



“THE LAST ACE”
United States Air Force Reserve
by Senior Master Sergeant Darby Perrin, 2015

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In April 1917, Suggsville, Alabama, native Charles d'Olive joined the United States Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps. After initial flight training in the US and France, d'Olive joined the 93rd Aero Squadron August 23, 1918. Less than one month later, on September 13, 1918, First Lieutenant d'Olive climbed into the cockpit of his French-built SPAD XIII pursuit aircraft to search for German aircraft. While flying with his wingman, d'Olive engaged five German aircraft near the town of St. Benoit, France. Although outnumbered, d'Olive used his flying and gunnery skills to shoot down three German Fokker D.VII pursuit aircraft. As a result of his impressive feat, the U.S. Army awarded the Distinguished Service Cross to d'Olive.

The citation stated:

“For extraordinary heroism in action near St. Benoit, France, September 13, 1918. Lt. d'Olive, in conjunction with another American pilot, engaged and fought five enemy planes. Outnumbered and fighting against tremendous odds, Lt. d'Olive shot down three enemy planes and outfought the entire enemy formation.”

By the end of World War I, d'Olive had scored five aerial victories. However, due to a clerical error, d'Olive did not receive official credit for his achievements until 1963—45 years after the end of the conflict. D'Olive, then in his 60s, received official recognition as the last World War I aviator to attain the coveted status of “ace.”

The 93rd Bomb Squadron traces its lineage to the 93rd Aero Squadron, which was organized on August 21, 1917, at Kelly Field, Texas. It is currently assigned to the 307th Bomb Wing, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. The 93rd Bomb Squadron flies the B-52 Stratofortress.

AIR FORCE RESERVE

The Air Force Reserve is a combat-ready force, composed of more than 70,000 Reserve Citizen Airmen, stationed locally at over 60 locations throughout the United States and serving globally for every Combatant Command in air, space and cyberspace.

We are a cost efficient and mission-effective force, providing the nation with operational capability, strategic depth and surge capacity, both overseas and here at home. The Air Force Reserve's wide-ranging operational capability serves the diverse needs of every Combatant Commander, whose requirements are as varied as the geographic and functional areas they support.

Air Force Reserve Command directly supports the homeland with capabilities, including aerial fire fighting, aerial spray, and weather reconnaissance, better known as the “Hurricane Hunters.” Our relationship with other federal agencies, including the National Weather Service and US Forest Service, demonstrates how federal, military and civilian organizations can work together to support the entire nation.

The majority of our Reservists serve alongside our active duty counterparts in association constructs. Approximately two-thirds of the Air Force's associations are with the Air Force Reserve. Integrating through associations delivers significant taxpayer value, both in cost savings and improved mission effectiveness, by sharing aircraft, equipment and facilities with the active duty.

Value is also gained from “Airmen for Life” as the Air Force Reserve retains the experience and training cost of a member's active duty service. As over 75 percent of our Reserve Citizen Airmen serve part-time, this combat-tested experience stays in a highly cost-efficient force, available whenever the nation calls. Further, the nation benefits from the intrinsic value gained by a member's civilian experience in a variety of career fields, from pilots and nurses to space and cyberspace professionals.

AIR FORCE RESERVE MISSION

Provide Combat-Ready Forces to Fly, Fight and Win.

MISSION SETS

The Air Force Reserve currently performs about 20 percent of the work of the Air Force, including traditional flying missions and other more specialized missions, such as Weather Reconnaissance, Aerial Fire Fighting, Aerial Spray and Personnel Recovery.

WHERE AIR FORCE RESERVISTS ARE CURRENTLY SERVING OR DEPLOYED

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti (Horn of Africa), El Salvador, Ethiopia, Germany, Guam, Guantanamo Bay, Honduras, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, South Sudan, Spain, Thailand, Turkey and Uganda.



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