
7th Bombardment Wing Operations, Carswell AFB, 1952-1954



HISTORY OF THE B-36 PEACEMAKER "NEVER A SHOT IN ANGER"

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SAC INSIGNIA APPROVED On 4 January 1952, Headquarters, USAF approved the SAC insignia. It evolved out of a contest conducted in 1951 which Staff Sergeant R. T. Barnes, 92nd Bomb Wing, Fairchild AFB, Washington, won. The significance of the insignia was:

The blue sky is representative of the Air Force operation. The arm and armor is a symbol of strength, power and loyalty and represents the science and art of employing far-reaching advantages in securing the objectives of war. The olive branch, a symbol of peace; and lightning flashes, symbolic of speed and power, are qualities underlying the

mission of the Strategic Air Command.



SAC Insignia

Air Force approved on 4 January 1952.

Under the Operational Engineering Program a flight test was conducted at Carswell using B-36F 50-1074 of the 492nd Bomb Squadron on 14 January. The flight showed the problem of engine starvation without fuel boost pumps in operation still prevalent. A new coupling was received as the month closed from the Fenick Flexi-Corp Co, Copley, Ohio, and was scheduled for testing in February. On 22 January, the 492nd Bomb Squadron was presented the Wing Flying Safety Award for the third time in a row at the base Monthly Safety Meeting.

FIRST WING B-36D TRANSFERRED FOR MODIFICATION Throughout January, three B-36Ds were transferred to the Convair Plant, San Diego, for modification. Also, one B-36D was at Kelly AFB, Texas, undergoing modifications. Overall, ten B-36Ds were at Kelly. Those aircraft received 13 modifications while at Kelly, six were turret retract, three dispenser motor, two bomb armament heater, and one involved removal of the fire control system.

As the month closed on 31 January, a total of 40 B-36s (25-D and 15-F) were assigned to the wing. The month of February opened with two 9th Bomb Squadron B-36Ds flying a service test and evaluation flight on 12 February 1951. Purpose of the flight was to test and evaluate detergent additive type oil in aircraft engines. The objective was to flight test and evaluate the use of non-metallic detergent additive type (compounded) oils in the R-4360-41 engine oil system. Results of the tests showed that the additive type oil did not appear to have any detrimental effect on the engine.

Two days later on 14 February, the 7th Medical Squadron was redesignated the 7th Medical Group and assigned to the wing. As February closed 40 B-36s (25-D and 15-F) were assigned.

The wing launched seven B-36s (3-9th, 3-436th and 1-492nd Bomb Squadron) from Carswell on a night bombing evaluation on 5 March. The target area was greater St. Louis. The purpose of the mission was to evaluate pattern-bombing methods with out-dated target information. Results of the mission were satisfactory.

SIXTH WING B-36 ACCIDENT After completing the mission and landing at Carswell on 6 March, a 436th Bomb Squadron B-36F, burned up on the ramp with only minor injuries recorded. The accident resulted from the left landing gear partially failing on touchdown and causing a fuel leak. This was the sixth major accident in the wing to date that destroyed an entire B-36, but the first non-flying.

Nine B-36F aircraft were transferred to the Air Material Command, Carswell AFB, on 20 March 1952, for landing gear modification following the 6 March aircraft fire. On 28 March, 12 wing B-36s (4-9th, 4-436th and 4-492nd Bomb Squadron) flew a unit simulated combat mission in the Eglin AFB Range, Florida. All aircraft recovered at Carswell on 29 March.

Two days later, the month closed with 39 B-36s (25-D and 14-F) assigned, minus the one B-36F lost to fire on 6 March.

On 13 April 1952, Colonel Chadwell relinquished control of the wing and group to Colonel John A. Roberts. Colonel Roberts had been temporarily Commanding Officer of the 19th Air Division since 30 October 1951. Colonel Chadwell returned to the deputy commander position in the wing.

The wing received three B-36Ds from the Convair plant, San Diego, California, in April. One on 16 April, and two more on 21 April, following landing gear modification.

Next, 18 wing B-36s (6-9th, 6-436th and 6-492nd Bomb Squadron) participated in a high altitude formation flight on 24 April. Purpose was to accomplish formation radar camera attacks against New Orleans, Louisiana; and Houston, Texas; high altitude gunnery, and other scheduled training including electronic countermeasures simulated runs against Forbes AFB, Topeka, Kansas, and Carswell. Also, the aircraft conducted individual radar bomb scoring runs on targets of choice at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Little Rock, Arkansas.

A total of 39 B-36s (25-D and 15-F) were assigned to the wing in April.

WING RECEIVES FIRST CONVAIR B-36H AIRCRAFT During May the first B-36H models were assigned. The first, B-36H 50-1083, arrived on 3 May and was assigned to the 9th Bomb Squadron. The "H" had an improved bombing system, relocated K-system components to pressurized compartment to facilitate in-flight maintenance, and a completely rearranged flight deck including a second flight engineer station. Also, the aircraft had a top speed of 416 mph with a 44,000 feet ceiling. Additionally, the "H" model had twin radomes of the AN/APG-41A tail gun system. The second "H" model 50-1084 arrived on 6 May and was assigned to the 436th Bomb Squadron. As May closed 41 B-36s were assigned in the wing (25-D, 14-F, and 2-H).

June 1952 opened with the wing taking part in a high altitude formation flight against Dallas. A total of 18 wing B-36s (6-9th, 6-436th and 492nd Bomb Squadron) flew the mission on 5 June. Following the attack all aircraft flew to south Texas and participated in a gunnery exercise on the Matagorda Island Gunnery Range. The exercise had four primary purposes: to test and evaluate the feasibility of a new formation tactic; test wing capability to attack large force multiple targets within a large city complex; test the defensive fire power of B-36 aircraft at high altitude; and to test the feasibility of maintaining formation to crosshair distance prior to making individual bomb runs. All aircraft recovered at Carswell the same day.

The 7th Bomb Wing Meritorious Achievement Award Plaque, presented to the Outstanding Support and Tactical Squadron of the Month was awarded on 12 June to the 7th Field Maintenance Squadron, and 492nd Bomb Squadron. This was followed on 16 June 1952, by the inactivation of the 7th Bomb Group, a paper unit since 16 February 1951. Simultaneously, the 9th, 436th and 492nd Bomb Squadrons attached to the wing since February 1951, were assigned directly under the wing. The same day, four wing support squadrons were reorganized: Headquarters, and Headquarters Squadron became Headquarters Squadron; 7th Maintenance Squadron was redesignated 7th Field Maintenance Squadron; 4010th Armament and Electronic Maintenance Squadron (AEMS) changed to 7th AEMS; and the 4010th Organizational Maintenance Squadron was redesignated the 7th Periodic Maintenance Squadron.

During the month seven new "H" models were assigned as the wing had 48 B-36s (24-D, 14-F, 10-H) assigned.

On 1 July, nine wing B-36s (5-H and 4-F) departed Carswell to take part in a high altitude formation radar camera attack on New York City. Three aircraft were from the 9th, three from the 436th, and three from the 492nd Bomb Squadron. The nine B-36s flew to the orbit area at Cape St. Francis, Newfoundland, Canada, then flew the scheduled attack on New York City. From there the bombers flew to Montgomery, Alabama, and recovered at Carswell on 2 July. Following this, the wing presented the Meritorious Achievement Award Plaque to the Outstanding Tactical and Support Units in the wing. The 9th Bomb Squadron and 7th Maintenance and Supply Group received the awards on 5 July 1952.

JOINT SAC/ADC EXERCISE The next flying exercise took place on 27 July, as the wing launched 21 B-36s (7-9th, 7-436th and 7-492nd Bomb Squadron) from Carswell, as part of a joint SAC/ADC attack on Detroit, Michigan. Enroute to Detroit, the bombers were intercepted by Air Defense Command North American F-86 and Lockheed F-94 fighters. The North American F-86 Sabre was the Air Forces first swept-wing fighter, entering operational service in February 1949. The Lockheed F-94 Starfire was the first jet-powered all-weather fighter to enter service with the Air Force and first to feature a speed-boosting afterburner. It became operational in May 1950 with the Continental Air Command. Fighter opposition was considered ineffective as all bombers attacked the target then returned to Carswell the same day.

On 31 July 1952, a total of 53 B-36s (24-D, 14-F, 15-H) were assigned to the wing. Of those 24 were TDY: nine to the Convair plant, San Diego; nine to the Convair plant, Fort Worth; five at depot, Carswell AFB; and one at Kelly AFB, Texas.



Photo by Frank Kleinwechter

SEVENTH WING B-36 ACCIDENT August opened with a B-36F 49-2679 of the 436th Bomb Squadron destroyed by fire on 5 August 1952. While on the parking ramp at Carswell, gasoline overflowed from the number three tank vent, which was ignited by the exhaust from a B-10 power unit on the ramp. No loss of life resulted with only minor injuries to three crew members. This was the seventh B-36 destroyed in the wing to date. Of those, five were flying crashes.

Two days later, on 6 August 1952, a unit simulated combat mission was flown against Philadelphia by 19 wing B-36s (7-F and 12-H), nine of the 9th Bomb Squadron, five of the 436th Bomb Squadron and five of the 492nd Bomb Squadron. After launch, the bombers flew to Maine and encountered several Air Defense Command F-84, F-86 and F-94 fighters in the northeastern United States. From Maine the bombers attacked Philadelphia. Following this, the aircraft landed at Carswell on 7 August. Fighter opposition was very small during the mission, and did not affect the mission's effectiveness. Overall, the mission was considered very successful.

On 15 August, the monthly wing Meritorious Achievement Award plaques were presented to the 9th Bomb Squadron and 7th Armament Electronic Maintenance Squadron. During August 56 B-36s (23-D, 14-F, 19-H) were assigned to the wing.

TORNADO DEVESTATES CARSWELL BOMBERS On 1 September 1952, a tornado ripped across the flightline at Carswell AFB knocking out 76 B-36s (28-7th and 43-11th Bomb Wing), almost half of SAC's heavy bombers. The next day, the San Antonio Air Material Area, Kelly AFB, Texas, sent a depot team to Carswell to begin fixing the damaged aircraft.



2 September 1952

Air Force photo via Ed Calvert

NEW 7TH BOMBARDMENT WING EMBLEM APPROVED Headquarters, USAF approved the new wing organizational emblem on 12 September 1952. The emblem design depicted, on a yellow shield, a preying eagle grasping a bomb in its talons; in the lower section is the shield of arms of the 7th Bomb Group on a blue shield with a yellow diagonal band, thereon three black crosses with the wing's motto, *MORS AB ALTO - DEATH FROM ABOVE*. Its significance was:

The blue and golden yellow were the colors of the Air Force. The eagle preying was symbolic of the mission of the organization and alludes to the motto "DEATH FROM ABOVE". The eagle, emblematic of fortitude and magnanimity of mind, is a worthy emblem for those charged with great responsibilities in their successfully accomplishing the mission. The band is for the mission of bombardment. The 7th Bomb Group emblem relates to the historical association and accomplishment of the wing.



Fifty-five B-36s (23-D, 11-F, 21-H) were assigned to the wing on 30 September. Six wing B-36s (2-D, 2-F and 2-H) were dispatched from Carswell AFB on 2 October 1952, on a night tactics mission to accomplish call compression; station-keeping; camera attacks on Texarkana, Texas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; radar runs on Tampa, Florida; and night celestial navigation and actual armament firing. The mission was flown by two 9th Bomb Squadron, two 436th Bomb Squadron, and two 492nd Bomb Squadron bombers. It was flown as planned with all aircraft finishing up with the actual firing on the Matagorda Gunnery Range, Texas, before landing back at Carswell.

A few days later the SAC Flying Safety Award for September 1952 was awarded to Carswell AFB on 6 October, for the Best Flying Safety Record in SAC for the Month of September.

1952 SAC NAVIGATION-BOMBING COMPETITION From 13 to 18 October, two wing bomber crews took part in the 1952 SAC Navigation-Bombing Competition. The competition involved ten B-29, five B-50, and four B-36 wings. Medium bombers staged out of Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona. The heavy bombers operated out of Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico. Also, the Royal Air Force entered with two Washington (Boeing B-29) bombers and two Lincoln heavy bombers. Ground rules were altered in the meet as each SAC wing sent only two crews instead of three as in previous years. The 97th Bomb Wing (8th AF) and 93rd Bomb Wing (15th AF) flying B-50s tied for the Fairchild Trophy. Major General Thomas S. Powers, SAC vice commander, flipped a coin to decide which unit would have possession of the trophy for the first half of the ensuing year. The 93d won the toss. Overall, the wing crews placed seventh and second among heavy bomb wings.

On 29 October, the 9th Bomb Squadron received the 19th Air Division Flying Safety Award for September 1952. Also, 48 B-36s (23-D, 3-F, 22-H) bombers were assigned to the wing as the month closed.

On 18 November, five 9th Bomb Squadron B-36s took part in a high altitude mission to accomplish cell compression, night formation, radar camera attacks, navigation and actual firing.

Following this, the 492nd Bomb Squadron was awarded the 19th Air Division Flying Safety Award for October 1952.

During November, 46 B-36s consisting of 23-D, 1-F, and 22-H models, were assigned to the wing.

LAST WING B-36F TRANSFERRED TO CONVAIR The last B-36F in the wing, assigned to the 436th Bomb Squadron was transferred to the Convair plant, San Diego, California, in December for modification. As 1952 closed, the wing had 45 B-36s assigned, 23 D models and 22 H models.

1953

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The wing opened 1953 with a change of command on 3 January. On that date Colonel George T. Chadwell, deputy commander, assumed command of the wing from Colonel Roberts. Colonel Roberts became special assistant to the Commanding General, 8th

Air Force, at Carswell AFB.

PROJECT FEATHERWEIGHT Later in the month on 18 January, Colonel Chadwell and certain staff members went to Offutt AFB, Nebraska, to brief General Curtis E. LeMay, CINCSAC, on the Project Featherweight Program, started at Carswell in 1952. Project Featherweight was a program which reduced aircraft empty weight to gain more speed, altitude and range by eliminating crew positions (Class I).



Class II Featherweights kept all their guns, and the aircraft designated Class III had all the gun turrets and fire control removed except for the tail guns. As a result of the meeting, General LeMay decided that more information and tests were needed before a final decision on the project was made. Therefore, the Featherweight testing was extended to 28 February 1953.

B-36 DEPLOYMENT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM As part of a unit simulated combat mission to RAF Fairford, United Kingdom, 18 wing B-36s (6-9th, 6-436th, 6-492th Bomb Squadron) flew from Carswell to the staging base at Goose Bay, Labrador on 2 and 3 February. Also, on 2 February, five Douglas C-124 Globemaster cargo aircraft deployed from Carswell to RAF Fairford with the wing advon party. Enroute to the United Kingdom the aircraft stopped at Kindley AFB, Bermuda, and Lajes AB, Azores, Portugal, before landing at Fairford. On 6 February, 17 B-36s departed Goose Bay with one B-36 returning to Carswell. Enroute to Fairford the aircraft experienced adverse weather conditions.

EIGHTH WING B-36 ACCIDENT As a result of the weather, one 492nd Bomb Squadron B-36H 51-5719 was abandoned near Fairford when the crew had to bail out. The crash was the result of adverse weather conditions, under manned and inexperienced ground control approach (GCA) personnel, fuel starvation after excessive holding, and two missed GCA approaches. There were no fatalities in the crash on 7 February. This was the eighth B-36 accident for the wing, the sixth flying to date.

NINTH WING B-36 ACCIDENT For the next week, the wing crews flew training missions out of Fairford. The advon party, flying on a Douglas C-124 Globemaster cargo aircraft, departed Fairford on 13 February and returned to Carswell by way of Lajes AB, Azores, and Kindley AFB, Bermuda, on 14 February. The wing B-36s departed on 13 February for the flight home. A total of 14 took off for Goose Bay, while two B-36s remained at Fairford. Of those, one B-36H 51-5729 of the 9th Bomb Squadron crashed near Goose Bay killing two of the 17 crew members on 13 February, recording the ninth wing B-36 destroyed, seventh in flight

since 1949.

From Goose Bay, 13 remaining aircraft deployed to Carswell between 15 and 20 February, with all recovering by 21 February. Additionally, the two B-36Hs were directed to remain at Fairford for seven days to conduct special weapons training.

On 21 February, the two B-36s flew to Westover AFB, Massachusetts, for fuel, then took off on 23 February, landing at Carswell the same day.

Earlier in February, on the 9th and 13th, Carswell was threatened by high winds, thunderstorms and hail. As a result of those, the wing evacuated 22 B-36s to Biggs AFB, El Paso, Texas, on 9 February, then returned home on 10 February. Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, was the evacuation base for 14 wing B-36s on 19 February. The bombers returned on 20 February 1953. This precaution resulted from the September 1952 tornado that hit Carswell, damaging 76 B-36s assigned.

Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker, President of Eastern Air Lines and famous "Ace of Aces" of World War I fame, was the guest speaker at the regular 19th Air Division Flying Safety Meeting at Carswell on 14 February.

As February 1953 closed, 47 B-36s (23-D and 24-H) were assigned to the wing.

The wing provided 12 B-36s (4-9th, 4-436th and 4-492nd Bomb Squadron) to the Atomic Energy Commission for tests at Frenchman Flat, Nevada, from 20 to 24 March. The wing's primary purpose in the tests was to provide photographic support.

On 31 March, a total of 51 B-36s (23-D and 28-H) were assigned to the wing. From 24 to 28 April, the wing took part in a SAC evaluation mission against Springfield, Missouri. Eighteen B-36s (6-9th, 6-436th and 6-492nd Bomb Squadron) participated flying out of Carswell, during the four-day exercise with excellent results.

Fifty-two B-36s (23-D and 29-H) were assigned on 30 April 1953. On 11 May, the last B-36 damaged during the September 1952 tornado was returned to the wing, leaving one beyond hope that was salvaged. Altogether, 75 out of 76 damaged were repaired and rebuilt between September 1952 and May 1953.

WING BEGINS TRANSFER OF B-36D AIRCRAFT During the remainder of May, the wing transferred eight B-36D aircraft to the 42nd Bomb Wing, Limestone AFB (later Loring), Maine, leaving the wing with 45 B-36s (15-D and 30-H) as the month closed.

AIRCRAFT COLLISION AT CARSWELL On 5 June 1953, B-36D 49-2664 assigned to the 69th Bomb Squadron, Limestone AFB, Maine, collided with B-36H 51-5705 of the 9th Bomb Squadron, on the aircraft parking ramp at Carswell AFB. The 9th Bomb Squadron aircraft B-36H 5705 was parked on the ramp awaiting a tow into a maintenance hanger. The B-36D flown by a 69th Bomb Squadron crew commanded by Captain William H. Dye, launched out of Carswell earlier for reassignment to Limestone AFB. Due to propeller problems the aircraft was forced to return to Carswell shortly after takeoff. After landing the aircraft taxied down the south ramp, brakes were applied prior to B-36H 51-5705 being towed, but failed due to a ruptured brake accumulator causing the collision. Both aircraft suffered substantial damage with no crew injuries.

Following this, the wing took part in a unit simulated combat mission on 11 June. A total of 17 B-36s (6-9th, 7-436th and 8-492nd Bomb Squadron) flew the mission bombing Biloxi, Mississippi; Memphis, Tennessee; Houston, Waco and Fort Worth, Texas. All aircraft recovered at Carswell on 12 June. The month closed with four B-36Ds transferred to Limestone AFB, Maine. This action left 41 B-36s in the wing (11-D and 30-H) as of 30 June 1953.

July 1953 opened with three wing Featherweight B-36Hs (1-9th, 1-436th and 1-492nd Bomb Squadron) participating in a two-phase bombing operation on 12 July. The exercise was nicknamed "TAIL-WIND". Each bomber flew simulated attacks on three vital control centers of the Air Defense Command: Colorado Springs, Colorado (Headquarters, Air Defense Command), Albuquerque, New Mexico and Buffalo, New York. Following the attacks, all aircraft recovered at Carswell. Aircraft commanders in the first phase were: Major Fredrick E. Bachman, Jr (436th Bomb Squadron), Major Wells F. Zerdecki (492nd Bomb Squadron), and Major Thomas A. Bell (9th Bomb Squadron).



Photo by Frank Kleinwechter

Also, the same day, 18 B-36s (15-7th and 3-11th Bomb Wing) took part in Phase II of "TAILWIND", flying to Savannah, Georgia, then north for an attack on New York City. The five B-36s were from the 9th Bomb Squadron, five from the 436th Bomb Squadron, and one from the 492nd Bomb Squadron. Additionally, Lieutenant Colonel George E. Cameron (436th Bomb Squadron), and Lieutenant Colonel Clifford Schoeffler (9th Bomb Squadron), were the two formation leaders in Phase II. All aircraft in Phase II landed at Carswell on 10 July following completion of the mission.

A total of 40 B-36s (11-D and 29-H) were assigned as of 31 July 1953.

During August, that total dropped to 39 B-36s (11-D and 27-H) as one "H" model was at Convair, Fort Worth, for modification. In September, the wing flew a simulated visual bombing mission against an industrial target complex in Omaha, Nebraska, in three phases. The primary purpose of the mission was to test the visual radar bomb scoring capabilities of the wing crews under optimum conditions. On 1 September, eight wing B-36s (2-9th, 3-492nd and 3-436th Bomb Squadron) flew the attack on Omaha in Phase I. A total of 10 B-36Hs (3-9th, 3-436th and 3-492nd Bomb Squadron and 1-11th Bomb Wing) launched out of Carswell on 14 September, and flew the mission over Omaha. Phase III was flown on 18 September, by 10 wing B-36s (2-9th, 3-436th and 4-492nd Bomb Squadron). Of those, four (2-9th, 1-436th and 1-492nd Bomb Squadron) did not make the visual bomb run over Omaha due to cloud cover and flew the mission again on 26 September. Overall, the results of the exercise were excellent. Additionally, this was the first time the wing had participated in a visual K-type evaluation.

1953 DAYTON AIR SHOW On 3 September, the wing flew one B-36H from the 492nd Bomb Squadron, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Delbert L. Huffman, Deputy Director of Operations in the wing, to Dayton, Ohio, for a practice fly-over at the Dayton Air Show. The show itself was conducted on 5 September, by eight B-36s (3-9th, 3-436th and 2-492nd Bomb Squadron). Those aircraft launched out of Carswell and flew a formation fly-over at the air show in commemoration of 50 years of powered flight, and the Ohio Sesquicentennial Celebration.

On 30 September, a wing advanced team boarded a Douglas C-124 Globemaster cargo plane and flew direct to Nouasseur AB, French Morocco, to prepare for the arrival of several wing B-36s in October. Also, the wing had 36 B-36s assigned on 30 September (25-H and 7-D), following the reassignment of four B-36Ds to the 95th Bomb Wing, Biggs AFB, El Paso, Texas.

B-36 DEPLOYMENT TO FRENCH MOROCCO On 7 October 1953, 10 wing B-36s (3-9th, 3-436th, 4-492nd Bomb Squadron) deployed to Nouasseur AB, French Morocco, on a unit simulated combat mission. Prior to this, on 4 October, two Douglas C-124 Globemasters, with support equipment and personnel departed Carswell and arrived in Morocco on 6 October. This was followed by

another C-124 with maintenance personnel on 5 October. The Globemaster stopped at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal, enroute to Morocco, finally arriving at Nouasseur on 8 October. All the B-36s launched out of Carswell on 7 October, touched down at Nouasseur on 8 October. The wing redeployed to Carswell on 14 October, as 18 B-36s departed and arrived at Carswell on 15 October. Also, on 14 October, one C-124 with support equipment and personnel left Morocco and flew to Carswell landing on 16 October. On 15 October, one Douglas C-97 transport with support personnel, and one C-124 with cargo, departed Morocco for Carswell. Both aircraft arrived on 17 October, following a stop at Lajes AB, Azores.

1953 SAC BOMBING COMPETITION Between 25 and 31 October 1953, two wing B-36 crews (Cameron, 436th Bomb Squadron and Schoeffer, 9th Bomb Squadron) represented the wing in the annual SAC Bombing Competition, staging out of Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico. This was the fifth competition held since 1948. Also, the competition welcomed the Boeing B-47 Stratojet for the first time. One change in the competition occurred as units were prohibited from using spare aircraft. The wing placed seventh, with the 92nd Bomb Wing, Fairchild AFB, Washington, a B-36 unit, winning the overall competition.

As October closed there were 27 B-36s (3-D and 24-H) assigned in the wing.



B-36s roll out of Convair's assembly line.

Photo by Jack Kerr via Frank Kleinwechter.

WING RECEIVES FIRST CONVAIR B-36J AIRCRAFT The month of November opened with the wing sending one B-36D to Biggs AFB, El Paso, Texas, on 2 November 1953. Following this, the first B-36J 52-2215, arrived from the Convair plant, Fort Worth, and was assigned to the 492nd Bomb Squadron. The "J" model carried additional fuel capacity and was equipped with the AN/ARC-21 high frequency radio.

On 23 November 1953, 18 wing B-36H bombers (6-9th, 6-436th and 6-492nd Bomb Squadron) accomplished a unit simulated combat mission which involved cell bombing over the Eglin AFB Range, Florida. All aircraft recovered at Carswell on 24 November. Three days later, on 27 November, another B-36D was transferred to Biggs AFB, El Paso, Texas, leaving only one "D" model in the wing assigned to the 492nd Bomb Squadron.

The wing B-36 inventory consisted of 31 B-36s (29-H, 1-D and 1-J) on 30 November.

LAST WING B-36D TRANSFERRED/TENTH WING B-36 ACCIDENT The last B-36D in the wing, assigned to the 492nd Bomb Squadron, was transferred to Biggs AFB, Texas, on 11 December 1953. Enroute to Biggs, the aircraft crashed into Mt Franklin in El Paso, while the pilot was attempting an approach in poor visibility and out of GCA radar contact. The aircraft was completely destroyed and the crew of nine perished. This was the third B-36 crash this year in the wing, and the tenth overall since arrival of the B-36 to the 7th Bomb Wing in June 1948. Two of those losses were due to ground fires.

Also, two new "J" model B-36s were assigned in December. The first, B-36J 55-2217, went to the 436th Bomb Squadron on 5 December, and the second, B-36J 55-2219, went to the 9th Bomb Squadron on 6 December. As 1953 closed out a total of 31 B-36s (28-H and 3-J) were assigned to the wing.

1954

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The year 1954 opened with the wing conducting emergency evacuation exercises at Carswell on 1 January and 25 February. Earlier in February, the 7th Medical Group was redesignated the 7th Tactical Hospital and assigned to the wing. Prior to this organizational change, the hospital was assigned to 19th Air Division.

B-36 DEPLOYMENT TO CANADA Nineteen of the wing's B-36s (4-J, and 15-H), six from the 9th Bomb Squadron, seven from the 436th Bomb Squadron, and six from the 492nd Bomb Squadron, took part in operation "PATHAND" on 14 March. That day, all 19 aircraft launched out of Carswell on a unit simulated combat mission to Goose Bay AB, Labrador, Canada. Following arrival at Goose Bay on 15 March, the aircraft were prepared for return strike missions enroute to Carswell. All nineteen aircraft departed Goose AB on 18 March, flew strike missions in the central United States, then recovered at Carswell on 19 March.

MIRACLE LANDING On 27 March 1954, Captain Berry H. Young, 9th Bomb Squadron, landed his B-36H safely at Carswell AFB with all three reciprocating engines on the right wing inoperative, the outboard jets completely disabled, and the landing flaps inoperative. Those problems were further compounded when two engines windmilled, without cockpit control, and the landing gear had to be lowered by emergency procedures. This incident became known as the "Miracle Landing". In acknowledgement of this feat, the entire crew was awarded the Carswell Crew of the Month Award, and later received a personal commendation from General Curtis E. LeMay, Commander-In-Chief, Strategic Air Command.

Colonel James Stewart (USAFR), was the guest speaker on 12 April, at the wing Monthly Flying Safety Meeting held in the Carswell base theater. He was at Carswell for the filming of the "SAC Story". In his short, but very effective talk, Colonel Stewart stated how impressed he was with the emphasis placed on flying safety now, compared to a few years ago when he was on active duty.



From the movie "*Strategic Air Command*"

The 7th Bomb Wing, along with other SAC wings, conducted night simulated radar bombing evaluation missions against an industrial complex in San Antonio, Texas, from 30 April to 5 May 1954. Nicknamed "ALAMO", the purpose of the exercise was to determine the current radar bombing capability of the command on a large industrial type target complex. Six wing crews (2-9th, 3-436th and 2-492nd Bomb Squadron) bombed by radar on the first night of the evaluation, 30 April. This was the only wing participation in the SAC wide exercise.

NON-STOP GOODWILL FLIGHT TO NICARAGUA Three wing B-36s, lead by Brigadier General John D. Ryan, 19th Air Division commander, and Colonel Clarence A. Neely, 7th Bomb Wing vice commander, took part in a United States "Goodwill

Policy Flight", to Central America on 26 May. The aircraft were flown by Lieutenant Colonel Robert A. Bennett, 492nd Bomb Squadron, Major Leslie W. Brockwell, 436th Bomb Squadron, and Major Wesley L. Pendergraft, 9th Bomb Squadron. All three flew a low level flyover of Managua, Nicaragua, for the Nicaraguan Army Day Celebration. During low level, the bombers flew over the Nicaraguan cities of Granada, Managua, Leon, and Matagalpa. Following this, the bombers returned to Carswell landing on 27 May. Overall, the formation flew over 3,800 miles non-stop.

On 5 June 1954, Colonel Chadwell turned over command of the wing to Colonel Clarence A. Neely, former vice commander. Colonel Chadwell departed Carswell the same day for England and his new job, Chief of Staff, 7th Air Division, RAF South Ruslip, London, United Kingdom.

An organizational change in the wing occurred on 1 July, when the 7th Aviation Squadron assigned since 1948, was inactivated. Personnel assigned to the former squadron were transferred to the 7th Armament and Electronics Squadron, Aviation Section

From 9 to 10 July, the quarterly unit simulated combat mission was conducted at Carswell AFB. It involved 22 B-36s (18-7th and 4-11th Bomb Wing) striking industrial targets in northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. It was held in conjunction with Air Defense Command sites located along the United States-Canada border. Purpose of the exercise was to test the striking forces of the 7th and 11th Bomb Wings. Exercise nickname was operation "CHECK POINT". On 9 July, the 7th flew five B-36Js (2-492nd, 1-9th and 2-436th Bomb Squadron) in the exercise, and 13 B-36Js (2-9th, 5-436th and 6-492nd Bomb Squadron) on 10 July.

For the remainder of the month, the wing prepared for a deployment to North Africa in August.

B-36 DEPLOYMENT TO FRENCH MOROCCO That mission to North Africa, was a simulated strike mission using tactics employed in the current wing emergency war plan, with a post strike base of Nouasseur AB, French Morocco. On 1 August 1954, Major Arthur Eberlein's 9th Bomb Squadron crew carried the advanced team to Nouasseur to prepare for the strike aircraft. The strike mission involving nine B-36s (3-9th, 3-436th and 3-492nd Bomb Squadron) departed Carswell on 8 August. Enroute to Morocco, the crews conducted assigned USCM strike missions then recovered at Nouasseur AB on 10 August. Following reconfiguration the bombers returned to Carswell on 16 August.

1954 SAC BOMB COMPETITION The month closed with two wing B-36 crews, one from the 436th Bomb Squadron and one from the 492nd Bomb Squadron, representing the 7th Bomb Wing in the sixth annual SAC Bomb Competition, held at Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico. Wing crews were led by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bareugh, 436th Bomb Squadron and Major Truxton S. Whitney, 492nd Bomb Squadron. Fifteen B-47 wings staged out of Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, while six B-36 and two B-50 wings staged out of Walker AFB, the competition headquarters. Both wing crews did an outstanding job placing second in the overall competition. Major Whitney's crew, with radar operator Lieutenant Colonel Hunter H. Harrell, brought home the coveted Fairchild Trophy by taking first place as Best Bombing Crew in SAC. Much credit for the fine showing obtained was given to the quality maintenance performed by the engine change crew of the 7th Field Maintenance Squadron. The crew included: Technical Sergeants Bueford F. Dodsworth and John P. Kimbell, Staff Sergeants Ivan J. Wright and Larimore Pearson, Airman First Class Elzie L. Corley, and Airman Second Class Billy D. Goodwin and Allan L. Warley. The crew changed a bad B-36 engine in what was believed to be a record time of 5 hours and 15 minutes. The job normally requires 14 hours to three days to complete.

From 11 to 22 October 1954, the wing participated in Operation "FAT CAT", a combined operational readiness and unit simulated combat mission. It was divided into two phases consisting of a deployment phase and strike phase. The route of the flight for the strike mission went as far south as Mexico City, Mexico, then west to Los Angeles, north to Springfield, Illinois, and then east to Texarkana, Texas. A total of sixteen B-36s (6-9th, 5-436th and 5-492nd Bomb Squadron) flew the mission out of Carswell on 14 October. On 18 October, a second flight consisting of 12 B-36s (4-9th, 4-436th and 4-492nd Bomb Squadron) was flown.

The day the exercise finished, 22 October, Mr. B. A. Erickson, Chief of the Flight Division at Convair, San Diego, California, was the guest speaker at the base monthly Flying Safety Meeting. He spoke on "Flying Technique", which was the subject stressed during October. Mr. Erickson flew the first B-36 on its original test flight and has been with the B-36 program ever since.

During November, the wing Directorate of Operations reorganized into three main divisions: Training, which included all air and ground training as well as the new wing control room; Planning Division, with communications, special weapons, observer and radar prediction sections; and the Intelligence Division.

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