

Exactly What or Who is the 91st?

The 91st has been and is many things, but here is part of it:

WWII

The 91st Bomb Group (Heavy) was an air combat unit of the United States Army Air Forces during the Second World War. Classified as a heavy bombardment group, the 91st operated B-17 Flying Fortress aircraft and was known unofficially as "The Ragged Irregulars" or as "Wray's Ragged Irregulars", after the commander who took the group to England.[1] During its service in World War II the unit consisted of the **322nd, 323rd, 324th, and 401st** Bomb Squadrons. The 91st Bomb Group is most noted as the unit in which the bomber Memphis Belle flew, and for having suffered the greatest number of losses of any heavy bomb group in World War II.

The 91st Bomb Group conducted 340 bombing missions with the Eighth Air Force over Europe, operating out of RAF Bassingbourn. Inactivated at the end of the war, the group was brought back in 1947 as a reconnaissance group of the United States Air Force, and then had its lineage and honors bestowed on like-numbered wings of the Strategic Air Command and the Air Force Space Command.

Post WWII

The 91st was one of SAC's longest-lasting and most versatile wings. It began as a reconnaissance wing, evolved into a bomb wing and ended up a missile wing. Its men flew virtually every plane in the SAC inventory. Today it operates Minuteman missile sites.

From 1 July 1947, until its drawdown in February 1952, the **91st Strategic Reconnaissance Group** provided worldwide surveillance, flying RB-29s, RB-45s and RB-47s as a subordinate component of the **91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing**, consisting of the **91st, 322nd, 323rd, and 324th** Strategic Recon Squadrons, the **91st Air Refueling Squadron (Medium)**; the **91st SRS** was later detached. The group was inactivated on 28 May 1952, as part of an SAC-wide termination of groups as an organizational echelon, while the wing and all subordinate units remained active until 8 November 1957.

Korean War

The 91st SRS was detached to the Far East Air Force and flew RB-29 combat reconnaissance missions during the Korean War. Reconnaissance was supplemented by RB-45s flown by other wing units and KB-29 tankers of the 91st ARS

supported the combat efforts.

Between 1950 - 1954 at least seven RB-29s and one RB-45 was lost to hostile fire. At least 51 KIA and 13 POW. (I say "at least" due to my sketchy records. I have names for these numbers.)

Cold War Era

The 91st conducted worldwide reconnaissance missions. Units were detached to England, 1952-1954 and to North Africa and Newfoundland in 1956 and Greenland in 1957, among other locations. Many missions were over unfriendly countries; and many received hostile fire. This phase ended when the wing deactivated in November 1957.

It was redesignated the 91st Bombardment Wing, Heavy and activated on November 15, 1962 at Glasgow AFB, Montana on February 1, 1963. It also began taking delivery on KC-135s. Its new mission was global bombardment, supported by aerial refueling.

Vietnam

On September 11, 1966, the entire wing, except for a small rear echelon, was integrated into the Strategic Air Command's Arc Light Force for combat in Southeast Asia. It returned on March 31, 1967.

From February 5, to April 15, 1968, it was deployed in Okinawa in response to the Pueblo Incident. A month after returning home, it became non-operational. Its aircraft departed and its primary job was closing Glasgow AFB.

Minuteman Missiles

On June 25, 1968, the old reconnaissance and bombardment wing was moved to Minot AFB, North Dakota. There it absorbed the personnel and equipment of the recently inactivated 355 Strategic Missile Wing. It was then redesignated the 91st Strategic Missile Wing.

Status

The 91st Missile Wing, currently maintains Minuteman missile operations at Minot AFB, ND.

The old 91st ARS operates the KC-135R Stratotanker out of McDill AFB, FL.

The old 91st SRS is now the 91st Network Warfare Squadron at Lackland AFB, TX. Also, the 6091st SRS was activated at Yokota Japan to replace the 91st SRS.

Veterans of the 91st Bomb Group established the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association; it is still active.

Veterans of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing established the 91st SRW Association and recently amended their by-laws to include ALL 91st units which followed (B-52s, Missiles, Network Warfare, etc).