
Bagram News Express

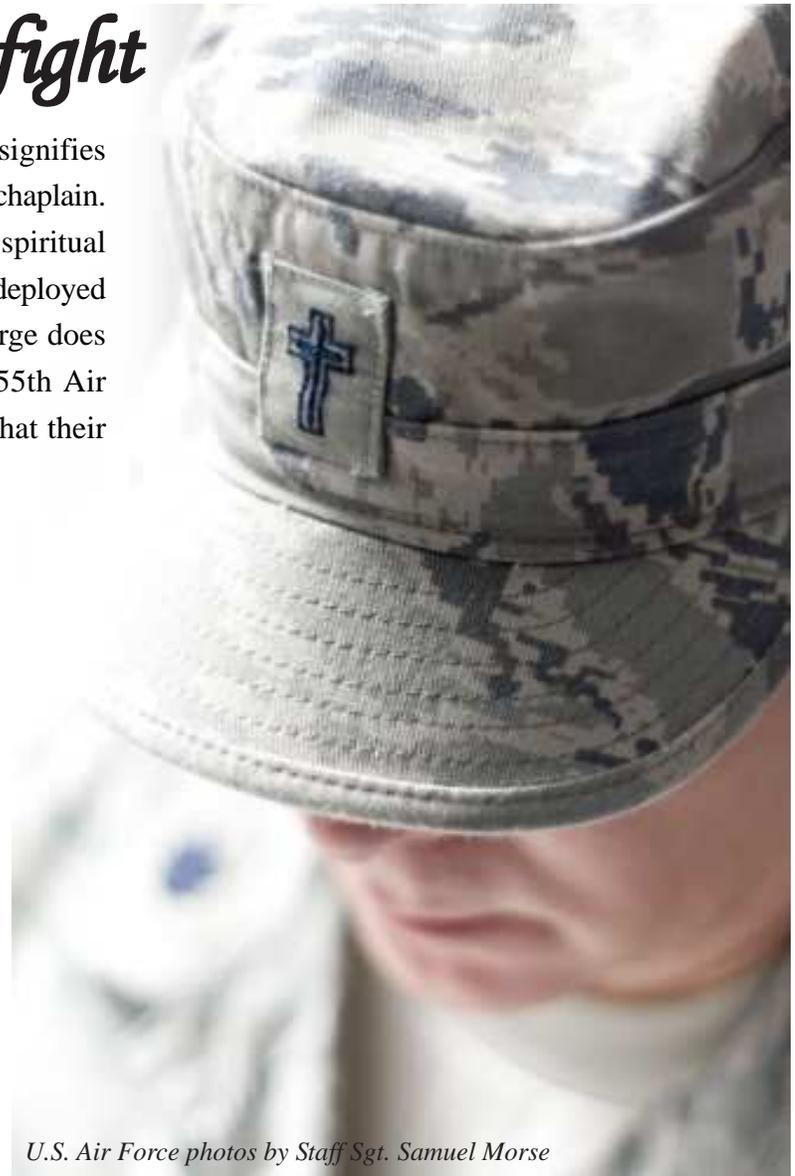


Fighting Terror, Building Peace

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Spiritually fit to fight

The Holy Cross adorning the patrol cap signifies non-combatant status and responsibility of a chaplain. Air Force chaplains are charged with the spiritual welfare of their Airmen. In a largely Islamic deployed environment where stress is high, that charge does not change. Chaplains assigned to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing work hard to ensure that their Airmen are spiritually “fit to fight.”



U.S. Air Force photos by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse



Airman plays bagpipes in honor of fallen comrades

By Staff Sgt. Rachel Martinez
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — During the two World Wars, many bagpipers were trained for military service, often playing for formal ceremonies. While the number of bagpipers in the military has declined, they still remain a long standing tradition at military ceremonies. One Airman here continues that tradition by playing his bagpipes in honor of fallen comrades in Afghanistan.

Tech. Sgt. Iain Morrison, assigned to the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, began playing the bagpipes at the age of 7 while living in Scotland.

“I joined a band at 7 years old and tried to learn for a couple of years but I was too small, too immature and too much of a little boy,” Morrison explained. “I was more interested in running around and playing than sitting home and practicing.”

After two years in the band Morrison quit and didn’t pick up the instrument again until 10 years ago. Since then, he has continued to play, often performing in formal ceremonies and as a member of a band. This is the third time he has deployed and brought along his pipes. At each deployed location Morrison notified the chaplains that he was available for services if they needed him. The chaplains at Bagram passed the word onto the Combined Joint Task Force - 101 Band.

In late May the band contacted

Morrison and asked for his help. They were planning on being out of town and wanted to know if Morrison would be willing to perform, ensuring there would be music should there be a fallen comrade ceremony. Due to some miscommunication, Morrison showed up for a ceremony along with the band. They got permission for Morrison to play along with the band.

“And ever since then I’ve been out there,” said Morrison. In the four months since his first participation in a fallen comrade ceremony, he has been a part of more than 40 ceremonies, honoring approximately 70 fallen heroes.

“I’m not keeping an accurate record, mainly because I don’t want to know,” said Morrison. “It’s difficult. You put up some sort of a mental block to it, but still there is a very deep realization that what I am doing is the last thing the family is going to see of Bagram.”

For each fallen comrade ceremony, Morrison plays a set of traditional Scottish tunes, always ending with “Amazing Grace.”

“I’ve had several people comment on how much it has added to the ceremony - the chaplains, our leadership,” said Morrison. “It’s definitely been noted by several people all the way through the top end of the (Combined Joint Task Force - 101).”

As much as it is an honor to be able to play for each fallen comrade, said Morrison, it can take an emotional toll. After one



*U.S. Air Force photo illustration
by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse*

Tech Sgt. Iain Morrison, deployed to the 455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron from Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., plays the bagpipes outside of the Enduring Faith Chapel following a church service here

particular ceremony for nine fallen Soldiers, Morrison said he spent most of the day in the chaplain’s office blowing off steam.

Back home, Morrison has played for a number of funeral services and ceremonies, but said it doesn’t compare to the ceremonies he performs at here.

“That’s a different scale I guess. I live in a Panama City which is largely a retirement community; most the time the people are 70, 80 plus years old and have lived their life,” he said. “But when we are doing this here, they are 18 to whatever years old. Sometimes they are kids just out of high school.

“While I would be happy to never have to play at another fallen comrade ceremony, I will continue to do it as needed,” Morrison added. “As a piper it is my duty.”

Wing recognizes award winners, promotees

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Members of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing honored the wing's newest promotees, top performers and outstanding contributor during the monthly recognition ceremony here Oct. 1.

The October promotees were:

To Airman 1st Class: Daneile W. Elliot, Bryan G. Forest, Emanuel O. Guzman, Kristie E. Miller, Bryan W. McAlhany, Christopher M. Pratt and Tyler R. Wooding.

To Senior Airman: Miles G. Alty, Joshua F. Alvarez, Derek C. Anderson, Kees A. Anderson, Todd W. Beecher, Larry Best, Shanina S. Bookhart, Joshua J. Daly, Samuel J. Davis, Kayla D. Duet, Jonathan R. Evans, Anthony Figuero, Stephen W. Fitts, Bradley L. Gaff, Alexander Hoes, Eric T. Housend, William S. K. Howard, Joselito M. Igarta, Joel R. Jason, Johann Ko, Kenneth Lewis, Jr., Edwin R. McKnight, Jr., Chris L. McLean, Daniel Mendez, Christopher Morgan, Travis K. Morris, Adam Mungin, Joel A. Munson, Elise M. Pavlak, Matthew L. Perry, Alexander P. Porte, Andres R. Portela, Kristi A. Slater, Cansada D. Smith, Anthony W. Son, Nicholas A. Stone, Jeremy S. Tompson, Joshua A. Utt, Evan E. Wright and Shayne M. Yalovec.

To Staff Sergeant: Raul Agosto, Lamar B. Anderson, Joshua P. Arends, Jason Christiansen, Joel B. Dodson, Laura L. DuQuain, Nicholas F. Emory, Garrett R. Fillingham, Randy A. Gagnon, Dallas Gray, Charles T. Hernandez, Melissa S. Jackson,

Brodrick K. Martin, Keyona S. McBride, Adrian Meiers, John P. Roth, Jeffrey R. Ruebel, David C. Sain, James B. Smith II, Michael A. Smith and Darren M. Williams.

To Technical Sergeant: Jeremy A. Benoit, Rusty L. Bledsoe, James F. Decker, William Feely, Andrea J. Heger, David K. Nyland, David J. Skonieczny, Jason Stobart, Morian M. Tulabot and Tremaye E. White.

To Master Sergeant: Lisa M. Jacobsen, Jeffrey Mather, Scott C. Rauscher and James L. Redmond Jr.

To Senior Master Sergeant: Kreg L. Carlson and Michael W. Pearce.

To Captain: Vesta Hilaire and Jozsef Z. Jonas.

To Major: Stefan D. Essig and Patrick T. Luna.

To Lieutenant Colonel: Aaron D. Heidt.

Outstanding Contributor: Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Lawrence, 755th Air Expeditionary Group.

Airman of the Month: Senior Airman Emily Walker, 755th AEG.

NCO of the Month: Tech. Sgt. Robert Fleek, 755th AEG.

Senior NCO of the Month: Master Sgt. Jeffrey Thompson, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group.

CGO of the Month: Capt. Glenn Little, 755th AEG.

Civilian of the Month: Michael Ott, 755th AEG.

News Briefs

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Come and attend the CJTF-101 Hispanic American Heritage Observance Luncheon on Oct. 13 from 1100L to 1300L at the Four Corners Clamshell. The guest speaker will be 1st Lt. Jason Gonzalez, Commander of 268TH CTC, TF Lifeliner.

RESTRICTED AREA ESCORT TRAINING

If you are a holder of an Air Force Restricted Area Badge that has an open area with a number in it and or a letter E you are asked to attend a training session in order to receive

an escort official competency card. Training classes are being held Monday through Friday each week throughout October from 0800 to 0900 at the Enduring Faith Chapel Annex. All personnel departing Bagram by Oct. 31 are exempt from the class. Beginning Nov. 1 ESFS Restricted Area Entry Controllers will be checking for your Escort Certification/Competency Card. If you have not attended the class by then, your flight line escort privileges will be revoked until you get the required training and card. Questions can be directed to Pass and ID at 431-2232.

COMBAT PUSH HOURS

Combat Push times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Camp Cunningham Rec Tent from 0900L/0430Z to 1000L/0530Z and from 2230L/1800Z to 2330L/1900Z.

COMBAT O

Combat Orientation is Thursday at 0930Z/1400L at the Enduring Freedom Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Newcomers must attend the briefing within two weeks of their arrival. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the 1st Sergeants at the end of the Week.

THE US AIR FORCE
CENTRAL EXPEDITIONARY BAND
PRESENTS

YUMA

BRINGIN' THE NOISE!



SHOWTIMES

1900L Fri, 10 Oct

LOCATION

MWR
Clamshell