze Stars for their outstanding service during their recent deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

EOD Bronze Star recipients from left to right:
TSgt Steven Hallenbeck, TSgt Arin Finch, and SSgt Robert Weston

March 31, 2006 – The CSAF General Moseley announced COPE THUNDER exercises held in Alaska will be renamed and enhanced to provide complementary training on the same level as the current RED FLAG exercises held at Nellis AFB, Nevada. With that said, the exercises held in Alaska would be referred to as RED FLAG-Alaska (RF-A) and those in Nevada would be called RED FLAG-Nellis (RF-N).



April 24—May 5, 2006 – The first RED FLAG-Alaska was held.

August 21, 2006 – MSgt Brad Clemmons, assigned to the 354 CES as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Craftsman, was killed in action while deployed in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. MSgt Clemmons was a member of a transportation convoy traveling to Taji, Iraq, when the vehicle he was a passenger in struck an improvised explosive device. A memorial service was held in the Eielson base theater on August 24.



Eielson AFB's new Hursey Gate

September 29, 2006 – The new main gate opened during the early morning hours. The new gate kept the same name as its predecessor, Hursey Gate, named in honor Airman Second Class Roy Hursey who was killed in 1963 when a KC-135 exploded and crashed in the vicinity of the gate



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



January 13, 2007 – Eielson’s Icemen hockey team defeated the Fort Wainwright Grizzlies with a score of 8-6 to capture the 11th Annual Commander’s Cup Trophy.

April 23, 2007 – Members from the 354th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron dedicated their unit’s conference room in honor of Major Jonathan “Cosmo” Sheer an A-10 pilot who died while flying a training mission in 2004. Major Sheer’s parents were in attendance for the dedication ceremony.

May 15, 2007 – After more than 50 years of spiritual service to Eielson, the demolition of the base chapel began. Although it was a sad day to many, construction would soon begin on the new chapel, a model for chapel design Air Force wide, located just up Central Avenue from the old one. The space created by this demolition was used for the construction of the new Base Exchange – a project completed in February 2009.



Demolition of the Eielson AFB Chapel

July 12—27, 2007 – RED FLAG-Alaska 07-3 included an extensive international presence from Japan, Turkey, Spain, Thailand, NATO, Mongolia and Russia. Many firsts occurred during this RF-A to included the first C-17 participation, the first 65 AGRS (F15C) participation, the largest number of global power sorties, and the first operational Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS) data link with Japanese E-767.



Lt Col Quentin “Q-Tip” Rideout

July 31, 2007 – Lt Col Quentin “Q-Tip” Rideout, 355th Fighter Squadron Commander, flew the last operational A-10 sortie at Eielson AFB.



Capt Dale Stark signals from his aircraft prior to Eielson’s final A-10 departure

August 15, 2007 – The last three A-10 aircraft departed Eielson. Lt Col Kevin Blanchard flew 81-0944, Capt Sean Hall flew 79-0172, and Capt Dale Stark flew 80-0259. Although originally scheduled to depart at 0700, the aircraft were delayed due to foggy conditions. Eielson’s final 3 A-10s lifted off the runway for the final time at 0830 hours.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



October 1, 2007 – The 18th Fighter Squadron was officially redesignated as the 18th Aggressor Squadron. This marked the beginning of a new chapter in Eielson history, depicted in the painting below by Warren Neary titled *The First Iceman Aggressor*.



The First Iceman Aggressor

October 11—14, 2007 – Eielson AFB history was made with the first ever combined Air National Guard and Active Duty Air Force combined Operational Readiness Exercise. The 354th Fighter Wing and the 168th Air Refueling Wing combined over 3,000 personnel to exercises its war fighting ability moving both wings closer to the Air Force’s Total Force Integration concept.

November 5—19, 2007 – Eielson provided support to an Air Force Material Command F-22A “Raptor” for cold-weather breaking tests. Pilots, maintenance, and support personnel from Edwards AFB, California capitalized on Eielson’s colder climate to conduct break tests under various Runway Condition Readings to ensure safe operations for F-22’s assigned to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska prior to winter operations.



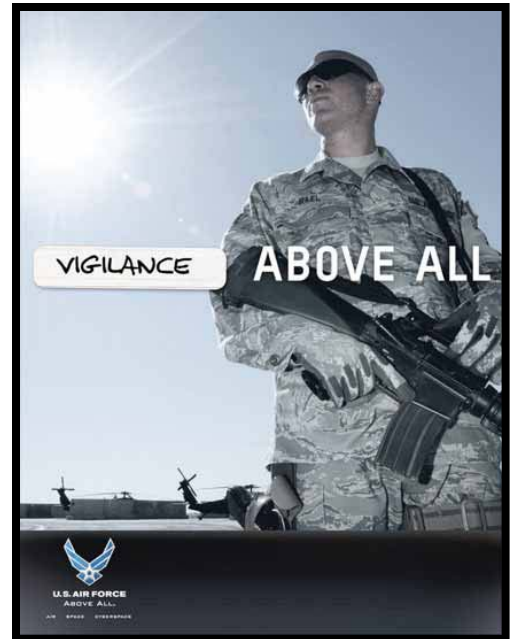
354 FW and Eielson AFB History



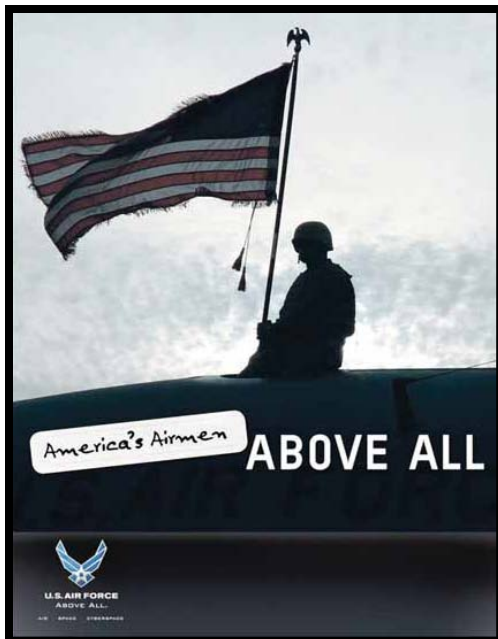
Two F-16s bound for Eielson AFB showing the new Arctic Flanker paint scheme

January 20, 2008 – The first of four F-16s designated as RED FLAG-Alaska Aggressors arrived from Kunsan Air Base, Korea. The swap of Kunsan’s Block 30 aircraft with Eielson’s Block 40 aircraft resulted in 21 aggressors for RED FLAG-Alaska.

February 2008 – The work of two deployed Eielson photographers was used for the Air Forces’ newest ad campaign – Above All. The advertising campaign highlighted both Eielson and the Air Force’s wartime contributions to the nation.



‘Vigilance – Relax, an Airman is on the job’
Picture by A1C Jonathan Snyder



‘America’s Airmen – Nothing more beautiful than the Stars and Stripes’
Picture by SSgt Tia Schroeder

March 28, 2008 – Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley visits Eielson AFB concluding a tour of bases throughout the Pacific theater of operations.

June 24, 2008 – The base opened its doors to the public for the Eielson AFB’s “Soaring into Solstice” Thunderbirds Demonstration. More than 6,000 people attended the open house witnessing not only the Air Force demonstration team, but were also treated to a four-ship fly-by featuring aircraft from Eielson’s 18th Aggressor Squadron.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



August 4, 2008 – The President of the United States, George W. Bush, visited Eielson AFB. He made Eielson his first stop on an eight-day trip to Asia. Addressing the men and women of Eielson and Fort Wainwright, the President remarked, “I’ve been to a lot of military bases around the world, but I don’t think I’ve ever been to one where a moose can cause a traffic jam.”

August 13, 2008 – The newly added fitness center and renovated Baker Field House opens. Eielson residents now have year-round fitness testing, indoor flag football and soccer, as well as world class cardio and strength training equipment available.

October 19, 2008 – Eielson’s new chapel opens for worship services. Winner of the 2007 PACAF Top Design Award, The chapel, dubbed “The Promise Land” by the 354 FW Chaplain (LtCol) David Terrinoni, was the third house of worship on Eielson in over 60 years.



President Bush addresses the men and women of Eielson Air Force Base



November 3, 2008 – The 18th Aggressor Squadron declared Full Operating Capability. After a year of intense preparation and training, the men and women of the 18th Aggressors would now be a pillar of Air Force threat training and academics in PACAF. The squadron proved ready to execute its professional adversary mission, to provide the most realistic Combat Air Force training in the world.

January 31, 2009 – Ten F-16s from the 18th Aggressors took their aircraft and adversary skills on the road for the first time to Andersen AB, Guam. More than 120 operations and maintenance personnel provided red air support for Cope North 09-1, an exercise designed to strengthen Japanese and American military relations as well as enhance U.S. and Japanese air operation in defense of Japan.

February 20, 2009 – The new Eielson Base Exchange opened its doors to customers. Replacing the 51 year old BX, the modern facility offers more merchandise, better laid out space, and an expanded concessions and food court.



An 18 AGRS F-16 Fighting Falcon being marshaled at Andersen AFB, Guam



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Fighter Wing Commanders

<u>Commander</u>	<u>Assumed Command</u>
Col Francis S. Gabreski	19 Nov 56
Col Robert L. Petit	13 Jul 60
Brig Gen Gilbert L. Meyers	3 Oct 60
Col Joseph J. Kruzal	1 Apr 63
Col Franklin H. Scott	12 Jan 64
Col Herbert E. Ross	15 May 65
Col Harold L. Price	27 Jul 65
Col Warren R. Lewis	29 Oct 66
Col Edwin A. Schneider	28 Nov 66
Col William I. Williams	1 May 67
Col Wallace C. Bosworth Jr.	19 Mar 68
Col Waring W. Wilson (additional duty)	22 Apr—2 Jul 68
None (not manned)	3—4 Jul 68
Col Donald W. Forney	5 Jul 68
Col Henry W. Ritter	5 Jun 69
Col Maurice G. Long	14 Jun 69
Col Albert R. Neville Jr.	12 Jul 69
Col Henry L. Warren	25 Jan 70
Col Evan W. Rosencrans	15 Jun 70
Col Thomas M. Knoles III	21 Jun 71
Col William D. Curry Jr.	1 May 73
Col Michael G. Filliman	25 Oct 74
Col Robert H. Reed	5 Aug 76
Col Michael P.C. Carns	23 Mar 79
Col Larry K. Barton	7 Oct 80
Col Roger A. Sorensen	10 Jan 83
Col Joel T. Hall	6 Apr 84
Col Joseph J. Redden	7 Jan 86
Col Robert G. Jenkins	12 Feb 88
Col Ervin C. Sharpe Jr.	23 Feb 90
Col John R. Dallager	28 Aug 91
Col Richard H. McDow	8 Jul 92
Col James A. Moen	22 Sep 92
None (inactivated)	1 Apr 92—20 Aug 93
Col Thomas O. Fleming*	20 Aug 93
Brig Gen Ronald E. Keys	14 Feb 94
Brig Gen Richard E. Brown III	28 Sep 95

* From this point forward 354 FW Commanders also served as Eielson AFB Commanders



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Fighter Wing Commanders (Cont.)

<u>Commander</u>	<u>Assumed Command</u>
Brig Gen Tommy F Crawford	9 May 97
Brig Gen Kenneth M. DeCuir	28 May 99
Brig Gen Bob D. DuLaney	4 May 01
Brig Gen Jan-Marc Jouas	3 Oct 02
Brig Gen Marke F. Gibson	28 Jun 04
Brig Gen David J. Scott	3 Jan 06
Brig Gen Mark W. Graper	22 Aug 08
Brig Gen James N. Post III	12 Feb 10

Eielson AFB Commanders

(prior to 354 FW activating at Eielson AFB)

<u>Commander</u>	<u>Assumed Command</u>
1Lt Ray Etmund (Chief Admin)	20 Sep 43
2Lt McLure Reynolds	15 Dec 43
Capt Charles Sherman	22 May 44—unknown
Maj John McGuire	unknown—1 Jan 45
Maj Garland Furr	12 Jan 45—unknown
Maj John McGuire	unknown—7 Jun 45
Unknown	8—27 Jun 45
2Lt Frank Sinclair	28 Jun 45—unknown
Col Jerome B. McCauley	2 Oct 47
Col Harry W. Generous	30 Mar 48
Col John L. Nedwed	14 Sep 48
Col William L. Eades	May 50
Col Edward W. Moore	Jan 51
Col James A. Ronin	30 Jun 52
Col Cordes F. Tiemann	9 Jun 54
Col Ray J. Will	6 Aug 55
Col Anthony G. Hunter	31 Oct 57
Col Stephen W. Henry	6 Jul 59
Col William W. Jones	5 Jun 62
Col Louis W. Rohr	30 May 66
Col Owen A. Weddle	17 May 68
Col Earl H. Ambrose	12 Aug 70
Col Vernon L. Allgood	15 Aug 73



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Eielson AFB Commanders (Cont.)

(prior to 354 FW activating at Eielson AFB)

Commander	Assumed Command
Col Phillip R. Shepherd	30 Aug 74
Col Richard E. Merkel	28 May 76
Col Doyle C. Ruff	3 Jun 77
Col Edward J. Lockwood	1 Jun 79
Col Carl W. Granberry	16 Jun 80
Col Rand Brandt	22 Jun 83
Col James G. Andrus	27 Jun 84
Col Philip W. Nuber	11 Oct 85
Col David B. Dingee	22 Jun 88
Col Clinton V. Horn	3 Jul 90
Col Thomas O. Fleming	1 Jul 92



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Fighter Wing Command Chiefs

<u>Command Chief</u>	<u>Date Assigned</u>
CMSgt Edward A. Patterson*	1 Sep 75
CMSgt Kenneth R. Meeks*	25 May 79
CMSgt William J. Tucker*	20 Jan 82
CMSgt Robert A. Kalcevic*	1 Dec 83
CMSgt Michael W. Long*	1 Oct 85
CMSgt Wayne J. Chandler*	16 Nov 87
CMSgt Gary J. Moser*	1 Aug 89
CMSgt Ronald L. Satterwhite*	1 Aug 92
None (inactivated)	1 Apr 92—31 Mar 93
CMSgt Danny Buckner	1 Apr 93
CMSgt Roger Hatcher	19 Jul 94
CMSgt Michael L. Lawrence	4 Nov 95
CMSgt Robert J. Jeffers	20 Jun 97
CMSgt Philip D. Gilmore	31 Mar 99
CMSgt James A. LeVack	4 Jun 01
CMSgt Todd A. Kabalan	5 Jun 03
CMSgt Bruce A. Kenney	15 Oct 05
CMSgt Stephen R. Ludwig	4 Oct 06
CMSgt Earl A. Hannon	12 Jul 08
CMSgt Jerry D. Moore	24 Aug 10

* Held position at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina

Eielson AFB Command Chiefs

(prior to 354 FW activating at Eielson AFB)

<u>Command Chief</u>	<u>Date Assigned</u>
CMSgt Ted Eaton (5010)	Oct 66
CMSgt R.O. Weyburn (5010)	Jul 69
CMSgt T.E. Krause (5010)	1 Oct 74
CMSgt Charles Pettit (5010/343)	28 Jun 75
CMSgt Ronald C. Huffman (343)	17 Feb 84
CMSgt Michael A. Galbraith (343)	Nov 87
CMSgt Richard K. Allen (343)	1 Aug 88
CMSgt James R. Beall (343)	3 Aug 90

5010 5010th Combat Support Group or Wing
343 343d Wing



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Aircraft Stationed at Eielson

65th Fighter Squadron (1946-47; Det 1950—51)

P-51 (1946—47); F-80 (1950—51); T-33 (1950—51)

375th Recon Squadron (1949—51)

B/RB/WB-29 (1949—51); C-47 (1949—51)

58th Weather Recon Squadron (1951—58)

WB-29 (1951—56); WB-50 (1955—58)

5010th Combat Support Group (1949—81)

L-20 (by 1952—60); T-33 (by 1957—81); VC/SC/C-47 (by 1952—59, 1962—69); C-123 (1965—66, 1969—71); CH/SH/HH-21 (1960—69)

40th Air Refueling Squadron (1959—61)

KC-97 (1959—61)

720th Fighter-Bomber Squadron (1954—55)

F-86 (1954—55); T-33 (1954—55)

455th Fighter-Bomber Squadron (1955)

F-86 (1955)

Det 3, 317th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron (1960—69)

F-102 (1960—69); F-106 (1965—69)

Det DC, 43 TFS, 21st Composite Wing (1970—82)

F-4 (1970—82)

Det 1, 55th Weather Recon Squadron (1960—68)

WB-47 (1960—68)

4157th Strategic Wing (1962—67)

KC-135 (1962—67); RC-135 (1962—67)

6th Strategic Recon Wing (1967—92)

KC-135 (1967—92); RC-135 (1967—92)

Det 1, 5040th Helicopter Squadron (1969—76); Det 1, 71st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (1976—80)

HH-21 (1969—70); HH-3 (1970—80)



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Aircraft Stationed at Eielson (cont.)

25th Tactical Air Support Squadron (1971—89)

O-2A (1971—86); OV-10 (1986—89)

11th Tactical Air Support Squadron (1991—93)

OA-10 (1991—93)

355th Fighter Squadron (1993—2007)

OA-10 (1993—2007); A-10 (1994—2007)

18th Aggressor Squadron (1982—Present)

A-10 (1982—91); F-16 (1991—Present)

168th Air Refueling Group (AKANG) (1986—Present)

KC-135 (1986—Present)



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



Flying / Combat Training Squadrons

The wing currently has one flying squadron assigned, the 18th Aggressor Squadron. Although the 18th Aggressor Squadron has been assigned to the 354 FW for more two decades, its history dates back to World War II and the Aleutian Campaign. Assigned to the wing as well is the 353th Combat Training Squadron. The 353 CTS has the primary responsibility for planning and executing the wing's many exercises including the multi-national RED FLAG-Alaska and NORTHERN EDGE. The following pages provide a brief history of both the 18 AGRS and the 353 CTS.

18th Aggressor Squadron History



18th Aggressor Squadron emblem

The 18th Aggressor Squadron was constituted the 18th Pursuit Squadron December 22, 1939, and was activated at Moffet Field, California, February 1, 1940. The 18th moved to Elmendorf Field, Alaska, February 21, 1941, and began flying P-36s.

Redesignated as the 18th Fighter Squadron May 15, 1942, the 18 FS participated in combat operations in the northern Pacific, as well as aiding the defense of Alaska during World War II. Throughout WWII, the 18th flew P-40, P-39, P-38, and P-51 aircraft.

Redesignated the 18th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron in 1952, the unit began operations at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport as part of Air Defense Command's Continental Defense Force. There, the 18th flew F-51s and later F-86s. In July of 1954, the 18th moved to Ladd Air Force Base, Alaska, where for three years it flew the F-89 Scorpion and carried out air defense operations with Alaskan Air Command.

In August of 1957, the 18 FS was transferred to Wurtsmith AFB, Michigan, where it transitioned to F-102s. From May 1960 until its inactivation in 1971, the 18 FS operated from Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota, as an integral part of the interceptor force of Air (later Aerospace) Defense Command. There, the 18th flew the F-101 Voodoo.

In 1977 the squadron was designated the 18th Tactical Fighter Squadron (18 TFW) and activated at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Its mission was to provide tactical air and defense operations using the F-4E. In January of 1982, the 18th was transferred to Eielson AFB, Alaska. In early 1991 the 18th transitioned to F-16Cs. That same year the squadron was redesignated the 18th Fighter Squadron.

In 1997 elements of the 18 FS deployed to Singapore and Malaysia to take part in dissimilar air combat tactic training as part of exercise COMMANDO SLING and COPE TAUFAN, respectively. The COPE TAUFAN deployment marked the first time Pacific Air Forces' F-16s had flown against MiG29s.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



The unit deployed to Al Jabar AB, Kuwait, October—December 1998 to support Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. Later, the squadron deployed to Incirlik AB Turkey, September—December 2000, employing five F-16 aircraft and 110 personnel, conducting the first ever Combat Search and Rescue support tasking for an F-16 squadron in support of Operation NORTHERN WATCH.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the 18th was called to generate eight aircraft for Alaska NORAD air defense during Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

The Blue Foxes next deployment was to Al Jaber AB, Kuwait, December 2001—March 2002 to support simultaneous combat operations for Operations SOUTHERN WATCH and ENDURING FREEDOM. They flew more than 3,200 hours in only 3 months, an amazing feat for the 142 airmen who deployed with only 10 aircraft. During that time, the 18 FS flew missions in support of Operation ANACONDA, including one in the Shah-I-Kot valley on March 2 when U.S. forces, engaged in a firefight with Taliban and Al Qaeda forces, called for aerial assistance. A number of Blue Foxes responded dropping bombs with pinpoint accuracy on the opposing forces. Two 18 FS pilots received Distinguished Flying Crosses for their efforts.



F-16s from the 18th Aggressor Squadron flying over Denali

systems and tactics. On January 17, 2008 the 18 AGRS received its first F-16 Block 30 from Kunsan AB, Korea with the new advanced Flanker (arctic) aggressor paint scheme.

Commensurate with its change in status came a new mission for the 18th, preparing and training combat air forces as PACAF's only dedicated adversary squadron.

The final deployment as the 18 FS was to Andersen AFB, Guam in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE during March 2003. The unit's last exercise was COMMANDO SLING, in January 2007.

On August 24, 2007 the 18 FS was officially re-designated the 18th Aggressor Squadron (18 AGRS). Formed from an initial cadre of experienced former 18 FS pilots and 64th Aggressors from Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, these individuals were hand-picked experts in adversary weapons



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



353rd Combat Training Squadron History



353rd Combat Training Squadron emblem

The 353rd Combat Training Squadron was activated as the 353rd Fighter Squadron on November 15, 1942 at Hamilton Field, California. The 353rd trained in the United States until November 1943, when it deployed to England. After being assigned to the Ninth Air Force, the squadron received P-51 aircraft and began flying combat missions. The 353rd escorted bombers to targets such as Frankfurt, Leipzig, Augsburg, and Schweinfurt. Later, in 1944, the squadron became involved in dive-bombing and strafing missions, striking railroad yards, bridges, troop concentrations, and airfields. The 353rd flew its last mission of the war on May 7, 1945. The unit inactivated March 31, 1946.

Redesignated the 353rd Fighter-Day Squadron and activated at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina November 19, 1956, the squadron began training in F-100 aircraft. The unit participated in exercises, operations, tests, and firepower demonstrations conducted by the Tactical Air Command within the US and abroad.

During the 1958 crisis in Lebanon, the 353rd moved without equipment to Torrejon AB, Spain, received F-100 aircraft, and was assigned to the 401st TFW. From Torrejon, the squadron made periodic partial deployments to Wheelus AB, Libya and Incirlik AB, Turkey, for weapons training.

Beginning in the last half of 1969 and ending in the first half of 1970, the unit converted from F-100 to F-4 aircraft. In 1971, the unit switched to A-7s.

On October 12, 1972, the 353rd deployed to Korat Royal Thai AFB, Thailand, and participated in combat operations in the Southeast Asian War. The squadron used A-7 aircraft for close air support and in search and rescue operations. Minus aircraft, the 353rd returned to Myrtle Beach around January 21, 1973. After acquiring A-7s from Davis-Monthan, the unit resumed training.

The 353rd again deployed to Korat March 31, 1973, where it flew bombing missions until the bombing was halted on August 15, 1973. The 353rd claims the distinction of dropping the last bomb and making the last strafing run of the war. On October 18, 1973 the squadron returned to Myrtle Beach AFB and resumed normal training activities. In 1978 the squadron obtained A-10 aircraft. The unit deployed to Saudi Arabia August 15, 1990. During Operation DESERT STORM, the squadron inflicted damage to enemy armor and artillery emplacements, cut off enemy supply lines, and engaged in search and rescue operations. With the closure of Myrtle Beach AFB, the 353rd inactivated December 15, 1992.

In August 1993, the unit activated at Eielson AFB, Alaska. The 353rd became responsible for the execution of PACAF's many multi-national exercises to include COPE THUNDER (renamed RED FLAG-Alaska) and NORTHERN EDGE as well as control over many local training ranges.



354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Fighter Wing Emblems

354th Fighter Wing





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Operations Group





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Maintenance Group





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Mission Support Group





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



354th Medical Group





354 FW and Eielson AFB History



The Iceman Team: Ready to go at 50 below!