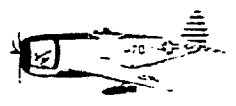




86th Fighter Bomber Group Association  
526th Fighter Bomber Squadron



**WORLD WAR II DIARY**

**526 FIGHTER SQUADRON**

**86<sup>TH</sup> FIGHTER GROUP**

**FEBRUARY, 1942 – OCTOBER, 1945**

O. H. ad. to 30 Sept '42

526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B Gp., APC  
520, c/o Postmaster, N.Y., N.Y.  
Office of the Intelligence Officer.

26 October 1943.

SUBJECT: Squadron History.

To: Intelligence Officer, 86 Fighter-Bomber Gp., A.P.O. 520, New York, N.Y.

1. Following is an outline history of the 526 Fighter-Bomber Sq., 86 Fighter-Bomber Gp., A.P.O. 520, c/o Postmaster, New York City, New York (formerly the 310th Bomb Sq. (D), 86th Bomb Gp. (D), APO 3659, c/o Postmaster, New York City, N.Y.; and APC 525, c/o Postmaster, New York City, N.Y.) as per request.

*Frederic H. Henriod*  
Frederic H. Henriod, Capt. A.C. 0917801.  
526 F-B. Sq., 86 F-B. Gp., APC 520, NY, NY.

Incl: 2 cy outline hist

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OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE 526 F-B SQ., 86 F-B GP., APC 520, NEW YORK CITY, N.Y.

A. ORIGINAL UNIT:

1. Designation: 310th Bomb. Sq. (L), 86th Bomb. Gp. (L).
2. Date of Organization: 10 February 1942.
3. Place of Organization: Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
4. Authority: General Order No. 5, Hq. Third Air Force, Tampa, Florida.
5. Personnel: Obtained from the 57th Bomb. Sq. (L), 43th Bomb. Gp. (L), AFCC.

B. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION:

1. On 19 June 1942, the personnel of the organization were transferred from the 310th Bomb. Sq. (L), 86th Bomb. Gp. (L) AFCC to the 387th Bomb. Sq. (L), 312th Bomb. Gp. (L) AFCC, per Special Order 149, dated 19 June 1942, Hq. Army Air Base, Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
2. On 4 August, 1942, 126 men (entire strength) transferred from 387th Bomb. Sq. (L), 312th Bomb. Gp. (L) AFCC, to A/C unassigned and departed from Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma, for Key Field Air Base, Meridian, Mississippi, where they arrived on 7 August 1942.

3. On 7 August 1942, 126 E.M. assigned and joined organization, from A/C unassigned. 23 E.M. from Hunter Field, Savannah, Georgia, assigned and joined organization.

4. On 11 August 1942, all personnel of organization transferred from the 587th Bomb. Sq. (L), 312th Bomb. Gp. (L) AFCC to 310th Bomb. Sq. (L), 86th Bomb. Gp. (L) AAF, per Par. 5, Special Order No. 188, Hq. Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma.

5. On 1 September 1942, new Table of Organization assigned Squadron. Organization changed from Light Bombardment Squadron to Dive Bombardment Squadron, and authorized A-31 and A-24 type aircraft.

6. On 1 June 1943, Fighter Table of Organization assigned to Squadron, superseding Dive Bombardment Table of Organization.

7. On 11 September 1943, Designation of Organization changed from 310th Bomb. Sq. (D), 86th Bomb. Gp. (D) to 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 86th Fighter-Bomber Group., per General Order 49, Hq. 12th Air Force, dated 5 September 1943.

C. STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATION:

1. At beginning of period, 1 officer and 32 enlisted men assigned, Special Order 18, Hq. II A.S.C., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, dated 3 February 1942.

2. Monthly Strength:

a. 28 February 1942,	1 officer assigned	32 E.M. assigned
b. 31 March 1942		36 E.M. assigned
c. 30 April 1942		36 E.M. assigned
d. 31 May 1942		44 E.M. assigned
e. 30 June 1942		84 E.M. assigned
f. 31 July 1942		126 E.M. assigned
g. 11 August 1942	11 officers assigned	197 E.M. assigned
h. 30 Sept. 1942	23 officers assigned	211 E.M. assigned
i. 31 October 1942	27 officers assigned	254 E.M. assigned
j. 30 November 1942	27 officers assigned	267 E.M. assigned
k. 31 December 1942	32 officers assigned	270 E.M. assigned
l. 31 January 1943	32 officers assigned	253 E.M. assigned
m. 28 February 1943	33 officers assigned	254 E.M. assigned
n. 31 March 1943	31 officers assigned	256 E.M. assigned
o. 30 April 1943	32 officers assigned	253 E.M. assigned
p. 31 May 1943	32 officers assigned	253 E.M. assigned
q. 30 June 1943	48 officers assigned	255 E.M. assigned
r. 31 July 1943	47 officers assigned	246 E.M. assigned
s. 31 August 1943	46 officers assigned	244 E.M. assigned
t. 30 September 1943	44 officers assigned	253 E.M. assigned

D. STATIONS: (Permanent or temporary) of unit or parts thereof.

1. Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 10 February 1942 to 4 August 1942.

2. Enroute to Key Field, Meridian, Mississippi, from Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, via train, 4 August 1942 to 7 August, 1942.

- 3. Key Field, Meridian, Mississippi, 7 August 1942 to 19 March 1943.
  - a. 22 officers and 98 E.M. on D.S. to Keesler Field, Biloxi, Mississippi, from 3 February 1943 to 17 February 1943.
- 4. Enroute to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey from Key Field, Meridian, Mississippi, via rail, 19 March 1943 to 21 March 1943.
- 5. Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, 21 March 1943 to 27 April 1943.
- 6. Enroute to New York City P. of E. from Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, via rail, 27 April 1943.
- 7. Enroute to Mers El Kabir, Algeria, North Africa, from New York City P. of E. via water, army transport "John Ericson", 27 April 1943 to 11 May 1943.
- 8. Enroute to La Senia Air Base, near Oran, Algeria, North Africa, 11 May 1943.
- 9. La Senia Air Base, Algeria, North Africa, 11 May 1943 to 11 June 1943.
  - a. D.S. Medioune, Morocco, North Africa, Flight Echelon, 17 officers and 21 enlisted men, 15 May 1943 to 9 June 1943.
- 10. Tafaraoui Air Base, Algeria, North Africa, 11 June 1943 to 7 July 1943.
  - a. D.S. to N. Korba L/G, Tunisia, North Africa, from Tafaraoui Air Base, Flight Echelon, 12 officers and 129 enlisted men, 2 July 1943 to 12 July 1943.
- 11. Enroute to N. Korba L/G, Tunisia, North Africa, from Tafaraoui Air Base, Algeria, North Africa via rail and motor transport, 7 July 1943 to 12 July 1943.
- 12. N. Korba L/G, Tunisia, North Africa, 12 July 1943 to 21 July 1943.
  - a. D.S. W. Gela L/G, Sicily, Flight Echelon, 39 officers and 30 enlisted men, 20 July 1943 to 31 July 1943.
- 13. Staging area, Bizerte, Tunisia, 21 July 1943 to 27 July 1943.
- 14. Enroute to W. Gela L/G, Sicily, from staging area at Bizerte, Tunisia, North Africa, via L.S.T. 388, 27 July 1943 to 31 July 1943.
- 15. W. Gela L/G, Sicily, 31 July 1943 to 1 September 1943.
  - a. D.S. to Barcellona, Sicily, Flight Echelon, 10 officers and 68 enlisted men, 27 August 1943 to 1 September 1943.
- 16. Barcellona L/G, Sicily, 1 September 1943 to 21 September 1943.
  - a. D.S. to Sele L/G, Italy, 3 officers and 0 enlisted men, September to 30 September 1943.
  - b. D.S. to Sele L/G, Italy, 33 officers and 99 enlisted men, 16 September 1943 to 30 September 1943.

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17. Staging area at Milazzo, Sicily, 21 September 1943 to 22 September 1943, Area #151.

18. Enroute to Sele Air Field (Salerno Area), Italy from staging area at Milazzo, Sicily via L.S.T. from 22 September 1943 to 23 September 1943.

19. Sele Air Field, Italy, 23 September 1943 to 30 September 1943 (end of report period).

E. CAMPAIGNS:

1. Sicilian Campaign:

a. First Squadron sortie flown by Lt. Wilson E. Gilliland, who accompanied the 27th Bombardment Group on an LST mission over Southwest Sicily.

b. First Squadron mission flown on 7 July 1943, by Commanding Officer, Capt. Reginald D. Winters, Capt. Stell, 1st Lt. Harry W. Dorris and 1st Lt. Wilson E. Gilliland, strafing and bombing the railway station, warehouse and factories at Mazara, South of Marsala, Sicily, in which mission, Capt. Stell was attacked by three enemy aircraft, receiving serious damage to his plane and being himself wounded by enemy aircraft fire.

c. The Squadron continued from 7 July 1943 to 18 August 1943 (date Sicily completely occupied by Allied forces), to perform strafing, bombing and reconnaissance missions over Sicily and Italy, executing 84 completed missions during that period in support of the ground and naval forces, and on independent targets designed to soften the enemy in the rear.

2. Italian Campaign:

a. The first Squadron mission over Italy was flown on 4 August 1943, consisting of a twelve aircraft bombing mission over the railroad yards at Rosarno, Italy, in which Lts. Estep, Oman, Cook, Ferguson, Claus, Klass, Fisby, Trapman, Orr, Greer, Kones and Capt. Stout participated, with Lt. Fager as a spare, causing serious damage to the marshalling yards at the above mentioned place.

b. The Squadron continued flying missions over Italy from 4 August 1943 to 30 September 1943 (end of report date), consisting of strafing, bombing, patrol and reconnaissance sorties, executing 76 complete missions (averaging approximately 10 aircraft each) between 18 August 1943 and 30 September 1943, which number is included in 112 completed missions flown by the Squadron between the 4 August 1943 and 30 September 1943. The total number of completed missions flown by the Squadron from its inception into combat on 7 July 1943 to 30 September 1943 amounted to 160, with a total of 1407 sorties comprising said missions.

c. The Squadron moved to Italy as mentioned above and continued operation from Sele Air Base, Italy, particularly in close support of ground forces, from that date until the 30 September, 1943, during the critical stages of the Salerno Area battles.

F. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS:

1. Capt. Reginald D. Winters commanded the Squadron during the Sicilian

Campaign, up to and including 10 July, 1943, on which date he was killed in action or missing in action, not returning to base from a mission on that date. During his command, Capt. Winters displayed unusual and outstanding and bravery, and particularly on 7 July 1943 when he drove off three enemy aircraft who were attacking Capt. Glenn A. Stell, who was wounded and who was to later be appointed commanding officer in the place of Capt. Winters.

2. Major Glenn A. Stell as Operations Officer and senior officer in command at the time, temporarily assumed the office of commanding officer of the Squadron on 10 July 1943, and on 13 July 1943 was permanently appointed Commanding Officer of the 525th F-B. Sq. (then the 310th Bomb. Sq.), which office he held at the date of the end of this report, 30 Sept. 1943. Prior to and during the time Major Stell has been Commanding Officer of the Squadron, he has highly distinguished himself as a superior pilot, whose courage and bravery have won for him the highest praise from those working under him, together with that of his superior officers in the Group. Particularly, on 7 July 1943, Major Stell was attacked by three enemy aircraft, and after having his plane seriously damaged to the extent that altitude and speed control were lost, he flew his plane at dangerously low altitude from Sicily across the Mediterranean to Korba, Tunisia, at a dangerously low air speed, successfully bringing himself and his plane back to base, although he had been wounded in the encounter. His record from the inception of combat service to date is replete with similar performances of heroism, courage and leadership.

G. LOSSES IN ACTION:

1. Sicilian Campaign.

a. Wounded:

1. Lt. Charles E. Place, wounded in hip, arm and shoulder by enemy anti-aircraft fire on 18 July 1943, at which time, although suffering from serious loss of blood and shock, he brought his plane back to base without throttle, which had been destroyed.

2. Lt. Robert F. Hood, wounded on leg on 16 July, 1943, when he bailed out near Camicatti, Sicily, after having been hit by anti-aircraft fire.

3. Major Glenn A. Stell, wounded by enemy aircraft fire, in the leg, in encounter near Marsala, Italy, 7 July 1943.

b. Missing in Action:

1. Lt. John P. Torland, seen to bail out near Tricina, Sicily, on 18 July 1943, after having been struck, apparently, by enemy anti-aircraft fire. Eyewitnesses reliably reported that he was taken prisoner by German officer and enlisted men.

2. Lt. Francis D. McCarroll, seen to bail out near Regalbuto, Sicily, eyewitnesses reliably reporting that he was seen to land safely and become a prisoner of war at the hands of German and Italian personnel.

3. Lt. Walter I. Kones, killed in action one mile West of Mazzarino, Sicily, on 27 August 1943, mechanical failure of aircraft, while fifteen miles from base on return trip of bombing mission over Sibari, Italy.

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4. Lt. Harold Sittler, killed in action at Maso, Sicily, on 1 August 1943, after engaging in a strafing mission. Cause of death unknown.

5. Lt. George W. Campbell, reliably reported to be a prisoner of war, after bailing out near Mt. Etna, Sicily. Cause of bailout unknown.

2. Italian Campaign:

a. Wounded in Action:

1. None.

b. Missing in Action:

1. Lt. Herbert C. Estep, Jr., failed to return from mission on 12 September 1943, cause unknown.

H. MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN ACTION.

1. Lt. Harold V. Sittler, leading a twelve aircraft flight over Messina Harbor on 24 July 1943, one of the heaviest defended flak areas known, scoring direct hits on enemy cruiser and 2 destroyers, for which, among other things, Lt. Sittler has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

2. Lt. Charles E. Place, who, after having been seriously injured by enemy flak, and whose plane was damaged to the extent that there was no throttle control, successfully brought his plane back to base, making a successful landing after being required, while suffering severe shock and great loss of blood, to reach across his body with an uninjured arm and cut the switch, for which feat, among other things, he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

3. Lt. Robert F. Hood, who, after having been wounded and his plane seriously damaged by enemy flak, bailed out, landing on the ground between friendly and enemy lines, being held up and robbed by an Italian officer, eluding capture with the help of friendly troops, for which feat, among others, he has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross, and for which engagement he has been awarded the Purple Heart.

4. Major Glenn A. Stell, commanding officer, who has been awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat with enemy aircraft in flight on 7 July 1943.

5. Lt. Jewell G. Dyer, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism over and above duty while attempting to rescue personnel near a burning plane on 10 July 1943 in the vicinity of live bombs which exploded.

6. S/Sgt. Jay M. Biesecker, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism in rescue work near a burning, exploding aircraft on 10 July 1943.

7. Sgt. John J. Gaffney, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism in rescue work near a burning, exploding aircraft on 10 July 1943, in which he was seriously wounded.

8. Sgt. Clifford R. Young, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism incident to rescue work near a burning aircraft at Korba, Tunisia, 10 July 1943.

9. Cpl. Clifford E. Herman, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism incident to rescue work at Korba, Tunisia, in the vicinity of a burning, exploding aircraft.

10. Pfc. Carmon Palmieri, who has been awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism incident to rescue work at Korba, Tunisia, in the vicinity of a burning, exploding aircraft, in which Pfc Palmieri received serious injuries.

11. The following officer pilots, who have been recommended, and their applications forwarded to higher authority, for the Distinguished Flying Cross, based on their unusual bravery and heroism during aerial flight over enemy territory; and for individual feats of courage and bravery over and above their line of duty:

- 1. Major Glenn A. Stell, Capt. John G. Claus, Capt. Wilson B. Gilliland, 1st. Lt. Joseph F. Campagna, 1st. Lt. Harry W. Dorris, 1st. Lt. Herbert C. Estep, Jr., 1st. Lt. Everett E. Fager, 1st. Lt. Harold H. Hill, 1st. Lt. Robert F. Hood, 1st. Lt. Hugh A. Pennal, 1st Lt. Michael P. Yannell, 1st. Lt. Robert J. Frisby, and 1st. Lt. Dale R. Garrels.

✓ 10 Feb 1943 -  
C.F. 1743

526 F-2 Co., 86 F-2 Gp., APO  
520, c/o Postmaster, N.Y., N.Y.  
Office of the Intelligence Officer.

1 November 43.

SUBJECT: Squadron History.

To: Intelligence Officer, 86 Fighter-Bomber Gp., A.P.O. 520, New York, N.Y.

1. Following is monthly supplement to Outline History required by AII ABC directive and as requested by you, covering the month of October, 1943.

*Frederic H. Henriod*  
Frederic H. Henriod, Capt. 0917501,  
526 F-2 Sq. 86 F-2 Gp. APO 520, NY, NY.

Incl: 1 cy outline history mo Oct 43

OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE 526 F-2 SQ., 86 F-2 GP., APO 520, NEW YORK CITY, N.Y.

A. ORIGINAL UNIT: See original outline.

B. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION:

1. On 12 October 1943, the advance party of the Squadron moved to Pomigliano, Italy, together with the planes.

C. STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATION:

1. Monthly Strength:  
a. 31 October 1943                      officers assigned                      E.N. assigned

D. STATICS: (Permanent or temporary) or unit or parts thereof.

1. Advance party enroute Sele River airport, Italy, to Pomigliano, Italy, via motor transport, 12 October 1943.

2. Rear echelon enroute Sele River Airport, Italy, to Pomigliano, Italy, via motor transport, 23 October 1943.

E. CAMPAIGNS: Operations continued over Italy, otherwise no additions.

F. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS: No additions.

G. LOSSES IN ACTION:

1. Italian Campaign:

a. Capt. John G. Claus, missing in action near Civita Castellano, Italy.

11-1-43

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
Redesignated 526 37r Bomba Sq.

SQ - FI - 526 - H  
27 APR 43 - O.S. 1943

Sheet No. 1 War Diary, 310 B. Sq., 86 B. Co.,

Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.

Month of April, 1943. Prepared by Frederic E. Henriod, 1st Lt., 310 B. Sq. 86 B Co.

DAY

EVENTS

- 27 The Squadron entrained at Camp Kilmer at night, and left for the Port of Embarkation at Staten Island, with drawn curtains in the coaches. The coaches were piled with men, B-4 bags, guns, bed rolls and other equipment, so that it was impossible to walk down the aisles. The slow trip to New York saw some of the men playing chess, others sleeping on the back of their necks, and most everyone "bitching" about something. It was insufferably hot in the closed in coaches. Sometime in the morning hours, about 1 A.M. we left the train and carried our B-4 bags, and full equipment about half mile to the waiting ferry where we finally arrived exhausted. Almost in silence we watched the darkened buildings of New York City grow dimmer in the chill sea air and finally arrived at the docks where we boarded the "John Ericsson" (formerly the Kungsholm), after waiting for what seemed like hours, and after walking another quarter of a mile to the gangplank.
- 28 Remained aboard ship all day preparatory to departure, during which time the officers and enlisted men, comprising some three hundred men in our outfit, prepared for the sea voyage. In this early stage we had already heard rumors that we were to dock at Oran, Algiers, North Africa. Precautions against secrecy had been lax all along the line, and both officers and men had their wives in hotels in New Brunswick or New York while we were at the staging area. We never did discover how everyone seemed to know where we were going before we got started. During the day the enlisted men were trying to make themselves as comfortable as possible on the open deck where they slept during the voyage. Some were quartered in cramped, three deck bunks inside, where the air soon became stale. We soon found that bathing or shower facilities were highly unsatisfactory.
- 29 About 9 A.M. our ship pulled away from the docks and set out for Oran. Aboard to were about 1500 negroes, an engineers outfit, a contingent of Army nurses, and several other contingents. The/shone all day on a calm sea. We followed the coast South, zig-zagging as we went. During the first two days out, the enlisted men quickly learned that one of the few pastimes on a boat loaded with soldiers, was poker. Games flourished, and thousands of dollars passed hands during the voyage. Some played pinochle, others just wanded around.
- 30

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**CONFIDENTIAL**

Sheet No. 2. War Diary, 310 B. Sq., 26 B. Op. APO 3659, c/o P-master, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of May, 1943. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, 1st. Lt. 310 B Sq. 26 B Op.

1 The sea remained calm throughout the entire voyage of 12½ days, during which time to we were advised that submarines had been near on several occasions, and that two 11 had been destroyed by the naval escort. These were unauthenticated "latrine" rumors and we never did find out just what happened. As we were about to pass North of Casablanca, half of the convoy split off and went to that city, while the remainder of us continued on to Oran. During the trip many of the boys who had never been on the water before, became sick, which added to the general discomfort. A good number of them had the ~~flu~~ flu. Significantly, there was no segregation in the ship hospital of whites and blacks. Due to the lack of bathing facilities and scarcity of water, the men became dirty and unshaven. The evenings and nights were cold and there was considerable uncomfortableness on the open decks where the men slept. The officers were allowed on the upper deck where the Air Corps and Engineers officers spent considerable time with the nurses on board. This association continued into the night throughout the voyage. A ship Chaplain named Parker did considerable preaching over the loudspeaker system, and there was considerable music also. In the evenings, there was usually a movie of ancient vintage in the overcrowded, overheated Officer's Lounge, which rendezvous was a misnomered, large room with wooden benches, a ping pong table, officer's bunks on either side separated by partitions. The food on the ship was excellent. Highlight entertainment values were furnished by colored jam sessions that seemed to just appear around the piano. On the lower deck, an equally hot white band, consisting of guitar, trumpet, clarinet and drums, amused a good many of the soldiers and seamen. One afternoon about dusk we approached and passed Gibraltar, which to most everyone on the boat was a spectacle of awe. Most of the boys had never been away from home until the war started, and this was their first view of foreign soil. Coming into the harbor at Oran proved equally as interesting, and we docked at about 4 P.M., shortly after an announcement on the radio announced the capture of the last elements of the Axis forces in Tunisia. After waiting on board all afternoon, we finally left the ship with our equipment and marched a mile or so along the quay, where waiting trucks took us through the crooked streets of Oran to a field near the airdrome at LaSenia. The night was black as pitch, and the enlisted men managed somehow to pick a bare spot and wrap themselves up in blankets for a restless night. The officers were taken to a barracks building across the road, where they slept for the first time on French beds consisting only of two inch wide slabs of steel. This first night proved to be one of the roughest we had encountered.

12 The officers and men pitched in and arranged a bivouac area in what looked like a corn or wheatfield, with rough furrows. The night before, we had heard the children in the streets hollering for "bon Bon" and "cigaretta" and this constant plea followed us the next day and as long as we were in Africa. The natives gathered around and begged for anything they could get. They are filthy and appear to be infested with vermin, and it is not unusual to see them relieving themselves alongside the roads and streets, or even in the streets. The children appear to be small and undernourished. They all go barefoot and wear nothing but rags. The thing that interested most of the men was the fact that the women went about with what looked like a white sheet wrapped around them, covering their heads, with one eye poking out of a small aperture in the sheet which was folded and held together by the women at nose level.

