

**Trenches to Foxholes**

**This week in World War history (Sept. 28 to Oct. 4)  
368th FG's 'Second to None', 365th FG's 'Hell Hawks'  
arrive at Chièvres Air Base**

Oct. 1, 1944 - Allied-controlled Chièvres Air Base becomes fully operational after nearly a month of rebuilding.

As the Germans abandoned the base, they had used explosives to destroy the buildings and create huge craters in the runway hoping the Allies wouldn't be able to use it.

During the recovery, the base is visited by B-24 Liberators of the 20th Transport Wing, which deliver fuel and other supplies.

Just a day after full recovery, Allied fighters land at the newly designated airfield - Advance Landing Ground A-84 of the 9th U.S. Army Air Force.

The first to arrive is the

The Hell Hawks will be remembered as one of the most famous fighter groups of the 9th Air Force.

368th Fighter Group with its P-47s under the leadership of Col. Gilbert Meyers. A group headquarters was established at Sainte-Gertrude convent in Brugelette.

Just two days later, the Hell Hawks of the 365th Fighter

Group arrive. Flying P-47s as well, they will be remembered as one of the most famous fighter groups of the 9th Air Force by war's end. The official unit patch is created at A-84 by Cpl. Grey Adams of the 386th Squadron.



As the German war machine is pushed back toward Germany, the P-47s of A-84 fly bomber escort into Germany and attack German supply lines and strategic locations of the changing front.

The Allied push sees success after success, continuing to liberate Belgium and pushing the Germans back to their borders.

P-47s flying from Chièvres would participate in the Battle of the Bulge, flying interdiction missions against German motorized columns in the Ardennes.

*"This week in World War history" is compiled from various sources by Keith Houin, USAG Benelux Public Affairs.*



Courtesy Photo

A pilot sits in his P-47 Thunderbolt on Chièvres Air Base.