

179 AERIAL PORT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

179 Mobile Aerial Port Flight constituted 5 Jan 1976
Redesignated 179 Mobile Aerial Port Squadron, Oct 1982
Redesignated 179 Aerial Port Squadron
Inactivated, 8 Jul 2008

STATIONS

Mansfield-Lahm Air National Guard Base, Mansfield, OH

ASSIGNMENTS

179 Tactical Airlift Group

COMMANDERS

LTC Herbert Wright, Jan 1976
LTC Kenneth Berger, Sep 1983

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 179th Aerial Port Squadron retired its flag on Sunday, July 8, 2008. What this means is the Aerial Port is no longer a squadron. Although their office name has changed to Air Terminal Operations, they will remain as part of the Logistics Readiness Squadron under the command of LtCol Douglas Greene. The ceremony to retire the Aerial Port Squadron flag, also marked an occasion to award the Meritorious Service Award to 15 Aerial Porter members for their deployment to Iraq from September 1, 2007 to January 13, 2008. Aerial Port's functions had always varied from building pallets, measuring and weighing them to then loading the pallets onto aircraft ranging from our C-130s to the C-5. Aerial Port personnel utilized these pallets to load everything from vehicles, mail, cargo, food, water and medical supplies in support of any disasters and wartime efforts. They also ran the Air Terminal Operations Center (ATOC) which controlled the flow of onloads/offloads of inbound and outbound aircraft. Aerial Porter members would also be in charge of processing passengers and their luggage as well. Here at the 179th, Aerial Port worked in conjunction with OPS, coordinating practice loads, packing, rigging and retrieving the parachutes and recovering the loads from out in the drop zone. One of the last official events Aerial Port took part in was a competitive exercise termed 'The Rodeo.' Different flight teams would compete on their air drops for accuracy in the drop zone. Aerial Port's responsibility in the Rodeo was loading the aircraft, and retrieving the parachutes and loads from the drop zone. The Rodeo event took place on Saturday of the July UTA. Aerial Port's Chief, CMSGT. Jeff Saltz, explained how these changes have affected Aerial Port's personnel. "The downsizing is occurring in two phases. The first phase happened in April and took us from a manning of 94 enlisted and four officers, to 46 enlisted and one officer. Effective October of 2009, the second phase will take us to 33 enlisted and one officer." This meant big changes and decisions for all personnel that were not included in the new manning plan. Some of the personnel opted to cross train to any open areas on base here. Others have transferred to different bases around the state such as Rickenbacker in Columbus and the Air Force Reserve Base in Youngstown. Sadly, a few others either retired from or left the Air National Guard altogether. Not only do these changes directly affect the personnel but they also have direct impact on the base. Even though Aerial Port is no longer a squadron, they still perform many of the functions as they have before, but now with fewer people and equipment. SMSgt. Robert Rogers of the Aerial Delivery section said that they're down to only two forklifts and a K-Loader for loading and unloading the aircraft; which presented a slight challenge for the Aerial Port team during The Rodeo. "The mission hasn't changed for us...we still support the air drops." MSgt. Chad Shifflet, Air Cargo Specialist/Training Manager for Aerial Port said that trying to keep up with the training has been a challenge. "The entire training has been affected by the changes. It's been chaos." TSgt. Zak Eggeman, Air Cargo Specialist agrees. Despite these challenges, the Aerial Port team was able to pull off support for the successful Rodeo. Aerial Port has seen its share of deployments over the years. 24 enlisted and one officer deployed in

support of Operation Enduring Freedom for six months in Ramstein, Germany and six months at McGuire AFB in New Jersey. Aerial Port was also a vital part of an enclave for Hurricane Katrina, in with individuals deployed to New Orleans in support of relief efforts. Recently in 2007, Aerial Port took part in Vigilant Guard, which combined Air Force and Army Personnel to respond to natural disasters here in the U.S. Deployments abroad have also taken Aerial Porter members to places around the globe from Spain to Antarctica. Losing the Aerial Port Squadron marks the end of an era for the 179th Airlift Wing. Although we will miss the Aerial Port members who have moved on and left the 179th, we know that they will do well and wish them the very best. We are glad to have the remaining members here on base in either their current positions or in the new roles they've cross-trained into during the transition; we know you will have much success through continuing to provide your outstanding service and work. To have you here as part of the 179th Airlift Wing as we transition into a bright future full of growth and "jointness" makes all 179th members proud.



USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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