

20th RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON



LINEAGE

Constituted 20th Transport Squadron, 22 Nov 1940

Activated, 15 Dec 1940

Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron, 5 Jul 1942

Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (Special), 13 Nov 1943

Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron, 12 Apr 1944

Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron, Heavy, 17 Jun 1948

Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 4 Oct 1948

Inactivated, 20 Oct 1949

Consolidated (19 Sep 1985) with the unit constituted 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron (Light), and activated, 26 Apr 1965

Organized, 8 May 1965

Inactivated, 1 Apr 1973

Redesignated 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron, and activated, 1 Oct 1973

Inactivated, 30 Sep 1984

Activated, 1 Apr 1990

STATIONS

France Field, Canal Zone, 15 Dec 1940

Howard Field, Canal Zone, 19 Feb 1942

Albrook Field (later, Albrook AFB) Canal Zone, 9 Jun 1943-20 Sep 1948

Bergstrom AFB, TX, 4 Oct 1948

Smyrna AFB, TN, 27 Jan-20 Oct 1949

Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, 8 May 1965-15 Jan 1973

George AFB, CA, 15 Jan-1 Apr 1973

Wiesbaden AB, West Germany, 1 Oct 1973

Sembach AB, West Germany, 8 Jan 1976-30 Sep 1984

Shaw AFB, SC, 1 Apr 1990

ASSIGNMENTS

Panama Canal Department, 15 Dec 1940

Panama Air Depot, 1 Feb 1941

6th Air Force Base (later, 6th Air Force Service; VI Air Force Service) Command, 5 Jun 1942

Panama Air Depot, 1 Dec 1944

Sixth Air Force (later, Caribbean Air Command), 5 May 1945 (attached to 314th Troop Carrier Group [later, 314th Troop Carrier Group, Heavy

314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium], c. Nov 1946-16 Jun 1948)

314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium, 17 Jun 1948-20 Oct 1949 (detachment attached to United States Air Forces in Europe, 1-29 Jul 1948, and to Airlift Task Force [Provisional], 29 Jul-19 Oct 1948)

Pacific Air Forces, 26 Apr 1965

2nd Air Division, 8 May 1965 (attached to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6250th, 1 Aug-7 Nov 1965)

505th Tactical Control Group, 8 Nov 1965 (attached to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6250th, 1-8 Sep 1966 and to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6253rd, 9 Sep - 7 Dec 1966)

504th Tactical Air Support Group, 8 Dec 1966

366th Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Mar 1972

6498th Air Base Wing, 27 Jun 1972

71st Tactical Air Support Group, 15 Jan-1 Apr 1973

601st Tactical Air Support Group, 1 Oct 1973

601st Tactical Control Wing, 1 Nov 1975

601st Tactical Air Support Group, 1 May 1977-30 Sep 1984

507th Tactical Air Control Wing, 1 Apr 1990

ATTACHMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-33, 1941

C-39, 1941-1944

C-49, 1941-1944

C-47, 1942-1948, 1949

OA-10, 1942-1943, 1943-1945

UC-91, 1942-1943

C-79, 1942-1943

UC-89, 1942-1943

C-38, 1942-1943

XB-15 (later, XC-105), 1943-1944

L-1, 1943-1945

BC-1, 1943-1944

L-4, 1943-1944

UC-61, 1943-1945

C-45, 1944-1945

C-46, 1945-1947

C54, 1946-1948
C-82, 1948-1949
CG-15, 1949
O-1, 1965-1969
O-2, 1967-1973
OV-10, 1969-1973
O-2, 1973-1974
OV-10, 1974-1984

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS

1LT (later, Maj) Harry C Morrison, 15 Dec 1940
Cpt Donald K Mumma, 3 Sep 1942
Cpt (later, Maj) James W Guthrie, 18 Oct 1942
Cpt (later, Maj) Raynold A Berg, 8 Oct 1943
Maj Frederick A Sanders, 1944
Cpt (later, Maj) Gerald Linscheid, 9 Dec 1944
Maj Sidney E Cleveland, 14 Feb 1946
Maj Irving R Perkin, May 1947
Maj William H Beale Jr, (by Jan 1949)
LTC Elmer C Blaha, (by Jul)-20 Oct 1949
1LT Frederick A Reiling, (by Jun) 1965
LTC Sam Pool, (by Dec) 1965
LTC Elvadore Ritter, (by Jun) 1966
LTC Paul V Greenwade Jr, (by Oct 1967)
LTC Herbert W McQuown, 7 Feb 1968
Lt Col Benjamin F Starr Jr., 10 Sep 1968
LTC Alvin M Welbes, 24 Jan 1969
LTC Laurence W Lackey, 24 Nov 1969
LTC Hyrum G Keeler, 1 Jun 1970
LTC Colvin L Sammons, 15 Mar 1971
LTC Ralph W Haymaker, 28 May 1971
LTC Lawton C Brown, 25 Oct 1971
LTC Gabriel A Kardong, 25 Feb 1972
LTC Richard E Leal, 10 Nov 1972-15 Jan 1973
None (not manned), 16 Jan-1 Apr 1973
LTC George W Grill Jr., 1 Oct 1973
LTC Robert B Clayton Sr., 20 Jan 1975
Maj (later, Lt Col) Robert E Riggs, 20 May 1977
LTC Robert M Staples, 6 Oct 1978
LTC Dennis C Torrez, 26 Nov 1980

LTC Thomas M Power, 13 Dec 1982
Maj Andrew E Dohany, 15 Apr-30 Sep 1984

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

On a disc divided fesswise nebuly of two, azure (ultramarine) and gules (pimento), the partition line fimbriated argent, overall palewise a flight symbol or, encircled by 20 mullets of the third, all within a diminished bordure of the second fimbriated of the third. Above and below the disc two scrolls edged gules, the one below inscribed with the words FIRST ON TARGET in letters gules. Significance Ultramarine blue and golden yellow are the official Air Force colors. The blue sky and the color red representing the embattled ground forces protected by the gold flight symbol, all refer to the tactical squadron's mission to provide Air Force-Army interface and close control of tactical air with accurate placement of air delivered ordnance. The 20 stars symbolize the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron's excellence of performance. (Approved, 25 Jun 1974)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

FIRST ON TARGET

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 20th TASS was activated April 1, 1990, also flying the OV-10A Bronco.

20th Tactical Air Support 15 Mar – 27 Jun 1972 (O-2A, OV-10)

366th TFW pilots scored 18 aerial victories in Southeast Asia. In 1972, gained the 362nd TEWS, equipped with EC-47N/P/Q aircraft, and 20th TASS, flying O-2A and OV-10A aircraft. The former was assigned an electronic countermeasures mission; the latter carried out a forward air control mission.

On 8 May 1965 the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) was activated as part of the 505th Tactical Control Group. On 8 September 1966 the unit was assigned to the 6250th Tactical Air Support Group (Provisional then on 8 December 1966 the squadron became part of the 504th Tactical Air Support Group headquartered at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon.

The squadron was authorized thirty "Cessna L-19 Bird Dog 0-1 Birddog aircraft, however this allocation proved difficult to fill, since the aircraft were being transferred from other agencies, primarily the Army.

Four months before its organization, the Air Force had 20 aircraft required by the TASSs in Vietnam. The TASS's growth was dependent on and linked to the acquisition of the 0-1s from other agencies. While TASS operations were initiated in August 1965, it wasn't until the end of the year that the 20th TASS received its full complement of aircraft. As the Forward Air Controller (FAC) pilots began to arrive, they were provided with familiarization checkouts and theater indoctrination flights. Upon completion of these requirements, FACs were assigned to support US and Vietnamese Army units. During this period, FACs were given many and varied tactical call signs.

In the latter part of 1965, the 20th TASS was assigned the out-of-country mission, which entailed flying interdiction missions over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in. Its area of operations (AO) was designated TIGERHOUND. To meet its mission requirements it was necessary to establish a number of forward operating bases (FOB) to support the operation. Initially, FOBs were established at Khe Sanh, Kham Duc, and Kontum. Eventually, the sites were expanded to include Da Nang, Dong Ha Airfield, Dak To, and Pleiku. In mid-July 1966, the 20th TASS was assigned another mission and AO. The new mission was designed TALLY HO. The AO was part of the STEEL TIGER area located in North Vietnam from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to about 30 miles north of the DMZ. The TALLY HO missions were flown from Dong Ha Airfield. During this period, it was decided that all out-of-country tactical call signs would carry the name of COVEY.

The 0-1, whether by design or accident proved to be an outstanding FAC aircraft. It provided exceptional visibility, was not complicated, and was surprisingly easy to fly. However, as the weapons of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese regulars became more sophisticated, the 0-1's vulnerability was accentuated. This vulnerability was countered by a new FAC aircraft. The new FAC aircraft was the Cessna Skymaster which was a modified Cessna 337. It was an inline dual engine aircraft with one propeller pushing and the other pulling.

From late 1966 until late, approximately 350 0-2s were contracted for by the Air Force. The first 0-2s, to arrive in country were assigned to the 20th TASS. They were then assigned to Dong Ha Airfield and Khe Sanh to provide a more substantial FAC aircraft to deal with the improvements in the enemy's weaponry. By reading some of the narratives submitted by 0-2 pilots, the reader will become acutely aware of the 0-2's capabilities and limitations. The 0-2 was an interim aircraft, but it filled a void while the OV-10 Bronco was being developed.

The OV-10 was a more sophisticated and durable FAC vehicle: it had greater ordinance carrying capability, more loiter time, a bit more power, and a greater array of conventional navigation aids

and in-flight instrumentation. The 20th TASS received its first OV-10s in July 1969. The arrival of the OV-10s to complement the O-2As resulted in the transfer of the O-1s to other units. By October 1969, the 20th TASS, while supporting five US Army and six South Vietnam force locations, as well as the out-of-country operations, was operating from Da Nang and eleven FOBs.

As the US Army began to gradually reduce its presence in and 1973, the 20th TASS began withdrawing from its FOBs. In response to the North Vietnamese spring offensive of 1972, the 20th TASS reestablished some of its former FOBs. It is notable to mention that in June 1972, the 20th TASS had tripled its pre-invasion sorties. Further, Covey FACs from Da Nang using OV-10s were a vital and integral part of base defense operations during that year. In January 1973, the 20th TASS ceased operations at its last FOB, and flew its final missions in Vietnam.

The O-2s were turned over to the Vietnamese Air Force, and the OV-10s were assigned to other USAF units in Southeast Asia. On 25 January 1973 the 20th TASS moved, without personnel or equipment, to George AFB, California.

The 20th Transport Squadron activated at France Field, Panama Canal Zone, on 15 Dec 1940, but had only one officer and no airplanes until Feb 1941. The squadron became operational by Mar 1941, hauling cargo on local flights with C-33s. In Apr 1941 the 20th received C-39 aircraft, and on 11 May made its first out-of-country flight, to Managua, Nicaragua. Before the end of the year, the squadron was flying to destinations throughout the Caribbean area, Central America, South America, and sometimes to the United States, transporting passengers, mail, and supplies in support of U.S. forces.

In Nov 1941, the squadron established a flight at Howard Field to handle local missions and a month later, another flight at Waller Field, Trinidad. The Howard Field flight ceased operations when the squadron moved from France Field to Howard Field in Feb 1942, but the Trinidad detachment operated, as did a third detachment established in Puerto Rico in Jun 1942, until Dec 1943. Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron in Jul 1942. Moved again in Jun 1943, this time to Albrook Field.

The 20th TCS flew many different types of aircraft between 1941 and 1949, several being one of a kind, such as the XC-105, the only four-engined aircraft that it possessed during World War II. It also flew, except for the first half of 1943, OA-10s in emergency rescue missions over the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea from Jun 1942-Aug 1945. In May 1946 the squadron received C-54 aircraft. The 20th TCS moved in Sep 1948 from Panama to Bergstrom AFB, Texas. It left all aircraft and equipment at Albrook, except for a detachment of C-54s that had left Albrook in Jul 1948 to participate in the Berlin Airlift. At Bergstrom, the 20th TCS received C-82 aircraft in Nov 1948 and began transition training. In early Jan 1949, the squadron's air echelon deployed seven C-82s on temporary duty to Kearney AFB, Nebraska, to transport supplies to snowbound ranchers and farmers, while the rest of the squadron moved at the end of Jan to Smyrna AFB, Tenn. The C-

82s and aircrews arrived at Smyrna in late Feb 1949. While at Smyrna, the 20th trained with U.S. Army paratroopers in airborne tactics and carried cargo about the United States. The squadron inactivated on 20 Oct 1949.

The 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron organized on 8 May 1965 at Da Nang AB, Republic of Vietnam. It received its first O-1F aircraft in late May and began operations in Aug 1965. Provided visual reconnaissance and airborne forward air control for tactical offensive operations, and also gave theater indoctrination flight checkouts in assigned aircraft for newly assigned aircrews in Southeast Asia. As the squadron expanded its operations, it established several detachments at forward locations throughout South Vietnam. In Jan 1969, received first OV-10A, and in July transferred its last O-1. By Oct 1969, the 20th operated from Da Nang and eleven forward locations, supporting five U.S. Army and six South Vietnamese Army forces locations.

The U.S. Armed Forces gradually withdrew from South Vietnam in 1970-1972, and the 20th discontinued its forward operating locations in 1971 and early 1972. Then, after the North Vietnamese invaded the south in Apr 1972, the 20th again set up forward operating locations. In Jun 1972, it flew three times the missions it had in Mar, prior to the invasion. In addition to FAC, liaison, observation, and reconnaissance missions, the 20th, in response to enemy rocket attacks on Da Nang AB during 1972, provided base defense with the OV-10A aircraft equipped with small bombs, 2.75 inch rockets, and 7.62 mm guns. In Jan 1973, the squadron discontinued its last forward operating location, flew its last mission, turned its O-2As over to the Vietnamese Air Force and its OV-10As to other USAF squadrons in Southeast Asia. On 15 Jan 1973 the squadron moved, without personnel or equipment, to George AFB, Calif, where it remained unmanned until it inactivated on 1 Apr 1973 .

On 1 Oct 1973 the 20th TASS activated at Wiesbaden AB, West Germany, to provide forward tactical air control for U.S. Army, Europe, and Seventh Army operations. The squadron had only three O-2A aircraft available until Jul 1974, when it began flying OV-10A aircraft. Engaged in close air support training during USAFE, NATO, and U.S. Army exercises, its pilots served as both ground and airborne forward air controllers. During training exercises, the 20th deployed to and flew from bases in Italy, Spain, Denmark, Turkey, England, Belgium, West Germany, and The Netherlands. In Jan 1976, the squadron moved with the 601st Tactical Control Wing to Sembach AB, West Germany. In May 1981, it added search and rescue missions to its tasks. In 1984, lost all OV-10 aircraft, squadron aircrews ferrying them to George AFB, Calif, Jun-Aug 1984. squadron inactivated on 30 Sep 1984.

Activated on 1 Apr 1990 at Shaw AFB, SC, as part of the 507th Tactical Air Control Wing.

The 20th TASS became fully operational on 4 September 1965. From 4 September 1965 thru 31 December 1965, the 20th TASS flew 3,961 sorties for a total of 6,851 hours, of these, 33% were FAC missions, 66% were VR missions and 1% was theatre indoctrination training. Full support was given to the Army Special Forces on operation 'Shining Brass'. From 5 Dec 65 to 20 Dec 65, the 20th TASS provided full support for operation 'Tiger Hound'.

Maintenance for the 20th TASS was provided by personnel detached from the 6253rd CAMRON, Nha Trang. Maintenance was adequate, although performing periodic inspection at Nha Trang was at times a handicap.

The 20th TASS submitted personnel of the unit for 22 Air Medals with 40 Oak Leaf Clusters and 5 Distinguished Flying Crosses. One Distinguished Flying Cross was disapproved while the remainder are still pending.

1 October 1973 The 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron (20th TASS) was officially activated at Wiesbaden Air Base.

10 October 1974 The 20th TASS flew the first OV-10 sortie involved with airborne forward air controller (FAC) coverage of an exercise entitled "Certain Pledge".

30 September 1984 On this date, the 20th and 704th TASSs were inactivated.

Finally, marking an end of an era for OV-10A operations in Europe, on 29 August 1984, the fourth and last wave of nine OV-10A aircraft took off from Sembach AB for the 6,500 mile journey to George AFB. As was the case with the preceding flights, the trip went remarkably well and all aircraft landed at the California base on 7 September 1984. The 45 OV-10A aircraft previously assigned to the 601st TCW were now assigned to the 27th TASS at George AFB. With the transfer of wing OV-10As to George AFB, more than 650 maintenance and flying squadron technicians moved. Effective 15 July 1984, the 601st Aircraft Generation Squadron and the 601st Component Repair Squadron were inactivated. Simultaneously, their supplies, equipment, and many of their personnel were transferred to the newly activated 601st Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. Last but not least, the wing's two Bronco squadrons (the 20th and 704th TASS) were inactivated on 30 September 1984.

February 1984, the 601st TCW and all its assigned units were awarded the "Air Force Outstanding Award" for the period 1 May 1981 through 30 April 1983. Next, due to a congressionally-imposed European troop strength ceiling, all 45 wing OV-10A aircraft along with approximately 800 support personnel of both flying squadrons (the 20th TASS and 704th TASS) and much of the maintenance complex returned to the states during the period 5 June 1984 through 29 August 1984. This major move reduced four squadrons (20th TASS, 704th TASS, 601st ACS and 601st CRS) to zero manning and equipment. Another 601st CAMS was activated. In any event, the first wave of 12 OV-10As took off from Sembach AB on the morning of 5 June 1984. The 15 day trip averaged about 40 total flying hours and the cells landed at George AFE, California, on 19 June 1984. The second wave of 12 OV-10As took off from Sembach AB on 10 July 1984, and despite being put on a weather hold at Keflavik, Iceland, landed at George AFB 12 days later. The third wave of 12 OV-10As departed Sembach AB on 30 July 1984 and, after an uneventful 12 day flight, they landed at George AFB on 11 August 1984.

On 21 June 1974, the wing's first two OV-10A aircraft arrived at Wiesbaden AB from Hurlburt AFB. The airplanes had been loaded aboard a LASH barge at a stateside port and shipped across the ocean on the SS Algeria Lykes to Rotterdam, Netherlands. The barge was then floated off and sent down the Rhine River to the inland water port at Mainz, near Wiesbaden. On 12 July 1974, OV-10A flying operations officially commenced at Wiesbaden AB and three months later, on 10 October 1974, the 20th TASS flew the first OV-10A sortie involved with airborne FAC coverage of an exercise (Certain Pledge). Additional OV-10s arrived from Thailand 11 days later and, on 18 December 1974, use of O-2A aircraft for wing flying operations was terminated. Also, in an expansion of airborne mission taskings during 1974, the 601st TASS was activated on 1 July in preparation for the arrival of CH-53C helicopters. However, the first CH-53C would not arrive until six months later.

Several aircraft related milestones were also reached in 1976. First, on 4 July, the 704th TASS was activated at Sembach AB as a "Bicentennial Squadron". Second, on 1 November 1976, wing OV-10A aircraft, pilots from the 20th TASS, and maintenance personnel from the 601st CAMS deployed to Zaragoza AB, Spain, to "kick off" a four-month weapons training detachment (WTD) deployment nicknamed "Creek Tally". This was the first time wing aircraft deployed to Spain for this type training. In a related operation, the 611th TCF also deployed their FACP to Zaragoza at the same time. While there, the 611th provided radar and radio coverage for dissimilar air combat training missions between Northrop F-5E Tiger Us of the 527th Tactical Fighter Training Aggressor Squadron (TFTAGS) and F-4 Phantoms. Also, the 611th TCF was airlifted in two C-5A Galaxies rather than the C-130s or C-141s normally used for radar airborne movements.

On 1 September 1959, Sembach became USAFE's primary missile base when the 38th TMW moved in from Hahn AB. The wing underwent a fundamental reorganization on 25 September 1962 when it took control of the 822d TMS from the intermediate 587th TMG which inactivated the same day. Concurrently, two additional squadrons, the 823d and 887th TMSs were activated.

Meanwhile, the Matador missile had been replaced with the superior Mace. On 1 July 1964, the activation of the 7th ACS marked the return of a USAF flying unit. Meanwhile, Army liaison aircraft and helicopters had become regular users. The 38th TMW and its subordinate units were discontinued on 25 September 1966 and the 603d ABW took over. On 1 July 1968, the 601st TCW replaced the 603d ABW as host unit.

The 601st TCW relocated to Wiesbaden AB on 1 July 1973 to make room for HQ Seventeenth Air Force which moved in from Ramstein on 5 October. After the 601st TCW had left, the 7400th ABG took over as host unit. The pending transfer of Wiesbaden AB to the Army led to the 601st TCW's return on 1 January 1976. The wing's 20th TASS flew OV-10A aircraft while the 601st

TASS operated CH-53C helicopters. On 4 July 1976, the 704th TASS activated as a second OV-10 squadron.

An A-10 forward operating location was established when Det 1, 81st TFW activated on 1 September 1978. Revetments and a dozen hardened aircraft shelters were built and A-10 operations began in May 1979. The 601st TCW began to draw down its flying activities when the OV-10s of the 20th and 704th TASS returned to the U.S. in summer 1984 and both squadrons inactivated effective 30 September. Meanwhile, the CH-53s of the 601st TASS were retained until March 1988. Sembach gained an electronic combat mission when the 65th AD and the subordinate 66th ECW stood up on 1 June 1985. The 43d ECS activated under the 66th ECW on 1 October 1986 with EC-130H Compass Call aircraft for which a high-security facility and special maintenance hangars were built in the eastern dispersal loop. Following the withdrawal of their aircraft after Desert Storm, the 43d ECS inactivated on 31 July 1991.

Concurrently, A-10 deployments ceased and Det 1, 81st TFW was phased out on 31 August 1991. After the inactivation of the 66th ECW on 31 March 1992, the 601st Support Wing (as the 601st TCW had been redesignated) resumed host unit duties but closed down three years later when the flightline returned to German control. At the time of writing, the administrative portion was still under USAFE control as Sembach Annex. This site has been managed by the 86th AW since the inactivation of Seventeenth Air Force on 30 September 1996.

Two major events occurred in 1973. On 2 May, HQ USAFE announced that the 601st TCW would move to Wiesbaden AB on approximately 1 June 1973. Specifically, the 601st TCW, 601st TCS, 621st TCF (formerly Det 27), and the 601st TCMS were to move to Wiesbaden with personnel and equipment, whereas the 601st Supply Squadron, 601st Civil Engineering Squadron, 601st Security Police, 601st DASS, 601st Transportation Squadron, and 601st CSG were to move to Wiesbaden without personnel or equipment. It was also announced that an entirely new unit, the 7400th Air Base Group (ABG), would be created on 1 June 1973 to operate and maintain Sembach AB. On 1 June 1973, the wing began its relocation from Sembach to Wiesbaden though the official ceremony marking the move wasn't held until 29 June 1973. The three O-2A aircraft relocated from Ramstein to Wiesbaden on 16 July 1973 and, seven days later, the Wiesbaden command post assumed all command and control functions for the 601st TCW. At this time, the Wiesbaden vehicle operations branch assumed responsibility for providing "round robin" resupply of outlying TAGS radar units. By 1 October 1973, the wing's relocation to Wiesbaden was essentially complete. In the other major occurrence during the year, the 601st TCW went through a major reorganization on 1 July 1973. In some of the major activations, the 601st TCG was once again activated and placed under the control of the 601st TCW. Also, the two 601st DASS detachments were activated as the 601st and 602nd DASC squadrons and their parent unit was inactivated. Further, all of the 601st TCS detachments were activated as numbered flights and squadrons and Det 1, 601st TCW, became the 601st TACC Squadron. Two other new units were brought on line in the form of the 601st Tactical Air Support Group (TASG) and the 601st Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (601st CAMS). The 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron or 20th TASS was not activated until 1 October 1973. Other miscellaneous activity

during 1973 included the TAGS assisted demonstration of AWACS capabilities in April and the arrival of the first contingent of OV-10A pilots in October. On the last day of the year, TACP operating locations of the 601st and 602nd DASC Squadron's were discontinued. The TACPs were reactivated as detachment operating locations of the 20th TASS.

On 21 June 1974, the wing's first two OV-10A aircraft arrived at Wiesbaden AB from Hurlburt AFB. The airplanes had been loaded aboard a LASH (Lighter Aboard Ship) barge at a stateside port and shipped across the ocean on the "55 Algeria Lykes" to Rotterdam, Netherlands. The barge was then floated- off and sent down the Rhine River to the inland water port at Mainz, near Wiesbaden. On 12 July 1974, OV-10A flying operations officially commenced at Wiesbaden AB and three months later, on 10 October 1974, the 20th TASS flew the first OV-10A sortie involved with airborne FAC coverage of an exercise (Certain Pledge). Additional OV-10As arrived from Thailand 11 days later and, on 18 December 1974, use of O-2A aircraft for wing flying operations was terminated. Also, in an expansion of airborne mission taskings during 1974, the 601st TASS was activated on 1 July in preparation for the arrival of CH-53C helicopters. The first CH-53C would not arrive until six months later.

The year 1984 had a "Bonanza" of events over and above that normally encountered. On 1 February 1984, the 601st TCW and all its assigned units were awarded the "Air Force Outstanding Award" for the period 1 May 1981 through 30 April 1983. Next, due to a congressionally-imposed European troop strength ceiling, all 45 wing OV-10A aircraft along with approximately 800 support personnel of both flying squadrons (the 20th TASS and 704th TASS) and much of the maintenance complex returned to the states during the period 5 June 1984 through 29 August 1984. This major move reduced four squadrons (20th TASS, 704th TASS, 601st ACS and 601st CRS) to zero manning and equipment. Another 601st CAMS was activated. In any event, the first wave of 12 OV-10As took off from Sembach AB on the morning of 5 June 1984. The 15 day trip averaged about 40 total flying hours and the cells landed at George AFB, California, on 19 June 1984. The second wave of 12 OV-10As took off from Sembach AB on 10 July 1984, and despite being put on a weather hold at Keflavik, Iceland, landed at George AFB 12 days later. The third wave of 12 OV-10As departed Sembach AB on 30 July 1984 and, after an uneventful 12 day flight, they landed at George AFB on 11 August 1984.





IS THIS REALLY 20 TASS



Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 18 Nov 2010

Updated:

Sources

Lineage. Constituted as 20 Transport Squadron on 22 Nov 1940. Activated on 15 Dec 1940. Redesignated as: 20 Troop Carrier Squadron on 5 Jul 1942; 20 Troop Carrier Squadron (Special) on 13 Nov 1943; 20 Troop Carrier Squadron on 12 Apr 1944; 20 Troop Carrier Squadron, Heavy, on 17 Jun 1948; 20 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, on 4 Oct 1948. Inactivated on 20 Oct 1949. Consolidated (19 Sep 1985) with the 20 Tactical Air Support Squadron (Light), and activated, on 26 Apr 1965. Organized on 8 May 1965. Inactivated on 1 Apr 1973. Redesignated as 20 Tactical Air Support Squadron, and activated, on 1 Oct 1973. Inactivated on 30 Sep 1984. Activated on 1 Apr 1990. Inactivated on 31 Dec 1991. Redesignated as 20 Reconnaissance Squadron on 20 Dec 2010. Activated on 1 Jan 2011.

Assignments. Panama Canal Department, 15 Dec 1940; Panama Air Depot, 1 Feb 1941; Sixth Air Force Base (later, Sixth Air Force Service; VI Air Force Service) Command, 5 Jun 1942; Panama Air Depot, 1 Dec 1944; Sixth Air Force (later, Caribbean Air Command), 5 May 1945 (attached to 314 Troop Carrier Group [later, 314 Troop Carrier Group, Heavy; 314 Troop Carrier Group, Medium], c. Nov 1946-16 Jun 1948); 314 Troop Carrier Group, Medium, 17 Jun 1948-20 Oct 1949 (detachment attached to United States Air Forces Europe, 1-29 Jul 1948, and to Airlift Task Force [Provisional], 29 Jul-19 Oct 1948). Pacific Air Forces, 26 Apr 1965; 2 Air Division, 8 May 1965 (attached to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6250, 1 Aug-7 Nov 1965); 505 Tactical Control Group, 8 Nov 1965 (attached to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6250, 1-8 Sep 1966 and to Tactical Air Support Group Provisional, 6253, 9 Sep-7 Dec 1966); 504 Tactical Air Support Group, 8 Dec 1966; 366 Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Mar 1972; 6498 Air Base Wing, 27 Jun 1972; 71 Tactical Air Support Group, 15 Jan-1 Apr 1973. 601 Tactical Air Support Group, 1 Oct 1973; 601 Tactical Control Wing, 1 Nov 1975; 601 Tactical Air Support Group, 1 May 1977-30 Sep 1984. 507 Tactical Air Control (later, 507 Air Control) Wing, 1 Apr 1990-31 Dec 1991. 432 Operations Group, 1 Jan 2011-.

Stations. France Field, Canal Zone, 15 Dec 1940; Howard Field, Canal Zone, 19 Feb 1942; Albroom Field (later, Albroom AFB), Canal Zone, 9 Jun 1943-20 Sep 1948; Bergstrom AFB, TX, 4 Oct 1948; Smyrna AFB, TN, 27 Jan-20 Oct 1949. Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, 8 May 1965-15 Jan 1973; George AFB, CA, 15 Jan-1 Apr 1973. Weisbaden AB, West Germany, 1 Oct 1973; Sembach AB, West Germany, 8 Jan 1976-30 Sep 1984. Shaw AFB, SC, 1 Apr 1990-31 Dec 1991. Whiteman AFB, MO, 1 Jan 2011-.

Commanders. Maj Harry C. Morrison, 15 Dec 1940; Capt Donald K. Mumma, 3 Sep 1942; Maj James W. Guthrie, 18 Oct 1942; Maj Raynold A. Berg, 8 Oct 1943; Maj Frederick A. Sanders, 1944; Maj Gerald Linscheid, 9 Dec 1944; Maj Sidney E. Cleveland, 14 Feb 1946; Maj Irving R. Perkin, May 1947; Maj William H. Beale Jr., by Jan 1949; Lt Col Elmer C. Blaha, by Jul-20 Oct 1949. 1 Lt Frederick A. Reiling, by Jun 1965; Lt Col Sam Pool, by Dec 1965; Lt Col Elvadore Ritter, by Jun 1966; Lt Col Paul V. Greenwade Jr., by Oct 1967; Lt Col Herbert W. McQuown, 7 Feb 1968; Lt Col Benjamin F. Starr Jr., 10 Sep 1968; Lt Col Alvin M. Welbes, 24 Jan 1969; Lt Col Laurence W. Lackey, 24 Nov 1969; Lt Col Hyrum G. Keeler, 1 Jun 1970; Lt Col Colvin L. Sammons, 15 Mar 1971; Lt Col Ralph W. Haymaker, 28 May 1971; Lt Col Lawton C. Brown, 25 Oct 1971; Lt Col Gabriel A. Kardong, 25 Feb 1972; Lt Col Richard E. Leal, 10 Nov 1972-15 Jan 1973; None (not manned), 16 Jan-1 Apr 1973. Lt Col George W. Grill Jr., 1 Oct 1973; Lt Col Robert B. Clayton Sr., 20 Jan 1975; Lt Col Robert E. Riggs, 20 May 1977; Lt Col Robert M. Staples, 6 Oct 1978; Lt Col Dennis C. Torrez, 26 Nov 1980; Lt Col Thomas M. Power, 13 Dec 1982; Maj Andrew E. Dohany, 15 Apr-30 Sep 1984. Lt Col Jonothan Hicks, 1 Apr 1990-31 Dec 1991. Lt Col Travis A. Burdine, 1 Jan 2011-.

Aircraft. C-33, 1941; C-39, 1941-1944; C-49, 1941-1944; C-47, 1942-1948; 1949; OA-10, 1942-1943; 1943-1945; UC-91, 1942-1943; C-79, 1942-1943; UC-89, 1942-1943; C-38, 1942-1943; XB-15 (later, XC-105), 1943-1944; L-1, 1943-1945; BC-1, 1943-1944; L-4, 1943-1944; UC-61, 1943-1945; C-45, 1944-1945; C-46, 1945-1947; C-54, 1946-1948; C-82, 1948-1949; CG-15, 1949. O-1, 1965-1969; O-2, 1967-1973; OV-10, 1969-1973. O-2, 1973-1974; OV-10, 1974-1984. OV-10, 1990-1991. MQ-1, 2011-.

Operations. Conducted aerial transportation in the Caribbean and Central and South America, 1941-1948. Supported the Berlin Airlift, Jul-14 Oct 1948. Trained with US Army paratroopers in airborne tactics and transported cargo within the US, 1949. Between May 1965-Jan 1973, flew combat missions in the Vietnamese theater; Forward Air Controller (FAC) pilots flew interdiction missions; supported US and Vietnamese Army units. Provided forward tactical air control for US Army, Europe, and Seventh Army operations, 1973-1984. Trained for tactical air control missions, 1990-1991. After activation in Jan 2011, provided persistent intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and full motion video for real-time actionable intelligence and precision weapons employment in combat operations, using unmanned aircraft.

Service Streamers. World War II American Theater.

Campaign Streamers. Vietnam: Vietnam Defense; Vietnam Air; Vietnam Air Offensive; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III; Vietnam Air/Ground; Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV; Tet/69 Counteroffensive; Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969; Vietnam Winter/Spring 1970; Sanctuary Counteroffensive; Southwest Monsoon; Commando Hunt V; Commando Hunt VI; Commando Hunt VII; Vietnam Ceasefire.

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers. None.

Decorations. Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia): 1 Jul 1966-15 Aug 1967; 1 Aug 1968-31 Aug 1969; 1 Jan-31 Dec 1970; 30 Jan-31 Dec 1971; 1 Apr-26 Jun 1972. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device: 1 Sep 1965-31 Aug 1966; 1 Apr-31 May 1967; 15-31 Mar 1972; 1 Jul 1972-[15] Jan 1973. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: 1 May 1981-30 Apr 1983; 2 Apr 1990-30 Apr 1991. Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Crosses with Palm: 1 Apr 1966-15 Jan 1973; 8 Feb-31 Mar 1971; 1 Apr 1971-9 Mar 1972.

Lineage, Assignments, Stations, Commanders, Aircraft, Operations, and Honors through 25 Apr 2012.

Supersedes statement prepared on 2 Mar 2011.

Emblem. Approved on 25 Jun 1974.

20th TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON



LINEAGE

Constituted 20th Transport Squadron on 22 Nov 1940
Activated on 15 Dec 1940
Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron on 5 Jul 1942
Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (Special) on 13 Nov 1943
Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron 12 Apr 1944
Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (Heavy) on 17 Jun 1948
Redesignated 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (Medium) on 4 Oct 1948
Inactivated, 20 Oct 1949

STATIONS

France Field, CZ, 15 Dec 1940 (detachments operated from Howard Field, CZ, 2 NOV 1941-19 Feb 1942; Waller Field, Trinidad, 22 Dec 1941-Dec 1943)
Howard Field, CZ, 19 Feb 1942 (detachment operated from Losey Field, PR, 10 May-Jun 1942; Borinquen Field, PR, Jun 1942-1 Dec 1943)
Albrook Field, CZ, 9 Jun 1943-Sep 1948 (detachment operated from Rhein/Main AB, Germany 1 Jul-19 Oct 1948)
Bergstrom AFB, Texas, 4 Oct 1948
Smyrna AFB, Tenn, 27 Jan-20 Oct 1949
Rhein Main AB, West Germany, 1 Jul 1948-19 Oct 1948
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 4 Oct 1948-27 Jan 1949

ASSIGNMENTS

Panama Canal Department, 15 Dec 1940
Panama Air Depot, 1 Feb 1941
Sixth Air Force Base (later Sixth Air Force Service) Command, 5 Jun 1942
Panama Air Depot, 1 Dec 1944
Sixth Air Force (later Caribbean Air Command), 5 May 1945
314th Troop Carrier Group, 17 Jun 1948-20 Oct 1949 (detachment attached to United States Air Forces in Europe, 1-29 Jul 1948; Airlift Task Force (Prov), 29 Jul-19 Oct 1948)

COMMANDERS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-39, 1941-1944

C-47, 1941-1949
C-49, 1941-1944
C-45, 1943-1944
C-46, 1945-1947
C-54, 1946-1948
C-82, 1948-1949
C-119, 1949

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

On a light blue disc, within a red border, piped white, a yellow caricatured stork carrying a caricatured bug, in the attire of a paratrooper, wearing yellow shoes and gloves and black helmet, suspended from a belt held in bill of stork, and carrying in the left hand a brown parasol and in the right hand a "tommy" gun. (Approved, 13 Jan 1943)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Aerial transportation in Caribbean and in Central and South America, 1941-1948. Berlin Airlift, Jul-14 Oct 1948.

Although it started its existence at France Field in mid-December 1940 the unit only had two members (one officer and one NCO) until February 1941, when it was assigned directly to the

Panama Air Depot. It seemed the Command didn't have any firm guidance on exactly how to subordinate its newly created dedicated transport outfit.

Slowly, the unit grew and, by 1 July 1941, had four officers and 87 other ranks, but no actual flight operations were undertaken by the unit any earlier than about 1 February 1941, when the Squadron obtained its first aircraft from France Field's 16th Air Base Squadron - a Douglas C-33 (s/n 36-72). With this solitary aircraft, the Squadron undertook daily flights to Albrook and, from there, on to Rio Hato and return in support of the rapidly growing Panama defense establishment. The Squadron made its first (of many) foreign flights on 11 May 1941, when an engine for a Douglas C-39 (one of its own aircraft) was transported to Managua, Nicaragua.

the C-33 was returned to the U.S. and two more capable Douglas C-39's had been received in April 1941 (s/n 38-510 and 38-524) and, with these two airplanes, the Squadron began the first of a seemingly never ending series of cross-country flights to Trinidad in the British West Indies (some 1,200 air miles east, one way, from the Canal Zone) on 2 June 1941 in support of the construction of the outer defense ring of air bases in the Caribbean. Both of the C-39's took part.

Four months later, on 9 August 1941, two more sorely needed C-39's were assigned (s/n 38-534 and 38-504) and, with one of these, the Squadron made its first-ever (and highly prized) flight back to the U.S. when, on 26 September, engines were flown to the San Antonio Air Depot for overhaul.

By 7 December 1941, the Squadron was virtually up to strength as, besides the C-39's, the unit had received as well six Douglas C-49's (138 commercial DC-3's had been impressed under this designation, including 51 acquired directly from U.S. airlines and a further 87 that were under construction for airline use at the time they were seized by the USAAC; most C-49 variants had 1,200hp Wright R-1820-71 engines or variants of this same engine). The C-49's assigned to the Squadron were s/n 41-7715 (a C-49C) in September and C-49D's 41 -7717 to 7720, plus another C-49C 41-7721, in October-November-December 1941.

On 22 November 1941, six of the C-49's were detached to Howard Field as part of what came to be known as Flight "B" (Reinforced) of the Squadron to work specifically with the 501st Parachute Battalion and the 550th Airborne Infantry, which were training to act as a kind of rapid deployment force in the Canal defense scheme. During several parachute training "drop" missions, the C-49's delivered the paratroopers to the "drop zone" in elements of three aircraft, in formation. When a young Airborne Lieutenant was killed when he hit the wing tip of one of the formation C-49's upon jumping, the training was continued with single aircraft only.

To this point in its existence (i.e., from 1 February 1941, when the first actual flight was made, until the end of November 1941), the actual flight accomplishments of the new Squadron were impressive. Unit aircraft had flown not fewer than 2,082 flight hours, carried 9,633 passengers and more than 2,032,000 pounds of cargo.

As the unit reached its statutory TO&E (Table of Organization and Equipment) strength, a scheme was created to number the aircraft-within-Squadron, and this remained in effect for some time to come, with but minor exceptions. As of 22 December 1941, shortly after Pearl Harbor, unit aircraft were as follows:

Type Air Corps

Serial Number

Douglas C-33 36-72

Douglas C-39 38-510

Douglas C-39 38-524*

Douglas C-39 38-534

Douglas C-39 38-504

Douglas C-49C 41-7715 Douglas C-49D 41-7716 Douglas C-49D 41-7717 Douglas C-49D 41-7718 Douglas C-49D 41-7719 Douglas C-49D 41-7720 Douglas C-49C 41-7721 (*Note: This aircraft was gained from HHS, Panama Canal Department Air Force, and had a VIP interior initially)

The Squadron was Commanded from creation through its most turbulent period by MAJ Harry C. Morrison, who passed the command to CPT Donald K. Mumma briefly from 2 September 1942 until 17 October 1942, when CPT James W. Guthrie took command. During this time, the Squadron was transferred from France Field to Howard Field (on 19 February 1942, although the movement order gave the actual destination as Fort Kobbe, just adjacent to Howard Field) and the unit had the dubious distinction of being only the second motor convoy to ever cross the Isthmus of Panama to that time. This trek required continuous travel over the relatively short distance of 53 miles but took from 0700Hrs in the morning until 1700Hrs (5:OOPM) that night.

Between 7 and 22 April 1942, seven new Douglas C-47's (41-7761,7762,7770,7782,7783,7784 and 7785) were assigned to the Squadron, considerably augmenting the hard-worked C-39 and C-49 fleet, and this allowed some unit aircraft to be detached to base out of Trinidad (Flight "A") and Puerto Rico (Flight "C") on a more-or-less permanent basis, as these far-flung regions of the Command fell within the 20th's area of responsibility, which was truly vast. Flight "A" left the parent Squadron entirely on 22 December 1941 when it was detached to the 92nd Air Base Group at Waller Field, Trinidad. The C-47's were followed on 19 June by two Consolidated OA-10 "Catalina" amphibians (41-18772 and 18773, the very first "Catalina's" offset for the Army from Navy construction), a locally procured Stinson UC-91 trimotor (initially identified only by its manufacturers serial number, 9110, as the USAAF had not as yet gotten around to assigning it a formal serial, which later was formalized as 42-79547) in September, another OA-10 on 12 October (given as "42-08079" a "funny number" which was a corruption of its former Navy Bureau Number, 08079), none other than a single Junkers C-79 trimotor on 7 November (a former Brazilian and Ecuadorean Ju-52/3m, which was given USAAF serial 42-52883, and which had nominally been assigned to Flight "A" as part of the Trinidad Area, VI Air Force Service Command as early as May) and a Hamilton UC-89 (42-79546, a former Panamanian registered single-engined Hamilton Metalplane, which was initially designated as a C-38 in error) on 2 December! These "local" acquisitions were a measure of the near desperate need for transport aircraft being felt by the Squadron and the Command at the time. The last of the Squadron's C-39's was reassigned to Puerto Rico in September, also.

In early March 1943 the aircraft situation came close to getting even crazier for the Squadron. During that month, CPT Raynold A. Berg of the Squadron was sent to Santiago, Chile, to fly an Italian Savoia-Marchetti S.M.83 tri-motor (lately of the Italian airline LATI, which had somehow found its way to Santiago after the airline folded in September 1941 after fuel stocks were denied) back to the Canal Zone. The arrival of this exotic (and somewhat abused) aircraft at Albrook

resulted in a flurry of memoranda between Headquarters, Sixth Air Force and Caribbean Defense Command (which had apparently arranged the "transaction" resulting in acquisition of the airplane) and culminated with the Sixth Air Force position that..."assignment of the Savoia-Marchetti airplanes [note plural form; four S.M.83's are known to have been "available"] to this Command would, in our opinion, aggravate an already unsatisfactory maintenance problem with reference to operating aircraft of foreign manufacture." The ultimate fate of the aircraft seems to be lost, but Raynold Berg suggests that "we used it, briefly."

Although on paper the Squadron could count 23 aircraft of five separate types, of these two had experienced major wrecks, five were for exclusively VIP work, four were detached at Waller Field, Trinidad, two were detached in Puerto Rico and only 10 were on hand for "normal" transport duties out of the home station at Howard Field. Two months later, on 10 July 1942, the unit was formally redesignated as the 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (although the "official" USAAF history says this occurred on 5 July).

In spite of its very heavy utilization, Flight "A" of the Squadron did not suffer its first casualties until January 1943, when C-49D 41 -7717 crashed at 0615 15 minutes after take-off from Howard Field, with the loss of pilot 1LT J. M. Molvehill and four others on board.

By early 1943, the unit had 36 officers and 234 other ranks and, as of January 1943, all of the Consolidated OA-10's were transferred to other units and, on and off, the C-79, C-89 and C-91 were all grounded for extended periods as the ground crews and the PAD attempted to deal with these highly non-standard aircraft. By June 1943, all had been reassigned out of the Squadron, much to the relief of all concerned. On 1 May 1943, the Squadron had suffered another loss when a Flight "B" C-49, piloted by LT's Sturges and Holland (plus two other crew and five passengers), while returning from Puerto Rico after dark sometime after 2100Hrs (9:00PM), crashed into mountains north of Waller Field, Trinidad (this was C-49D41-7718). All nine on board were killed.

Replacement aircraft received by the Squadron after the stand-down of the earlier odds-and-ends in June 1943 seemed scarcely less strange. Chief amongst these was the huge Boeing XB-15 (s/n 35-277, assigned 2 April 1943 from the VI Air Force Service Command) which was converted from bomber to heavy transport configuration to meet some of the Sixth Air Force's peculiar requirements - most notably the long and frequent over-water re-supply flights to the Galapagos Islands. But the unit also got the first two (s/n 41-38799 and 38795 on 3 May 1943, formerly of the VI Air Force Service Command) of a number of Fairchild UC-61 's, a Stinson L-1 (s/n 40-233, also on 3 May 1943), a new Douglas C-47A (42-23596, formerly of the Trinidad Detachment, VI Fighter Command, Antilles Air Command) assigned on "verbal" authority directly from the Sixth Air Force Service Command, another C-47 on loan (from an unspecified Command), yet another Consolidated OA-10 (s/n "42-08085" assigned on 2 August 1943) and a solitary North American BC-1 (s/n 38-361, on 3 August 1943), the latter a veteran of the Canal Zone, having arrived in October 1938. With this mixture of disparate types, the unit set about meeting its ever increasing workload, ranging from international, long distance flights with cargo and personnel to resupply and evacuation of the small radar sites spotted around the periphery of the Canal.

As Howard Field became ever more crowded with bomber units, the Squadron was moved again in June 1943, this time to Albrook Field, which was scarcely less crowded. Prior to the move, the first of several very special missions was flown, the first on 26 April 1943, another on 14 October 1943 and at least two others in 1944. These were conducted under exceptionally tight security conditions, and involved bringing the interned German, Italian and Japanese nationals out of Bolivia to camps in the Canal Zone and, later, the U.S.

Just after the multi-aircraft, long range mission to distant La Paz, Bolivia, every available aircraft of the Squadron was ordered to Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico on 17 May 1943 where they air-transported an entire U.S. Army infantry unit from there to Morrison Field, Florida, which was completed on 3 June 1943

Squadron suffered another loss, this time a Flight "B" C-47A (apparently s/n 42-23596) out of Waller Field bound for Atkinson Field, British Guiana, which was lost without a trace on 8 July 1943. It is still believed by most squadron members that this aircraft was shot-down by a surfaced U-boat that it may have encountered somewhere enroute.

September 1943, two Squadron aircraft (including C-47A 42-23597 and one other) made an ultra-long distance flight to Santiago, Chile (nearly 2,400 miles) to transport 35 Chilean Army officers and cadets back to the Canal Zone for a special course conducted for them by the Caribbean Defense Command, which was anxious to wean the Chilean Army from its very strong Prussian heritage and orientation.

The Squadron also added another OA-10 to its strength on 14 November 1943, s/n 42-33267, which had formerly been assigned to the PAD.

By December 1943, the detachments in the Antilles (Rights "B" and "C"), which had been leading essentially a separate existence from the "home" based Flight "A" in the Canal Zone, were finally detached from the Squadron completely, and became assets of the Antilles Air Command, and were based loosely out of Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico, although in reality their dispersion throughout the Antilles as far as Trinidad and the Guiana's continued.

With the loss of responsibilities in the Antilles, the Squadron was at last able to tighten up a bit in the Canal Zone, although it was still left with a truly remarkable array of aircraft on hand as it became redesignated as the 20th Troop Carrier Squadron (Special) on 1 January 1944. The Squadron still had one veteran Douglas C-39, four C-47's, four of the original C-49 variants, four Fairchild UC-61 's, the XB-15 (which by now had been redesignated as the XC-105, in view of its configuration as a cargo transport), the two examples of the Consolidated OA-10, and one each BC-1 and L-1, but now also the first (L-4C 42-79557 on 3 August 1943) of a number of Piper L-4's.

The Consolidated OA-10's, besides other over-water transport duties, were being utilized during early 1944 to support what was termed the "San Jose Project" on San Jose Island, which has been mentioned elsewhere in this account. Briefly, this was a highly classified chemical weapons (and, apparently, storage) test site. , while the Squadron had passed intra-theater transport duties to its former Flights in the Antilles, it still had responsibilities to make flights to Puerto Rico and

elsewhere from Panama, but was aided in this in early May 1944 when VI Bomber Command assumed responsibilities for transport flights to Puerto Rico for 10 days using two of its B-24's. This came at a time when the Squadron was under heavy pressure to conduct its schedule of flights within Panama and its organic aircraft were suffering chronic maintenance problems.

Another C-47 was added in late May 1944 (identified in unit records as "41-13475" although this is a non-existent C-47 serial number!) and, with the arrival of this aircraft, the unit was at last able to bid farewell to its last C-39 (38-534), which was transferred on 1 June 1944 to the Antilles Air Command. The C-39 did not leave the Squadron before it had a chance to engage in yet another of the "Secret Maneuvers" cited earlier.

On 3 May 1944, the Squadron received a "Warning Order" to prepare five of its C-47's, (plus one other, which was attached from Headquarters, Sixth Air Force) four C-49's and the C-39 (in other words, a maximum effort) to engage in "secret maneuvers" on or about 5 May. This most unusual order stated, specifically, that: "This maneuver will not, repeat not be discussed with any other person. Instructions as to destination will be furnished you verbally by the Commanding General Sixth Air Force, prior to departure. Flight Commanders may be given the itinerary, next destination only, immediately before take-off from home stations, but they will be cautioned not to inform any other members of the flight as to destinations. Flight leaders will inform the pilots and co-pilots of their next destination only immediately prior to time set for take-off. All personnel assigned to accompany these planes will be directed prior to departure that they are not to discuss with anyone their flight plans, next destination, or to give any information as to possible routes or next landing places, except the flight element leaders authorized to arrange for clearances with the flight control section of air ports in accordance with normal procedures. Radio silence will be observed during flights, except the necessary communications by the flight leaders with airdromes and for emergency communication between aircraft in flight which should be by voice if possible."

Initially, MAJ Raynold A. Berg, the Squadron Commander, had been ordered not to reveal the "maneuvers" to any other person, an obvious impossibility. Besides MAJ Berg, who led Flight A (so designated for the purposes of this exercise), the other elements were led by MAJ Charles W. Larson (B Flight) and CPT Frederick A. Sanders (C Right). Each aircraft was to be issued sufficient field rations to feed 18 people for four days, and each aircraft was to be issued a Thompson .45 caliber sub-machine gun with 300 rounds and each crew member with a .45 caliber pistol. No parachutes were to be carried, and all non-essential equipment was to be removed from the aircraft. The solitary C-39 was going along to carry spares for the other aircraft, should they require maintenance enroute to the destination. And, finally, non-transparent covers were placed over all of the fuselage windows of the aircraft.

The aircraft participating in this "maneuver" actually departed Albrook for Talara, Peru at 0655Hrs (6:55AM) on 16 May 1944 where they arrived without incident and remained overnight, sequestered in barracks set aside specifically for them. They flew on to Arequipa in the interior of Peru the following day where they were laboriously refueled with pumps carried aboard the C-39. C-49C 41-7715 (tactical No. 10) nosed over on takeoff, and had to remain at Arequipa for repair.

The fleet of aircraft swept into the final destination, La Paz, Bolivia, at 0845Hrs on 18 May 1944 where their 220 passengers (referred to as "prisoners"), German, Japanese and Italian residents of

Bolivia, were quickly herded onto the aircraft by Thompson-armed M.P.'s (one per aircraft, and, after loading, an M.P. was positioned fore and aft in the cabin of each aircraft, and all were back in the air enroute back to Arequipa, Peru by 0930Hrs. An overnight stay at Arequipa saw the "prisoners" marched to a house there "... inside a barbed wire fence, complete with searchlights, guard towers and many guards"

By November 1944, the unit had finally started benefiting from the massive aircraft production of transport types at home, and could finally approach some semblance of standardization in its fleet. By 30 November 1944, the Squadron had not fewer than 12 C-47's (including a new C-47B, 43-49141, which had just been received that month), the now highly modified XC-105, one of the OA-10's, a Beech 0-45, one Stinson L-1 and one UC-61 (which was in storage). With some regret, the huge XC-105, which was experiencing some structural problems beyond the ability of the Command to repair, was reassigned to the PAD on 18 December.

The last year of the war, with the general wind-down of the size and breadth of the Sixth Air Force, saw a gradual reduction in the previously hectic flight schedules for 20th TCS crews. By February, operations had reached the point where the Squadron could entertain a limited training program, in keeping with the general thrust of other Sixth Air Force activities at the time.

On 7 February 1945, the Squadron welcomed the first 26 of 42 Bolivian Air Force personnel who were to train with the Squadron in the operation and maintenance of the Douglas C-47 transport. One of the Lend-Lease Bolivian C-47A's was attached to the Squadron for a brief time to aid in the training program for the Bolivian personnel.

By this time, the Squadron had also received C-47A's 43-48000 and 43-48006 and, in March, four of the Squadron's older C-47's (41-7761,7770,7782 and 42-23597) were transferred out of the unit when three brand-new Curtiss C-46A's were delivered (43-47194, 47195 and 47196), giving the Squadron a much enhanced cargo-lift capability. In April, C-47A42-93102 was transferred to the Antilles Air Command, being replaced by new C-47B 43-48301, and the Squadron also received its second Stinson L-1 to be operated, 40-243, when it arrived from the PAD after refurbishment.

The 20th Troop Carrier Squadron ended the war with four C-46A's (43-47197 had joined the other three received earlier), eight C-47A's, one C-47B and an OA-10, although an OA-10A (44-34062) was briefly assigned to the unit circa May 1945 for search and rescue work.

460424	C-47	41-18530	20TCS	Albrook Field, CZ		KCR	Hammer, George F	5M off Peru, PR
430207	L-4A	42-36798	20TCS	16SrG		TAC	Pierce, Richard T	Howard Fld
430710	C-47A	42-23596	20TCS	6ABG		MIS	Gruber, Isadore L	
430116	C-49D	41-7718	20TCS			KMAC	Mulvehill, John M	Palo Seca

430501	C-49D	41-7717	20TCS			KMAC	Sturges, Richard F	Waller Fld, BWI
430516	C-61	41-38799	20TCS			LAC	Gruber, Isadore L	Albrook Fld
430716	UC-61	41-38799	20TCS			TOA	Mackey, Francis H	La Joya #2
430725	L-1	40-233	20TCS			TAC	Willis, James R	Albrook Fld
431024	C-49D	41-7720	20TCS			LAC	Rule, Lewis R	Rey Is
431124	UC-61	41-38797	20TCS			TOA	Hastle, William J	Pedasi
440121	UC-61	41-38798	20TCS			GL	Sweeney, Robert P	Pito
440315	C-39	38-534	20TCS			LAC	Eichler, Jack H	Pito
440329	BC-1	38-361	20TCS			KCR	Cook, Lee E	La Joya #3
440723	C-49C	41-7715	20TCS			LAC	Linscheid, Gerald (NMI)	Rey Is
441129	UC-45F	43-35711	20TCS			LAC	Jenkins, Richard A	
450621	C-47A	43-48003	20TCS			CBL	Pederson, Glenn W	Arequipa Apt/ 4mi NNW
450823	C-47A	43-15942	20TCS			TOA	O'Boyle, John J	Lima, Limatambo Apt
451018	C-47A	43-48000	20TCS		Albrook Fld/CZ	TAC	Jordan, William D	Albrook Fld
460130	C-46A	43-47195	20TCS			CBL	Monroe, Raleigh A Jr	Charana/NW
461112	C-54D	42-72552	20TCS			CRL	Sobieski, Thomas J	El Pelado Peak
421001	C-39	38-524	20TCSq	6AFSC	Losey Field, PR	KCRGC	Durant, Francis H	15 mi NW of Coamo, PR
421119	C-49D	41-7719	20TCSq	6ASC	Howard Field, CZ	TOA	Pierce, Richard T	Albrook Field, CZ

421124	C-79	42-5883	20TCSq	6ASC	Howard Field, CZ	GAC	Barnes, Forest E	Howard Field, CZ
420922	C-47	41-7782	20TCSq		Howard Field, CZ	GAC	Mumma, D. K.	Howard Field, CZ
420803	C-49D	41-7717	20TCSq		Howard Field, CZ	FLEFGC	Sturges, Richard F	Naranjo Airport, COS
420803	C-49D	41-7718	20TCSq		Howard Field, CZ	FLEFGC	Sanders, Frederick A	Naranjo Airport, COS
420819	C-47	41-7770	20TCSq		Howard Field, CZ	LACW	Jenkins, Elbert C	San Jose, COS
420901	OA-10	41-18772	20TCSq		Howard Field, CZ	GAC	Larsen, Charles W	Colo Solo NAS, CZ

420406	C-39	38-534	20TS	6AF	Waller Field, TRN	GLMF	Bacci, Edward D	Waller Field, TRN
420607	OA-10	41-18773	20TS	6AF BC	Howard Field, CZ	TAC	Gerhart, Quinter P	In bay at St Elmos Point, PAN
420607	C-49D	41-7717	20TS	6AF BC	Howard Field, CZ	TACNU	Montgomery, Charles A	Managua, Nicaragua
420329	C-49C	41-7715	20TS		Howard Field, CZ	LAC	Larson, Charles W	Tejeria, MEX
420527	C-49D	41-7717	20TS		Howard Field, CZ	ACC	Marts, Kenneth E.	Over Pacora, PAN

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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