



Messerschmitt Bf 109s of Jagdgeschwader 26 (JG 26) and for a brief time Messerschmitt Me 262's, the world's first operational jet-powered fighter aircraft before being liberated by the Allies. Today it is an active USAF air station only 12 miles from SHAPE & NATO Headquarters. The C-37 Gulfstream V aircraft based there provide crucial logistical support for NATO. We will overnight in Mons. Hotel Mons TBD (B)

10 Aug Sun—Margraten & Aachen

Today we head to Margraten to visit the Netherlands American Cemetery. We visit the Aachen Merzbruck Airport (Y-46) which is an active Civilian airport. After being liberated from the Luftwaffe combat engineers of the 818th Engineering Aviation Battalion arrived and laid down a 5000' Pierced Steel Planking metal runway down on the grass airfield for the 365th's use. Farewell Dinner. Hotel Aachen (B/D)

11 Aug Mon—Aachen, Fritzlar & Frankfurt

The final combat field of the 365th is our target today as we visit the Fritzlar Air Base (Y-86). Captured nearly intact the 365th used it to support U.S. forces on their drive to the Elbe River. Today it is home of the German Air Force Kampfhubschrauberregiment (Attack Helicopter Regiment) 36 "Kurzessen." Following lunch we head to Frankfurt where we will have time to explore the nightlife of this vibrant city. Hotel: Frankfurt (B)

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12 Aug Tue—Frankfurt Departure

Today we bid farewell to our group as we depart Germany for home, arriving same day.

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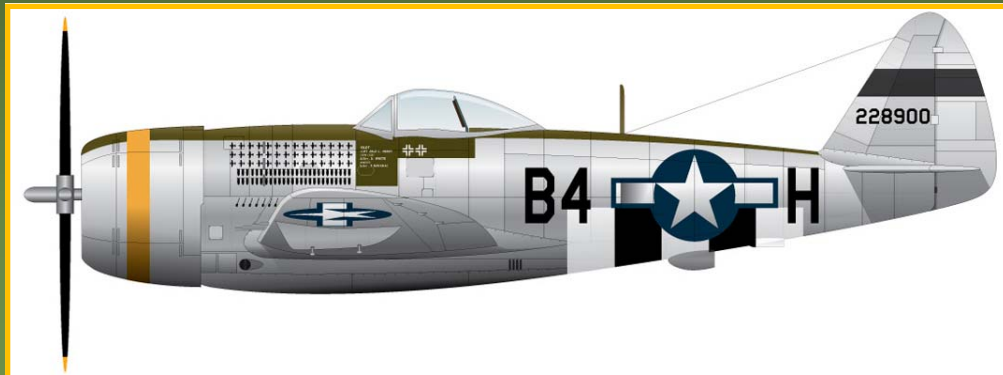
Don't miss the 365th Fighter Group's Return to "Airfields of WWII Europe 2014"



"AIRFIELDS OF THE 365TH"

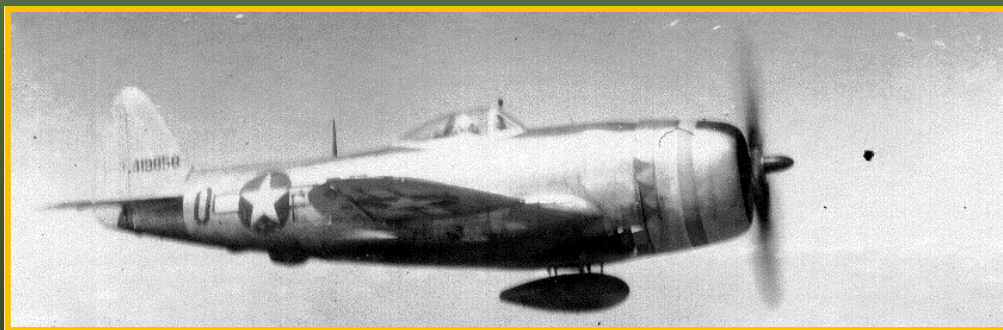
**70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIGHTER GROUP IN WWII EUROPE
 LONDON-PARIS-NORMANDY-REIMS-MONS-AACHEN-FRANKFURT
 31 JUL—11 AUG 2014**

TOUR LEADERS: LTC JOHN POWELL, USA & LTCOL GARY ANDREJAK USAF



P-47 D Thunderbolt

387th FS, 365th FG
 Capt. Arlo Henry



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MILITARY HISTORICAL TOURS is proud to offer another in our series of historic anniversary tours to the battlefields of the world. Our tour starts in London, with a tour of the airfield used by the 365th Fighter Group on its arrival in England. We then proceed across the English Channel to Paris as we move to Normandy where the Group supported "Operation Overlord." We also visit the airfields and aerodromes where the Group was based as it moved eastward in support of the Allied offensive against Nazi Germany. Specific airfields will be included based on veteran's and family input and interest. We conclude our tour with a very special Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the 365th Fighter Group's superlative service during the war. We will conclude our tour on the last airfield where these heroic fighter squadrons flew from at wars end.

Gosfield was known as USAAF Station AAF-154 for security reasons by the USAAF during the war, was the first home of the 365th Fighter Group. This was a temporary measure for the winter month until conditions improved at the south coast advanced landing grounds where they were to be deployed prior to the invasion. Thus the first combat flying unit to occupy Gosfield was the 365th Fighter Group, arriving on 22 December 1943 from Richmond, VA AAF flying Republic P-47 Thunderbolts. The 365th was a group of Ninth Air Force's 84th Fighter Wing, IX Tactical Air Command, the operational squadrons were:

- 386th Fighter Squadron (D5)
- 387th Fighter Squadron (B4)
- 388th Fighter Squadron (C4)

It was several weeks before the 365th received a full complement of 75 P-47D Thunderbolts and mid-February 1944 before they were placed on operational status. Their first mission, flown on 22 February, was a bomber support sweep of short duration over enemy-held territory. Early missions were flown in support of Eighth Air Force B-17 and B-24 bomber operations and on one of these on 2 March, the 365th had its first encounter with enemy fighters in the Bastogne area resulting in the loss of one Thunderbolt and six enemy planes shot down. On 5 March, with only nine missions to its credit the group moved south to RAF Beaulieu in Hampshire. During its stay at Gosfield, the 365th Fighter Group had two P-47s missing in action. The group was stood down three days after arrival so that it could undertake a two-week intensive course in ground attack and fighter-bombing. After training, the 365th flew dive-bombing missions to attack such targets as bridges, aerodromes, rail facilities, gun positions, and V-weapon sites prior to the D-Day invasion. On D-Day, its duties were attacking gun emplacements and communications facilities behind the bridgehead. Two P-47s were lost. On the following day, when 12 separate squadron-sized missions were flown, five more aircraft failed to return.

The 365th was one of the most successful P-47 groups of the Ninth Air Force when it came to air combat with a total of 29 enemy aircraft credited as shot down during the four months the group operated from Beaulieu. On 25 June, the 365th had one of its best days when eight enemy fighter-bombers were destroyed. On 2 July, Lieutenant Colonel Robert Coffey Junior, the Air Executive, became the Ninth Air Force's third Thunderbolt ace. 24 P-47s went missing-in-action during their stay at Beaulieu.

The 365th Group began its move to Europe on 21 June 1944, the first squadron taking up residence at Azeville, France (A-7) on 26 June providing tactical air support in support of U.S. First Army. Today the airfield is a mixture of agricultural fields. We follow the group as it moves to easterly airfields in support of the Army's push into Germany. Sixty-nine pilots and airmen died in the fight across the continent during the Group's 1,241 combat missions.

Return with the most experienced staff of Battlefield Tour Leaders and Historians will combine to make your trip the most enjoyable, relaxing, entertaining and educational experience possible.

For questions or additional information please e-mail LtCol Gary Andrejak, USAF at gandrejak@miltours.com or LTC John Powell at jpowell@miltours.com.



2007 aerial view with airstrip in blue-Col Ray J. Stecker, CO of 365FG, in front of Chateau de Fontenay



Tour Price: \$ 2,500*

Based on double Occupancy

Single Supplement: \$ 1,195

Tour Price Includes:

Deluxe Hotel Accommodations

*

Air-conditioned deluxe motorcoach with onboard restroom

*

Meals as indicated in itinerary

*

Historical Trip information packet, containing maps & other Tour information

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Services of experienced Tour Leaders and local guides

Get your own or Book Optional MHT Airfare: Round-trip economy or business class airfare from your hometown via Paris CDG/Frankfurt price quoted upon registration!

* - Price based on € conversion rate at final billing



Daily Itinerary

31 Jul Thu (or earlier)—Individual Departure from USA. Overnight flight to London.

1 Aug Fri—London

Group assembles at London hotel. Today is a day at leisure to explore London. You will have the option for the sight-seeing, open top double-decker tour buses ("Hop-On-Hop Off" & audio tour guide allowing you to visit the amazing Imperial War Museum, Churchill's War Cabinet Rooms, Parliament and much more. Early evening wine reception and tour overview briefing. Hotel: Tower Bridge Hilton



2 Aug Sat—London & Braintree

After breakfast we depart for RAF Gosfield Airfield (AAF-154). We have permission from the current owner to walk one remaining runway intact. We will enjoy "Happy Hour" and spend overnight at the 365th's favorite the White Hart Braintree Hotel. Hotel: White Hart Braintree (B)



3 Aug Sun—Cambridge & Duxford

After breakfast, we head to Cambridge American Cemetery and then onto "The Eagle" Pub for lunch. We finish the day at the Imperial War Museum Duxford Airfield. Hotel: The Cambridge Belfry (B)

4 Aug Mon—Cambridge to London to Paris

Morning departure from St. Pancras Station and transfer to the "Eurostar" Train for Paris Gare du Nord Station. Upon arrival in the "City of Light" we will have a short city tour and then evening on your own to enjoy Paris. Hotel: Concorde Montparnasse (B)



5 Aug Tue—Paris to Caen

Morning departure to Normandy. Time permitting, we will stop at Rouen to view the magnificent Cathedral and the site of Joan of Arc's execution. Cathedral. Hotel: Best Western Moderne Caen (B)



6 Aug Wed—Normandy & Azeville

Today we depart Caen to Azeville Airfield (A-

7) the 365th first home on the continent. Today it is farmland but we will walk the ground and view the Chateau de Fontenay, still in ruins from the battle for Normandy. Afterwards we will visit Omaha Beach and the Normandy American Cemetery and the new "Overlord" Museum. Hotel: Best Western Moderne Caen (B)

7 Aug Thu—Juvincourt-et-Damary & Reims

This morning we board the bus for Juvincourt Airfield (A-68) that is also decommissioned but some buildings and runway remain in the farmland locale. After lunch we will stop at General Dwight Eisenhower's temporary headquarters – a small schoolhouse in Reims where on May 7th 1945 General Alfred Jodl representing Nazi Germany signed the surrender documents bringing World War Two in Europe to an end. Before checking in to our hotel we view the famed Reims Cathedral. Hotel: Holiday Inn Reims (B)

8 Aug Fri— Reims & Metz

On the way to Metz we will visit the epic 1916 battlefields of Verdun. Metz-Frescaty Air Base (Y-34) was a front line French Air Force Base, primarily being used for command, control and training along with electronic warfare. The base was put in reserve status in 2012. Metz-Frescaty has to be the oldest airfield the 365th used as it started life pre-WWI as a Zeppelin base and was a German aerodrome during WWI. The cold winter of 1944/45 saw the 365th operating here and it was subjected to one of the last Luftwaffe air attacks on 1 Jan 1945 in support of the Battle of the Bulge. The "Hell Hawks" suffered 22 P-47s destroyed and 11 damaged but knocked out almost half the attacking force. Hotel: Mercure Metz Centre (B)

9 Aug Sat—Florennes, Chièvres & Mons

We start the day with a visit to Florennes Air Base (A-78) which is an active Belgian Air Force F-16 base. Next stop is Chièvres Air Base (A-84) that housed Luftwaffe

