

321st TRANSPORT SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE

321st TS disbanded, 15 Nov 1945

Reconstituted and consolidated with 321st Air Refueling Squadron, 15 Sep 1985, but remains inactive.

STATIONS

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 321st Transport Squadron under Major James Briggs moved to Grove from North Ireland and went into training, studying the use of the army .45 caliber automatic and basic French.

The 321st Transport moved over 1,000 tons and Captain William Boyd, Squadron Engineering Officer, was sent to France to prepare for the arrival of the unit at Le Bourget.

During December the 321st Transport Squadron boasted 97.8 per cent of its aircraft operational. The 325th Ferrying Squadron, charged with intra-United Kingdom activities, carried over 500 tons.

Just as Le Bourget airfield was beginning to regain its color and the mud was not quite so plentiful, action was brought to a head to return the field to the French Air Force, Villacoublay, another field just on the outskirts of Paris was selected as the new home. Units started moving in February and continued throughout March. The 321st Transport Squadron, profiting from past experiences, having its equipment listed in order of priority for movement, and for the past year having studied moves and the ease with which they could be accomplished, found little difficulty in completing its change of station. All units were blessed with mud on their arrival however, for it was plentiful. The 321st Transport Squadron commenced training for night flights. These were planned for use between London and Paris. The last week of March was spent by this squadron shuttling ammunition to front line units from Grove, flying ten long hours each day. Captain Boyd developed a system of maintenance check that paid dividends by keeping his record above 95 percent.

The 321st Transport Squadron 27th Air Transport Group

The 321st Transport Squadron was activated at AAF Station 239 under the authority contained in Paragraph 1, Section 2, General Order No. #52, Headquarters, 8th Air Force Service Command, 1 November 1943, as amended by section 2, General Order #54, 8th Air Force Command. The primary duty assigned to the organization was the "Taxi" service to return the ferry pilots back to the depots, with secondary duties of hauling freight and/or passengers. The squadron also performed the special duties of providing transportation on numerous occasions to VIPs, such as Major General Hezlett, Brigadier General Collins, Brigadier General Hill, and, in addition, operated the Air Traffic Office of the 27th ATG at AAF Station 239.

In early January 1944 the squadron was transferred to Langford Lodge Air Depot at Aldergrove, Northern Ireland. This was a large depot managed by the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. At the time of its activation the organization was under the command of Major Leo H. Johnson, with Captain C. Palma as Administration Officer, Capt. Joel A. Carrol as Operations Officer, 1st Lt. Arthur J. Harris as Technical Supply Officer, First Lieutenant Harry A. Cobbler as Engineering Officer, and Sergeant Fred C. Sehaid, Jr., as First Sergeant. 2nd Lt William H. Strickland replaced Lt. Cobbler as Engineering Officer on the 28th of November.

After Major Briggs assumed command the key personnel of the 321 st were as follows:

Commanding Officer Operations Officer Administration Officer Technical Supply Officer Engineering Officer Communications Officer First Sergeant Chief Aircraft Inspector Line Chief Communications Chief Major James D. Briggs, Capt. R.C. Henderson, 1st Lt. DeJay J. Shriner, IstLt. Arthur J. Harris, IstLt. William C. Boyd, IstLt. Harold B. Beilmer, M/Sgt. Charles H. Fore, M/Sgt. John C. Booth, M/Sgt. Marvin L. Torry, T/Sgt. Richard M. Cook,

This squadron had numerous obstacles and problems to overcome. Originally, the biggest problem was the vague and indefinite assignnn of aircraft, not only by number, but also by type. This was solved with initiation by 27th Group Headquarters of "Aircraft Assignment Order. The problems relating to this situation, of unsuitable personnel and wrong types of tech supply parts, were overcome with time. Over a period of months the B-24 specialists and mechanics were gradually trained to maintain the aircraft being used. Shifting personnel was a constant difficulty, however, disrupting the organization of the unit and necessitating the training of replacements. The men available for such replacement training became scarce, and of increasingly inferior ability and aptitude, until surplus personnel were non-existent. A man could not be obtained for training to replace another man in a certain section of the squadron (who may have become ill or transferred) without removing him from some other section which might have been in dire need of his services, also. The last of the major problems was that of technical supply items for our own aircraft. Part of the reason for the lack of supplies is really explained by the low priority rating of the unit. However, every effort was made to obtain sufficient parts to keep the aircraft in the air a maximum number of hours each day. In spite of all the obstacles, the 321st's performance in carrying out its assignments steadily improved. This was shown by the constant increase in passengers and freight as indicated in the chart below.

In general, morale in this unit was good, improving with increased operations. The men had access to an Aero Club, several post libraries, athletic equipment, and two or more motion pictures and other types of theatrical entertainment each week.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

Unit History. *302 Transport Wing*. Nd.