

AIRCRAFT HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

Part II - Post World War II

by

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As we have observed in Part I of this discussion, the aviation sections of the pre-war National Guard were primarily observation supplements to infantry divisions. As a result of the remarkable transformation in aerial warfare that grew out of World War II, however, an entirely new organization came into being on June 30, 1946. On that date Federal recognition was granted to the first unit of the new National Guard, the 120th Fighter Squadron of Denver, Colorado. Still, the National Guard of 1946 had little resemblance to today's jet-equipped organization of 617 recognized units with a membership of 63,773. The purpose of the following report is to trace this growth over the past decade with particular reference to the types of aircraft in service with the ANG.

From 1946 to 1948 the aviation units of the National Guard filled a position roughly similar to that of the Army Air Forces in World War II. But with the creation of the separate U.S. Air Force a new name and status was given to NG aviation sections, that is, the Air National Guard. The Air Guard was now a distinct and separate organization from the Army Guard, and came directly under the National Guard Bureau in Washington. The markings of ANG aircraft were changed at this time and they afford a way of roughly dating photographs of aircraft in service throughout the ten year period, e.g. F-51's. Before 1948 ANG aircraft carried an abbreviation of the state's name plus the letters "NG". Generally there was a space between these two groups of initials, but observation by the authors would indicate that if there was a standardized rule it was rarely followed. In most cases the national military aircraft insignia was omitted from the fuselage, and in some cases was replaced by a state emblem (see Fig. 2). Furthermore, the abbreviations of state names were quite irregular, for example Arizona was abbreviated both "ARIZ" and "AZ", Washington was seen as "WASH" and "WN", and California varied between "CALIF" and "CAL". When the state-name abbreviation and the letters "NG" were not separated or hyphenated, aircraft observers were treated to seeing various types with large inscriptions such as "FANG" (Florida National Guard) and "MONG" (Missouri National Guard, see Fig. 4) which often proved quite amusing. With the new Air National Guard, markings have become standardized, the national insignia now appearing on the fuselage and separating the state name and "ANG" (See Fig. 5). The new markings are smaller but still quite distinctive and deserve the attention of all markings specialists. There have been some exceptions to the new standards but they have usually arisen out of the peculiar configurations of particular aircraft. For example, the inscription is often on the auxiliary fuel tanks of jet aircraft when they are mounted on the wing-tips. As a general rule the letters "ANG" are painted on the fin above the Air Force serial number and they are smaller than the wing and fuselage markings. One exception to all the general rules mentioned above are the C-47's of ANG squadrons assigned for the use of the State Governor. These very often had the full name of the state spelled out on the length of the fuselage.

The use of aircraft in infantry National Guard units was not halted in 1948 when the ANG was founded, but has continued in a similar capacity with the U.S. Army

aviation sections. However, these types continue to use the initials "NG" rather than "ANG" in their markings. This should cause no confusion as their function is apparent from the aircraft itself. Aircraft in use have included L-5, L-13A, L-16A, L-17, L-19A etc. During fiscal year 1954 40 helicopters were delivered to infantry units, being H-13's and H-23A's and B's. As of June 30, 1953 there were approximately 470 L-19's assigned to Army NG aviation, and these are today the most predominant type still seen with the "NG" markings.

It was during the Korean War that the Air National Guard became galvanized into the first line organization that it is today. The first units went on active duty in October 1950, and by June 30, 1951, three-fourths of the Air Guard was in service. The ANG contributed 45,000 officers and airmen, as well as 19 Fighter Wings, 2 Light Bomb Wings, and one Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. At least four ANG pilots became aces in the Korean air war, the leader being Maj. James Hagerstrom, TEX-ANG, with 8½ kills. At the end of fiscal 1950, the Guard had made considerable progress in replacing their piston fighters with jets (F-80's and F-84's), but all of these were recalled to active Air Force service with the war, and in May 1951 the USAF began delivery of factory rebuilt F-51H's as replacements. As soon as the demands in Korea lessened ANG units at home were resupplied with jet aircraft, the first deliveries coming in fiscal 1953 with 6 T-33A's and 175 F-80's.

During the Korean War the ANG was reorganized into 27 Combat Wings to conform to the regular Air Force method of organization. As of June 30, 1956, the ANG operated a total of 131 installations located in every state as well as the Territories of Alaska and Hawaii, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. These service 617 federally recognized units. The composition of the ANG in Wings is as follows (see also Table II):

- 15 Fighter-Interceptor Wings (day-fighter equipped)
- 8 Air Defense Wings (all-weather fighter equipped)
- 2 Tactical Bombardment Wings
- 2 Tactical Reconnaissance Wings
- 4 Air Resupply Groups
- 93 Flying Squadrons
- 3 Tactical Control Groups
- 3 Communications Groups

From the above list we should note especially the Air Defense Wings and the Air Resupply Groups. With regard to the former, in August 1954, the ANG was incorporated into the Air Defense Augmentation Plan of the USAF's Air Defense Command. This plan calls for two jet fighters and five combat aircrews to be on runway alert seven days a week. Seventeen ANG units are participating in this program in certain strategically vital areas. As for the four Air Resupply Groups, their mission is the dropping of supplies to isolated units behind enemy lines and were created as a result of successful operations of similar groups in the Korean War. Of particular interest to aviation enthusiasts, however, is that to accomplish this mission they are supplied with black-painted C-46's and SA-16A's. The 129th Air Resupply Group of the CALIF ANG at Hayward, California, was the first such organization to be created, and is equipped with 4 C-46D's and 3 SA-16A's.

Two annual competitive exercises of the post-Korean ANG have been of interest to aviation enthusiasts. These are the Earl T. Ricks Memorial Trophy Event and the Air National Guard Fighter Gunnery Trophy. The Ricks event is a cross-country air race for jet aircraft and was founded May 15, 1954. The first running was held July 24,



1. F-51D's of 144th Ftr Wing (California - Nevada - Utah) 8-29-50

W. T. Larkins



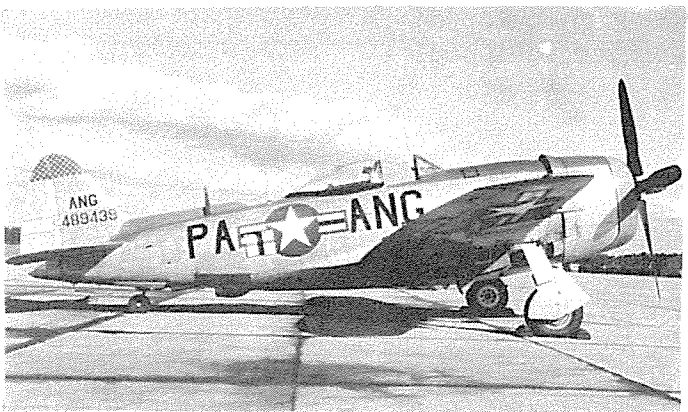
2. NAA AT-6D (42-85258)

C.A. Johnson



3. Douglas B-26B

L. Coombs



4. F-47N-25-RE

W. J. Balogh



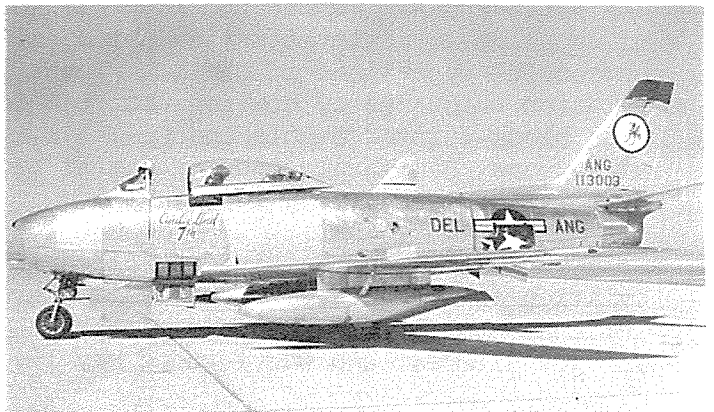
5. Douglas C-47A

E. M. Sommerich



6. F-84B-1-RE

D. D. Olson



7. F-86E-15-NA

D. D. Olson

1954, between Ontario International Airport (California) and Detroit's Wayne-Major Airport. It was won by Lt. C. J. Young, 141st Ftr-Bomber Sqdn., NJ-ANG, in an F-86. On July 2, 1955, the race was again held on the same course with slightly modified rules allowing different types of jets to compete with each other. The winner was Lt. Col. J. A. Poston, 166th Ftr-Bomber Sqdn., OHIO-ANG, flying an F-84E. This year the rules were again modified so that only squadrons with identical equipment can compete with each other, and the entry requirements will be rotated in the future to include all ANG jet-fighter types. This year the race was limited to Sabres, and was flown July 28, 1956, between Hamilton AFB, near San Francisco, and Moisant International Airport, New Orleans. The winner was Maj. D. F. McCallister, 142nd Ftr-Incptr. Sqn., DEL-ANG, in F-86E-15-NA, 51-13003 (see Fig. 7).

The first ANG Gunnery Meet was held October 2-9, 1954, at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, and was won by a team of ANG jet pilots representing the 140th Interceptor Wing of Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming. This same group went on to win third place in the Air Force Fighter Gunnery Meet at Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada, in the fall of 1955. This amply demonstrates the effectiveness of the training being given to National Guard pilots. Today the Air National Guard is probably the most advanced professionally and is certainly the most modernly equipped of America's reserve military components.

We shall now turn to a detailed analysis of this equipment over the past ten years. As of June 30, 1956, the ANG was approximately 80% equipped with a total of 2,185 aircraft. These included 1,366 tactical jets, 216 T-33A jet trainers, 357 conventional tactical aircraft, and 246 support and other training types.

Table 1. National Guard Aircraft Types (1946-1956)

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Model</u>	<u>Example (Taken from photographs)</u>	
Aeronca	L-16A	47-1126	TEX NG
Beech	C-45H	52-10864	WYO ANG (See Note 1)
	T-11	41-27460	MICH ANG
	H-13	Unknown	PENN NG
Bell	L-19A	51-4711	NY NG
Cessna	LC-126A	49-1959	NG HEADQUARTERS
	L-13A	47-376	MICH NG
Convair	C-46D	44-78407	CALIF ANG
Curtiss	B-26B		See Fig. 3
	B-26C	44-35405	ALA ANG
Douglas	C-47A		See Fig. 4
	VC-47A	42-93184	ARIZ NG
	C-53	41-20088	NG HEADQUARTERS
Grunman	SA-16A	49-89	CALIF ANG
Hiller	H-23A, B		(No example known)
Lockheed	RF-80A	45-8348	ARK ANG
	F-80C	49-717	ALASKA ANG
	RF-80C		(See Note 2)
	T-33A	52-9401	PENN ANG
	F-94A	49-2528	MINN ANG
	F-94B	50-805	VT ANG
	F-94C		(See Note 2)

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