

7th EXPEDITIONARY AIRBORNE COMMAND AND CONTROL SQUADRON



LINEAGE

7th Air Corps Ferrying Squadron, 18 Feb 1942

Activated, 24 Mar 1942

Redesignated 7th Ferrying Squadron, 12 May 1943

Disbanded, 1 Apr 1944

7th Combat Cargo Squadron constituted, 25 Apr 1944

Activated, 1 May 1944

Inactivated, 15 Jan 1946

Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948

7th Logistics Support Squadron constituted, 22 Jun 1954

Activated, 18 Oct 1954

Redesignated 7th Air Transport Squadron, Special, 1 Jul 1964

Discontinued and inactivated, 8 Jan 1966

7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron, constituted and activated, 13 Feb 1968

Organized, 1 Mar 1968

7th Ferrying Squadron, 7th Combat Cargo Squadron, 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron consolidated, 19 Sep 1985. Consolidated unit retained 7 Airborne Command and Control Squadron designation.

Inactivated, 28 Oct 1998

Redesignated 7 Expeditionary Airborne Command and Control Squadron, and converted to

provisional status, 19 Mar 2008.

STATIONS

Seattle, WA, 24 Mar 1942
Gore Field, Great Falls, MT, 22 Jun 1942–1 Apr 1944
Syracuse AAB, NY, 1 May 1944
Baer Field, IN, 7–27 Oct 1944
Biak Island, 11 Nov 1944
Dulag, Leyte, May 1945
Okinawa, 19 Aug 1945
Yokota AB, Japan, 22 Sep 1945–15 Jan 1946
Robins AFB, GA, 19 Oct 1954–8 Jan 1966
Da Nang AB, South Vietnam (operated from Udorn RTAFB, Thailand), 1 Mar 1968
Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 31 Oct 1968
Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 15 Apr 1972
Clark AB, Philippines, 22 May 1974–14 Aug 1975
Keesler AFB, MS, 14 Aug 1975
Offutt AFB, NE, 19 Jul 1994

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 1–25 Sep 1991
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 25 Sep 1990–16 Mar 1991

ASSIGNMENTS

North West Sector, Ferrying Command (later, 7th Ferrying Group), 18 Feb 1942–1 Apr 1944
2nd Combat Cargo Group, 1 May 1944–15 Jan 1946
Warner Robins Air Materiel Area, 18 Oct 1954
3079th Aviation Depot Wing, 6 Feb 1955
39th Logistics Support Group, 1 Jul 1962
62nd Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Jul 1963
63rd Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Jul 1964–8 Jan 1966
Pacific Air Forces, 13 Feb 1968
Seventh Air Force, 1 Mar 1968
432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 31 Oct 1968
388th Tactical Fighter Wing, 30 Apr 1972
374th Tactical Airlift Wing, 22 May 1974
3rd Tactical Fighter Wing, 31 Mar 1975
507th Tactical Air Control Group, 14 Aug 1975
552nd Airborne Warning and Control Wing (later, 552nd Airborne Warning and Control Division), 1 Oct 1976
28th Air Division, 1 Apr 1985
552nd Operations Group, 29 May 1992
55th Operations Group, 19 Jul 1994
Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate at any time on or after 19 Mar 2008

ATTACHMENTS

Seventh Air Force, 31 Oct 1968-15 Aug 1973

US Support Activities Group/Seventh Air Force, 15 Aug 1973-21 May 1974

Thirteenth Air Force, 22 May 1974-14 Aug 1975

Air Division Provisional, 15, 5 Dec 1990-16 Mar 1991

WEAPON SYSTEMS

None (ferried tactical aircraft), 24 Mar 1942-1 Apr 1944

C-47A, 1944-1945

C-46A, 1944-1945

C-124, 1954-1966

C-130E, 1968

EC-130E

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT SERIAL NUMBERS

C-46A

41-12427

C-47A

42-93193

42-108923

EC-130E

63-7863

62-1836

62-1818

C-130E

62-1857

EC-135C

63-8052

62-3582

ASSIGNED AIRCRAFT TAIL/BASE CODES

EC-135C: OF

EC-130E: JC

C-130E: JC

UNIT COLORS

COMMANDERS

Maj Alma G. Winn, 24 Mar 1942-1 Apr 1944

Unkn, 1-5 May 1944

Maj Willard R. Jones, 6 May 1944

Cpt Ray H. Brasher, Oct 1945-unkn

1Lt J. L. Sanford, by Dec 1945

None (unmanned), 1-15 Jan 1946
LTC George G. White, 18 Oct 1954
Col Fred A. Morgan, 30 Jun 1957
LTC Walker R. Reynolds Jr., 1 Jun 1962
LTC Dixon J. Arnold, 20 May 1964-8 Jan 1966
None (not manned), 13-29 Feb 1968
Col Guy Hurst Jr., 1 Mar 1968
Col (unkn) Crutcher, Apr 1968
Col John M. Winkler, 2 May 1968-unkn
Col James R. Starnes, by Mar 1969
Col William W. Sams, Mar 1969
Col Chester A. Jack, 27 Apr 1969
Col John E. Blake, 16 Apr 1970
Col Wilbur A. Tapscott, 22 Oct 1970
Col Frank Mann Jr., 4 Oct 1971
Col Jerry F. Hogue, Aug 1972
Col Robert B. Ennis, 17 Jan 1973
Col Jerry F. Hogue, 1 Feb 1973
Col Raymond W. Hinck, 15 Aug 1973
LTC Robert B. Wagner, 18 Aug 1975
Col Robert E. Stone, 6 Aug 1976
Col Hugh L. Cox III, 7 Jun 1978
LTC Robert L. Ziman, 7 Sep 1979
Col Jimmie R. Robertson, 3 Mar 1980
LTC Ronald J. Ziebold, Sep 1982
Col Wayne R. Bechler, Jan 1983
Col Richard A. Riegel, May 1984
Col Stephen H. Foster, Apr 1985
Col Roland K. Potter, Aug 1987
Col Terry L. Oldham, Apr 1990
Col Larry G. Radov, 26 Aug 1993
LTC Jeffrey T. Steig, 4 Oct 1994
LTC Laddy F. Bovey, 16 Feb 1996-28 Oct 1998

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Japan

New Guinea

Western Pacific

Leyte

Luzon

Southern Philippines

Ryukyus

Vietnam

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

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Grenada, 1983

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citations

Vietnam, 1 Nov 1968–31 Oct 1969

Vietnam, 1–30 Apr 1972

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, with Combat "V" Device

1 Mar 1968–17 May 1969

21 Nov 1969–20 Nov 1970

21 Nov 1970–6 Apr 1971

18 Dec 1972–15 Aug 1973

12 Apr–15 May 1975

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

17–28 Oct 1962

1 Jul 1965–7 Jan 1966

1 Jul 1977–30 Jun 1978

1 Jul 1978–30 Jun 1980

1 Jul 1982–30 Jun 1984

1 Apr 1985–31 Mar 1987

1 Apr 1987–31 Mar 1989

1 Dec 1989–1 Dec 1991

1 Apr-30 Sep 1992
1 Apr 1992-31 Mar 1994
1 Jul 1994-31 Jul 1995
1 Jun 1997-1 Oct 1998

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
1 Mar 1968–28 Jan 1973

EMBLEM

On a medium green disc, border brown, a caricatured, brown and white rabbit wearing white aviator's goggles and a revolver in a brown holster, fastened to a yellow belt about the waist, walking on hind legs toward dexter and supporting a large, yellow pack, with a gray machine gun and cartridge belt strapped to back, while carrying a gray aerial machine gun in the right forepaw. (Approved, 5 Jul 1945)

On a Light Blue disc fimbriated White within a Yellow band a stylized White bird detailed Black with wings extending to base emitting two Red lightning bolts to dexter and sinister base. (Originally approved, 17 Feb 1977 revised in 1994; replaced emblems approved, 28 Feb 1956)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Ferried lend-lease aircraft to Alaska for turnover to Soviets, Jun 1942–Mar 1944.

Aerial transportation in Southwest and Western Pacific, 13 Dec 1944–Sep 1945.

The 7th Combat Cargo Squadron was activated May 1st, 1944 at Syracuse, N.Y and was part of the 2nd Combat Cargo Group with 3 other Squadrons, the 5th, 6th and the 8th. Each Squadron had an attached Airdrome Squadron and ours was the 338th. The 338th handled mess facilities, servicing, transportation and maintenance of the aircraft.

Captain Jones was chosen by Col. William Bell, 2nd Combat Cargo Group CO to head the 7th Squadron. Capt. Jones was from Munich, North Dakota and had been in several Troop Carrier organizations prior to coming to Syracuse.

The Syracuse Army Air Base was located at Hancock Field, on the edge of the city of Syracuse, NY. and one of the first things that we noticed was the scattered placement of the barracks. We were told that from the air, the field did not appear as a typical air base where barracks are lined up in perfect rows.

Our authority for activation originated at Stout Field, Indiana. Our 2nd Combat Cargo Group became the latest addition to the 1st Troop Carrier Command headquartered at Stout Field. Many

men were arriving at the base in early May and continued to come all month. Many were former B-25, B-26, B-17, etc., pilots and crewmen. Others came directly from Flight Schools or Technical Schools.

Also a great influx of enlisted men from Radio and Engineering Technical Schools came to Syracuse. Officers and enlisted men arrived with little or no knowledge of what fate held in store for them. They came by train, plane and automobile. They were quickly assigned to the oddly spaced barracks on Hancock Field. Being located near the East Coast, apparently there existed some fear of appearing like a typical military air field in the event of enemy air attacks. A Syracuse newspaper had an article on our organizing at S.A.A.B., and this represented to many the first information on what was to be expected.

Actually nothing happened for about a week as the men were getting set up in their living quarters. May 8th was the official day Capt. Willard Jones was made C.O. of the 7th. On that day, 35 new officers and 40 enlisted men made up the Squadron strength. By May 31st, the overall personnel had surged to 95 officers and 86 enlisted men.

In forming a Squadron, the leaders must fill all the necessary positions so as to become operative. There was a degree of confusion in this early period of organization, to appoint the proper men for the jobs that were needed. A mess hall was required for enlisted men and officers and this was worked out with the other Squadrons, who were also in a state of organization.

1st Sgt. Jack C. Oberholzer on May 19th took over the responsibilities of conducting reveille roll call. Saturday morning inspections were implemented and Col. Bell, Group Commander, was pleased with the results of the first inspection. Slowly everything seemed to fall in place and on May 23rd, the following appointments were made by Capt. Jones.

Operation Officer, Capt. James H. Moon, Asst. Operation Officer, 1st Lt. Ray H. Brashear, Adjutant, 1st Lt. John D. Foskett, Communications, 2nd Lt. Gerald D'Amour, Tech. Supply, 1st Lt. John C. Schall, Medical, 1st Lt. Lewis R. Pummer, Adm. Supply, Add. Duty., 1st Lt. John D. Foskett, Intelligence, Add. Duty., 1st Lt. Ray H. Brashear, Assist. Intelligence, 2nd Lt. Gerald E. Schmitt, Line Chief, T./Sgt. Capazutto, Tech. Supply, S/Sgt. Nutton, Quartermaster, S/Sgt. W. J. Sullivan, Engineering Officer, 2nd Lt. Richard E. O'Brien.

All of the incoming men were scheduled for training in their field. There were some glitches at first but by June 1st, all of our training had begun. This was considered early for a new group. Captain Bowen, Group Officer, was assigned the job of assembling a schedule for flight training. Capt. Piper was responsible for ground school training. In our Squadron, Capt. Moon and Lt. Reese directed the flying and ground school scheduling. The ground school courses for pilots consisted of instruction in all phases of operation and maintenance of the C-47. Transition check flights, day and night formation flying, instrument and radio, low level cross country, landing (short field and normal) procedures, constituted the first month in flying. In Ground school, flying regulations, communications, navigation, meteorology, instruments, Link Trainer, engines, weights and balances, air evacuation, demolition of supplies and equipment, pyrotechnics and ciphers were reviewed thoroughly.

Enlisted personnel received varying courses in flight training. Radio men had schooling in code, blinkers, ciphers, radio and equipment, etc., while the crew chiefs studied engineering, engines, electrical and hydraulic equipment. By then, most of the officers were settled in B.O.Q.'s or barracks. Some men were later permitted to live off base if they were married.

It is only natural that chow was an important factor in keeping up the morale of our Squadron. In the first phases of our set up, we used Group mess halls. After the 4 Squadrons were organized, the Officer's mess was set up about 3 blocks from the main squadron area. The 7th enlisted men joined with the other squadrons for mess until the 338th ADS got organized to help us. A minor fire caused a slight delay in the opening but on May 10th, a red-letter day for hungry men, the first palatable meal was served in the combined enlisted men mess hall.

Transportation was important to Air Force units and the 338th, by the end of May, had a Motor Pool for our use. Vehicles were driven in from points in New York and Ohio. The camouflage, for which Syracuse A.A.B. was famous, made it difficult for truck drivers to drive down to the line.

A combined mail room handled the mail for the 7th and 338th. Cpl. Ted Calbensky was responsible for personal correspondence for Officers and enlisted men. Payroll work was handled by P.F.C. William C. Fairchild, assisted by S/Sgt. William C. Robertson. On May 31st, all personnel stepped up to be paid - their first pay earned at S.A.A.B.

For enlisted men, reveille was 0545 hours, 6 days a week. Because of night flying and erratic hours, the officers could not always follow a strict schedule. Saturday morning each week was set aside for the purpose of inspection of barracks and personnel. No officer or enlisted men was excused. This way the administration could maintain a reasonable check on both the welfare and equipment required by personnel.

One of the major problems in setting up a new Army Air Corps unit is in getting all the supplies required to become fully operational. Then the task of scheduling which was under the guidelines for a new organization. This all occurred, actually ahead of schedule. Despite early difficulties, all training was on schedule by June 15th. Capt. Moon and Lt. Brashear had to deal with shortages at first in aircraft. Only 5 C-47's were available in the beginning. In 2 weeks, we had 12 aircraft - some of which required engine overhauling or replacement.

On June 8th, the maiden flight (cross country) of the 7th Squadron took place. The flight was made with Capt. Jones as pilot, 2nd Lt. Robert S. Sillery as co-pilot, S/Sgt. Hertenstein as Crew Chief and Sgt. McLaughlin as Radio Operator. This mission was to fly to Stout Field conveying 6 squadron pilots to ferry planes back to Syracuse. It was a rainy day but the flight to Stout was uneventful. Also some supplies were needed. Late in the day Capt. Jones flew back to Syracuse in bad weather and ice began to form. The de-icer boots didn't function well and there were a few tense moments. About 2100, old "175" glided to a stop in front of the operations hangar completing the 1st historic mission of the 7th C.C.S.

Eventually 4 flights were formed. "A" Flight was headed by 1st Lt. William P. Trotter, "B" Flight 2nd Lt. William D. Hart, "C" Flight 2nd Lt. Guy Lowe and "D" Flight 1st Lt. Otho Watford.

These men then formed pilot, co-pilot combinations. On June 15th 30 of these combinations were formed. The transition of experienced pilots from more war-like aircraft to the C-47 was not easy. Several had to learn to land a "wheel dragger" as opposed to tricycle landing gears. It is safe to say that though the C-47 wasn't exactly a B-25 or a B-26, it was a very flyable aircraft that most came to respect.

When S.A.A.B. was up and running, it was time to think about some of the fun things. Our Officer's Club and enlisted men club were places for socializing and even have a drink or two. Syracuse was loaded with beautiful girls and several of our men even married while stationed there. The Hotel Syracuse was the meeting place - similar to the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio. There were, from what I have learned over the years, lots of romancing and friendships that were cemented during our almost 6 month stay at Syracuse. Being married and having a baby, I was happy to be able to live an almost normal life when off the base. It is fair to state that life at Syracuse wasn't all that bad.

After having some aircraft to fly, it was discovered part of the inventory required some expertise in maintenance. There was a lack of experienced engineering personnel. Most of the crew chiefs and assistants had worked on other types of heavy aircraft. In time, these men mastered the engine work and equipment care and more planes became flyable. By June 15th, the 7th planes were mostly flyable and were well up front in flying hours and could already boast an enviable record in training. There was a shortage of parachutes, a lack of proper facilities for repairing the damage to engines and one by one, these problems were eliminated.

John Schall, Tech. Supply Officer, had to assume the awesome task of bringing order out of chaos. There was the necessity of obtaining parts and equipment of all types which were required. Parachute riggers were obtained so more planes could fly according to regulations. Supplies were flown in from Rome, New York and other areas. Finally every C-47 was equipped with parachutes and the supply shelves were well stocked with airplane parts. Ground station radios were distributed and equipped with component parts and accessories. Code keys and head sets also came in.

The 338th ADS handled the enlisted men clothing and all shortages were satisfied. Laundry facilities were set up almost from the beginning and the men took advantage of the modest rates for laundering. Bedding and linen were also available.

In the first 6 weeks - up to June 15th, the 7th was up and running quite well. The crisis period was past. Pilots and crewmen were getting more familiar with the C-47. There were some indications and expressions of discontentment. The typical G.I. gripes happened here as well as every place we were to be. Many pilots were disappointed with this assignment. Not everyone transferring in could have 1st pilot seats. Many had left "hot" ships to fly the admittedly more awkward and slower cargo ships. Despite all that, they were getting the job done. The enlisted men, in some instances, also had a few gripes. Some had been earning flight pay being part of the flight crew on previous bases. At S.A.A.B. only a certain number would be assigned to crew member jobs earning more money.

Time off post was another gripe. Col. Bell permitted only 2 passes per man each week. Only 50% of the strength was allowed off-post on any one night. This limitation was kept in force at first but later the men were allowed one night a week until reveille. Also week end passes of off duty personnel were given with 30 hour duration. It was strongly suggested that officers and enlisted men not bring wives and family to nearby points of residence. The advice was based on the argument that training would be intensive. Despite that ruling, discontent and early refraction resulted in many wives coming, despite the advice.

I remember when we did a lot of night flying, I would come home at about 4:00 A.M. The flying hours were slowly accumulating in the "Gooney Bird" and eventually, most of us were pleased with the ease of which this great airplane was to fly. Later, we were to fly the C-46, which was a much more difficult plane to handle.

From June 15th and up to July 31st, we were on schedule on flying hours for the air crews. Several of the men that came to Syracuse were transferred out to satisfy the number of men needed in various positions on the base. Capt. Moon, Lt. D'Amour and Lt. O'Brien followed by Lt. Beatson, directed the flying schedules of officers and enlisted men who made up the flying personnel. Ground school was under the supervision of Capt. Moon. Pilots practiced instruments, R.D.F., short field landings, day and night formation flying, minimum altitude navigation, bundle drops, parapack drops and triangular night missions. Radar homing was learned as well as glider towing. We also engaged in dropping paratroopers from Ft. Bragg.

Officer's ground school included: flight regulations, communications, navigation, meteorology, instruments and T.O.'s, Link Trainer, engines, weights and balances, air evacuation, demolition of supplies and equipment, pyrotechnics and ciphers. In this period, all required subjects were completed.

Special training was given to enlisted men in communication and engineering. Communication personnel received courses in code and blinker, maps and facility charts, flight codes and ciphers, weather liaison sets, command sets, V.H.F., radio compass, marker beacon interphones, frequency meters, operational procedures and signals, localizer receiver, Rebecca Babs, I.F.F., Antenna equipment, T.O.'s and T.M.'s, practical inspection and first echelon maintenance of aircraft.

For engineering - enlisted personnel, special subjects were: moving and mooring aircraft, use of hydraulic jacks, lubrication and cleaning, wheels and brakes, propellers, fuel systems, electrical systems, hydraulic and heating systems, oil, oxygen and de-icer systems, instruments, pre-flighting, tech orders and weights and balances.

By July 31, 1944, virtually all training of enlisted men and officers was completed. Now we were eager to move on to the next step towards overseas duty.

Also, at this period in our training, some changes were made in duties on base. Capt. John Foskett was named Group Adjutant on July 18th and he was replaced in the 7th by Lt. Albert H. Phillips. On July 6th, Lt. Richard O'Brien was transferred, being replaced by Lt. James G. Beatson as Squadron Engineering Officer. Promotions were as follows: 1st Lt. Ray H. Brashear,

Wm. P. Trotter, John D. Foskett and Lewis Pummer all made Captains. 2nd Lt. Wm. D. Hart, Guy Lowe, James E. Creelman and Gerald D'Amour, Wm. C. Metsker and John Le Bleu became 1st Lieutenants. Also the enlisted men had some promotions in July. Line Chief Sgt. Capazutto promoted to M/Sgt. and Crew Chief S/Sgt Harold James to T/Sgt.

At the close of July, the roster totals were 88 officers, 100 enlisted men, and 7 attached enlisted men. Key personnel are: C.O., Capt. Willard Jones, Operations, Capt. James Moon and Asst. was Capt. Ray Brashear, Adj., 1st Lt. Albert Phillips, (Adm. Supply added duty), Engineering, Lt. James C. Beatson, and Asst. 2nd Lt. L. P. Farrell. 1st Lt. Gerald D'Amour took on Communications, Cryptographic Security and Unit Censor. 1st Lt. John Schall, Tech. Supply. Medical Officer, Capt. Lewis R. Pummer with Add. duty as Unit Censor. Intelligence, Capt. Ray H. Brashear, Asst. 2nd Lt. Gerald Schmitt. 1st Sgt. Jack C. Oberholzer, Reveille. M/Sgt. Orland R. Capazutto, Line Chief. S/Sgt. Harry Milton, Tech Supply. S/Sgt. Jack H. Milhon, Operations, T/Sgt. Thomas Conover, Communications. S/Sgt. Walter Sullivan, Quartermaster.

On the morning of July 3rd, the 338th Airdrome Sqdn. left S.A.A.B. in a convoy to the town of Fulton, N.Y. It was a dreary morning and all types of military vehicles made up the convoy ranging from jeeps to gasoline trailer trucks. In a small wooded area, just off the local airport at Fulton, the 338th set up camp. We were less than 100 yards from the air strip and quite concealed in the woods. Our 7th Sqdn. men were being prepared for our 1st bivouac.

We prepared to bring tents, bed rolls, blankets, musette bags, canteens, helmet liners and other field equipment. All our flying personnel were assigned to their own aircraft and equipment was on-loaded.

Up at 0630, all men were soon ready to climb aboard our C-47's at 0750 hours, eleven green nosed planes taxied out in single file, ran up the engines, checked the mags and took off into the blue. Arriving at Fulton, the lead ship, piloted by Capt. Jones, peeled off for a landing followed by the rest of the Squadron.

After discharging passengers and cargo, the C-47's took to the air. Many were left to set up tents, dig fox holes and camouflage the area. We also slept in individual Pup Tents.

Our first meal was K rations because the field kitchen was not yet set up. We did some flying there. Only one mishap. Ship #193 blew a tire on landing. Full brakes were applied and the plane nosed over damaging the props and nose of the C-47. We were on the way to prepare our outfit for overseas duty.

Bivouac #2 followed on July 18th. Our destination was Wheeler-Sack Field, Pine Camp, New York, near Watertown. This outing was to prepare us for experience in glider towing. The first tow was done by Capt. Jones, who by then was an old hand in this tactic. We performed single and double tows and each pilot was required 2 landings minimum. We also flew formation with the tows. Adverse weather conditions prevailed through much of the training there, but there were no mishaps. Some of us also got to ride in the Waco CG4A. (Lt. Curtis Krogh remarks: "I distinctly remember my ride - up to 10,000 ft. in the "Silent Wings". It was quite an experience to fly free of engine noise. The only sound was the wind against the aircraft. Only one chance to

land required the glider pilot to plan the approach carefully and our G.P. did an excellent job. I truly enjoyed that experience".) On July 21st at 0800 hours, the Squadron flew back to Syracuse, flying formation under a low and threatening ceiling.

Flight training continued at Syracuse and schedules were established where each flight was using the aircraft with their crews. The flying time was divided equally and the planes were almost always in constant use. This meant that maintenance on the aircraft became a problem. With 12 ships to use, generally 11 were flown while the 12th plane was grounded for maintenance. Later on, only an average, about 9 ships were available to fly. Our Squadron led in flying hours compared to the other 3. Other Squadrons flew 3 pilots at times to increase the hours flown.

Our Squadron history records that on the night of July 1st, at 2230 hours, our 1st Squadron plane crash occurred. I had the dubious distinction of being a part of that crash, sorry to say. The plane was demolished.

In July, we started R.O.N. flying (remain over night) within a 500 miles radius. Instrument flying was worked on also and some of our pilots flew to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, etc. This was a nice break for our flying crews and an opportunity to see some of the larger cities in the Eastern section of the U.S.A.

Problems arose regarding supplies needed such as tools and also tires for the C-47's. The greatest bottleneck, though not a supply shortage, was transportation. Because of the lack of transportation facilities, many on the base couldn't reach their destination on time or be in a ground school class at appointed hours or be on time for flying schedules.

Despite problems that arose, most of the pilots had over 100 hours flying time by the end of June or early July. Radio men and crew chiefs had become familiar with their jobs. There were 40 flying crews but for a while, a shortage of Radio operators. At times, these men flew along with several crews until this shortage was eliminated.

The writers of this portion of the Squadron history state that morale was good. The men appeared to be ready to go overseas. By this time, many of the pilots grudgingly accepted their fate flying the "work horse" and some even admired the flyability of the C-47. Two and one-half months of training had been completed and some men were trying to obtain leaves to go home before our overseas assignment. , only those whose last time off was not later than April, 1944, were able to get a leave. Things were looking up by July 31st and most of the problems in the earlier stages were now history.

By August, most of our men had finished training in their various fields. The men were becoming restless as the inevitable overseas journey was talked about. Like always in the service, rumors surfaced and there was talk also of going to Carolina for maneuvers.

Then it happened! Col. Bell announced that we were to begin training in the C-46. Gen. Bell wrote to me 11 years ago and said the following; "Late in July when Gen. Hap Arnold came to observe our graduation exercises, having completed our training in the "Gooney Birds," he asked how long it would take to transition into C-46's. Having never had an occasion to even think of

such a possibility, I was caught flat-footed. I hazarded a guess that it would take about 2 months. As you know, in about 6 weeks, when we all averaged about sixty hours per pilot in the C-46, we were off to Ft. Wayne to pick up new airplanes."

The official date of transfer to C-46 training was August 21st, 1944. Our men were enthusiastic about this because the C-46 was a larger aircraft with more powerful engines. Also the plane offered more of a challenge.

Along with the C-46's came an almost complete new table of organization. The number of pilots per squadron was to be greatly reduced. The number of enlisted personnel was to be increased because of the maintenance on this, the largest troop carrier plane that existed in 1944. Also an Intelligence Officer was added to each squadron. So, the month of August went from monotonous repetition of training to what could be considered a state of confusion. New training schedules were instituted and there was some disappointment. Some of our pilots were transferred out also.

The first C-46 arrived at Syracuse on the 21st of August. Without any previous instruction, Major Clark from Group and Capt. Jones of the 7th attempted and successfully completed the first flight. This occurred on the 22nd of August. C-46 instructors came to Syracuse and I distinctly remember a civilian named Mr. De Garmo. He worked for Curtiss-Wright as a test pilot and had 18,000 hours of flying time. I remember him as a rather stout man and he was almost always smoking a cigar. Before De Garmo arrived, Captains Jones, Brashear and Trotter of the 7th checked themselves out.

To each squadron was attached 6 ATC pilots from Reno, Nevada as instructors to check out all 1st pilots. They received 8 hours of C-46 time and this all started on August 28th.

When I first got into the cockpit of the C-46, I was overwhelmed at the profusion of instruments and switches. My first reaction was that this is impossible. There is no way I will ever absorb all the knowledge required to get this airplane off the ground. Fast forward to the time when I had 500 or so hours in the C-46 and it became as simple as driving the old Model A Ford I had owned prior to the service. When one does something regularly somehow one can almost automatically use the right controls and switches when needed. I learned as everyone does eventually, that you refer to or use only a few of the gadgets at a time.

The total strength of our 7th Squadron on August 31st was 88 officers and 107 enlisted personnel. On September 30th, 1944, we dropped to 61 officers and increased to 141 enlisted men. Also during this dramatic change in our squadron, deserving officers and enlisted men were promoted in rank and grade. 2nd Lt. James Beatson, Engineering Officer, was promoted, as was 2nd Lt. Malcolm Knight, who served as Assistant Adjutant and Paymaster for the enlisted men. Their new rank, 1st Lt. Many enlisted men were promoted. Our Intelligence Officer, 1st Lt. Morris Winograd came into the squadron then and Capt. Ray Brashear was relieved of the Intelligence job.

In August, prior to the changeover to C-46's, we had 38 crew chiefs. This number was reduced to 25 and we added 25 specialists. This reduction of crew chiefs was difficult because we had well qualified men. Some were eventually transferred out.

Ground school on the C-46 was conducted in its entirety by a Mobile Training Unit with the aid of representatives of Curtiss-Wright and Pratt & Whitney Corporations. Everyone attended from Col. Bell down to and including radiomen and mechanics.

Ground school for flying personnel included 25 hours of power plant operation, fuel and oil systems, hydraulic systems, control surfaces, heating systems, de-icer systems, oxygen systems, weights and balances, air evacuation, radio and emergency procedures. In addition, orientation lectures, safeguarding military information and code classes. By the end of this changeover period, all the ground school courses were completed.

A few enlisted personnel in the engineering section were sent to the Curtiss-Wright factory at Buffalo, N.Y. for training in becoming specialists on various parts of the C-46. We also received some previously trained specialists making a total of 25 in all.

The 7th Squadron fared well in flying time in the C-46's. In fact, we were ahead of schedule. In addition to regular flight training, the remain overnight cross-countries enabled the flight crews to visit many of the large Eastern cities within a 1,000 mile radius. This larger allowed area to cover, made it possible to fly west to the Mississippi. The planes could leave on a Saturday morning and had to be back by 1600 hours on Sunday. one of the requirements was to log 12 flying hours. This enabled the men to experience longer distance flying, which was later to become the norm when we flew in the Pacific Theater. There were periods of bad weather in the Syracuse area and those out on long trips were permitted to return to Syracuse when the weather "broke" at the home field.

On September 27, 1944, the 7th Squadron lost its first C-46. The accident occurred at Utica, N.Y. where the plane's pilots had been shooting short field landings. While the plane was demolished by the crash and subsequent fire, all four of the crew escaped injury. The irony of losing this particular aircraft was that it was a war-weary C-46, having been flown over the Hump on many missions. No names of the crew are given in our official unit history.

There were supply problems when we started flying the C-46's. Some flying hours were lost due to parts shortages. A supply shuttle was inaugurated between Syracuse and Buffalo so we could quickly obtain needed parts. In about three weeks, our parts problems were solved using the shuttle and then no planes were grounded for that reason.

If there were any misgivings about the merits and quality of the C-46 at the onset, it wasn't long before this changed. It can be stated that our pilots took to the ship as a "Duck to Water" after their C-47 time. The bigger, heavier and faster aircraft had a strong appeal to most everyone. The crew chiefs and radio men also took a great interest in our conversion to the C-46 and this made the job much easier.

There was the 4th Combat Cargo Group also using S.A.A.B. but on the 15th of August, they left to train elsewhere. Because of their move, on the 19th of August our Operation's Office, Communications and Engineering all moved to the opposite side of the field and we were assigned hard-stands closer to base operations.

Now we had a day room for the pilots across the street from Operations. A pool table was secured from Special Services and magazines were placed there along with a phonograph. There were also jig saw puzzles, records, etc., and now we had a pleasant day room.

On the night of September 25th, the squadron enlisted men had a party at the "Roof Garden" on top of the Onondaga Hotel. To quote Capt. Jones, "It was probably the best party any enlisted man ever had." Of course, Capt. Jones and Lt. Philipps were present as chaperones. The party was a big success. The money was donated by the Army Special Services. There were 90 of the most beautiful girls employed by the Easy Washing Machine Co. of Syracuse, in attendance. Married men brought their wives and those men lucky enough to have girlfriends, brought them along too. A small bar added to the vim and vigor of the party as did a dance band. The band was from S.A.A.B. The Syracuse newspaper took pictures which appeared in the paper the next day.

On Saturday, September 30th, at a pilot's meeting, several long-awaited announcements were made. The first was the 5th flight headed by Bob Linn. The 2nd announcement was that Oct. 5th was the date on which we were to be alerted pending overseas movement. The 3rd announcement was that 13 pilots were to go overseas by ship along with a number of enlisted men. The 4th was the formation of crews as of September 30th to fly from the P.O.E. (Port of Embarkation) to the "Big Show." I believe that most of us were awaiting this announcement with mixed feelings. When the time had finally arrived, which we all had expected, there was the thought of heading into the unknown. This always brings feelings of anticipation but also we harbored the sadness of leaving our loved ones. This was a memorable moment, which we had prepared for over a long period of time.

This period from October 1st, 1944 to November 1st was a very exciting time. The excitement of being alerted, saying good-bye to family and friends and looking forward to the great adventure, was overpowering. All of our aircraft were grounded in preparation for movement to our staging area, Baer Field at Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

On Oct. 5th, the Squadron was restricted to base. The time had come and we were on our way. With this knowledge and the relief from our anxiety that had built up in waiting, the 7th engaged in a final celebration.

Those that flew over, left Baer Field on October 17th. There were 20 C-46's and they first headed to Amarillo, Texas for an overnight fuel stop. Then on to Fairfield-Suisun on the 18th to the P.O.E.

Our Squadron history records that at Fairfield, the courtesy and service given our men was very poor. The nice mess hall and food as well as the final briefings tended to balance the negative stuff mentioned above. Auxilliary fuel tanks were installed in the cargo compartment of all the C-46's. There were some shots and medical exams and even wills were executed. On the night of

October 21st, Col. Bell, Group Commander and Major James Bowen, Group Operation's Officer, piloted the first ship on our overseas flight. The 2nd plane was flown by Frank Hescocock. Their destination was John Roger's Field on Oahu in the Hawaiian Islands. The next night, the 22nd, 6 more planes took off and on the 23rd, 8 more headed west. Due to strong headwinds, not one of the 8 plane group made it to John Roger's, but were forced to opt for closer landing strips. They had exhausted most of their fuel. They gassed up and flew on to John Roger's.

These flights took from 16-18 hours and even with the auxilliary fuel tanks, it made for some "white knuckle" flying. Each plane had aboard an A.T.C. Navigator which certainly made the pilots more at ease but when the fuel gauges indicate almost empty tanks, it can get hairy. Some landed at Hilo on the "Big Island." The remaining 4 planes at Fairfield-Suisun waited until October 31st before leaving due to bad weather.

The stay at John Roger's took about 3 days. Some planes had the auxilliary fuel tanks removed in order to haul supplies to islands enroute. The men made trips to Honolulu and, of course, Waikiki Beach.

From Oahu, the planes took off for Christmas Island. This became the first experience landing on a coral island. Every courtesy was extended to the transient crew members at Christmas Island. The next morning they flew to Canton Island and noted that there was only one tree growing on the entire island. Again they were treated well.

The following day, the planes took off but now to two different destinations. Some went the northern route to Tarawa and the other the southern route to Nandi in the Fiji Islands. Those that arrived at Tarawa were treated well and an exceptional amount of service and consideration was extended. They received a tour of the island pointing out the Japanese positions, guns and emplacements. At Nandi, on the southern route, they received also every courtesy, the high point being invited to a beautiful Officer's Club.

Then, on to New Caledonia where living quarters were only "fair" and it was comparatively an unpleasant place.

The northern route planes flew to Guadalcanal where the A.T.C. was entrenched. Their snobbishness was noted. The next day was the continent of Australia and to Townsville. The crews had expected conditions to be similar to the U.S. This was not the case. In fact, there was a sort of quaintness about it and Townsville looked like an old western town as seen in the movies. Some of our planes stopped at Brisbane with cargo and then on to Townsville. The ships were taken to a depot to be checked over after the long flight. The crews were warned at Townsville that they should remove all personal things or anything of value from the plane. Even clocks in the plane should be removed. There were thieves around and nothing was safe. , the thieves did succeed in stealing some articles out of our planes and this angered Col. Bell to the point where he demanded restitution from the authorities at the base. Somehow most of the stolen items were returned. The groups that arrived at Townsville later had 24 hour guards by the aircraft which solved the problem. Then we were ordered to fly up to Nadzab, New Guinea. When arriving at Nadzab, we reported to the Combat Replacement Training Center where we went through Jungle School and received briefings on the Southwest Pacific area. After a week

there, we were ordered to fly up to Biak and were temporarily attached to the 375th Troop Carrier Group until a suitable area could be found for us to set up living quarters. We were now a part of the 54th Troop Carrier Wing under Brig. Gen Prentiss.

At Baer Field, we were assigned space in Barracks and proceeded to take care of personal affairs and fitness tests were taken for all our men. Equipment was packed for shipment and everything was carried off with precision. Personal equipment was stowed in foot lockers to be shipped by boat rather than by plane. There were a few days of no duties and we were free to shoot the bull with one another. I remember being given a 45 Colt Revolver and a leather shoulder holster. We were taught to clean and load the weapon. I am happy to report that I never had to use the 45 for anything but shooting at cans by the shore at Biak.

Thirteen of us were scheduled to go overseas by ship with the rest of the ground echelon and our Squadron equipment. I was among these men and we stayed at Baer Field until the 27th of October. Lt. Hart was in charge of the ground echelon and we then left Baer Field, boarding a train for Camp Stoneman near Pittsburg, California.

I remember the train ride to Camp Stoneman. There was an old fashioned open car, probably leftover from WWI, that was our "rolling mess kitchen." The G.I. cooks did quite well preparing food for us guys. The train ride was tiring as we had to sleep sitting up in the passenger cars. We arrived at Camp Stoneman on the 31st of October.

We spent two weeks at Stoneman awaiting our ship. There we had some exercises in climbing up and down ropes to prepare us for the possibility of having to climb down the side of our ship in the event we were torpedoed.

We got into San Francisco several times eating in fine restaurants and even got to the "Top of the Mark." (The Mark Hopkins Hotel). I remember the large circular bar there and the large glass windows where one could see much of Frisco. What a beautiful sight.

On November 14th, we were taken to the harbor at San Francisco where we boarded the "Boschfontein," a conscripted Dutch ship. It was an old "Bucket" but I must honestly say we never had it so good. The G.I.'s lived in crowded quarters below deck and ate with their mess gear. The officers dined in a lavish dining room where there were white table cloths on each table. We were served by young boys from India, who had white jackets and a towel over their arm as one saw in finer restaurants of that day. The dishes used were fine china and stemmed goblets were used for water. The food and service aboard this ship was to my mind, terrific.

During the day time, we were out on the deck playing cards or shooting the bull. We had music provided by some G.I.'s that somehow had instruments aboard. They played swing music tunes that were popular in that time. We also had daily drills with small groups of men to prepare us to get to our assigned life boat in the event of our being torpedoed. The ship zig-zagged for 25 days until we reached Hollandia, New Guinea where we reluctantly disembarked to a hot, dusty transient camp.

Before we left the ship, a bunch of A20's came down low over the harbor and buzzed the ships. I thought, wow, there aren't any rules about flying here. This is going to be great.

We stayed at this camp for about a week waiting for someone to pick us up. Finally Jocko Creelman, one of our top B Flight pilots, landed on the strip and we piled in for the brief flight to Biak.

We didn't have our foot lockers yet so we set up housekeeping in pyramidal tents. "B" Flight tent was larger than most and I think there were about 10 of us sleeping in this crude abode, known as "Sad Shack."

The men that had flown from the States to Biak struck me as being somewhat aloof and distant. My guess is that these guys were tired from all this new kind of life and long distance flying. After we were settled in, we were immediately assigned flights. Happily I was a co-pilot then because frankly I had a healthy fear of the extreme weather flying and I hadn't been up in a plane for over one month and a half. I needed to be acclimated to the "wild blue yonder" in a new, tropical setting.

7th Logistic Support Squadron was activated at Robins Air Force Base on 18 October 1954. Its first C-124, Serial No. 53-011, was delivered five days later. One more airplane was delivered in October, five in November and three in December, for a total of ten machines.

The squadron was named the Pack Rats and was characterized by a large fuselage insignia of a mouse swinging a log. The 7th was also known as the "Loggers" and became notorious for "zapping" every transient aircraft and barracks they came in contact with on their globe-hopping assignments with their squadron stickers. In early 1955, the unit was administratively transferred, without change of station, from Warner-Robins Air Material Area to the 3079th Aviation Depot Wing (ADW) at Wright-Patterson AFB.

On 1 Jul 1962 SAAMA activated the 39th Logistics Support Group, assigning to it the two logistics support squadrons which provided airlift support (the 7th at Robins AFB, Georgia, and the 19th at Kelly) and the two aviation depot squadrons. The 39th was short-lived; on July 1, 1963, SAAMA deactivated the group; the 7th and 19th Logistics Support Squadrons were reassigned to the Military Airlift Transportation Service, and the aviation depot squadrons were assigned directly under the Special Weapons Directorate.

It was called the Pack Rat squadron, characterized by a drawing of Mighty Mouse carrying a log. This was the symbol of one of the busiest and most highly respected tenant organizations in the history of Robins—the 7th Logistics Support Squadron. It was a fitting symbol since members of this squadron, assigned to WRAMA on October 18, 1954, were constantly on the move packing materiel and carrying it to faraway places aboard C-124s.

Thousands of Pack Rat symbols blanketed the base. The 7th Loggers put stickers on every available barracks and transient aircraft they found while on temporary duty in the states and overseas. It eventually became an international symbol—the 7th Loggers' answer to "Kilroy was Here" of World War II fame.

It was a gung ho outfit. Though its members had to fly for more than nine days with just three days rest, aloft all day and loading and unloading materiel at night, they had pride in their C-124s, known affectionately as "Old Shakeys." They had to fly at altitudes of some five thousand feet because the aircraft were not pressurized. The Globemaster looked like a bumble bee with a fat body and short wings—a plane which many had predicted would never fly.

7th LSS C-124C 53-0023 at Norton AFB, CA, on 19 May 1962. Nose and tail stripes and wing tip heaters were insignia red.

1 Mar 1956 C-124 crashed off the coast of Iceland, killing 17 men.

Provided airlift support during Cuban Missile Crisis, 17–28 Oct 1962.

Airborne combat command and control in SEA, 1 Mar 1968–15 Aug 1973.

Controlled airborne forces during the recovery of the SS Mayaguez, May 1975; in Grenada, 23 Oct–21 Nov 1983; Panama, Dec 1989–Jan 1992; and Southwest Asia, 1 Sep 1990–16 Mar 1991.

In April 1972, the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron arrived at Korat from Udorn RTAFB and began flying missions in its EC-130E, which were equipped with command and control capsules. The 7th ACCS played an extremely important role in the conduct of air operations. During the action in Southeast Asia, the squadron had a minimum of two aircraft airborne 24 hours a day directing and coordinating the effective employment of tactical air resources throughout SEA.

The increased number of large aircraft underscored the need for airfield improvements. Starting in January 1974, engineers began extending the runway and converting two hangars into aircraft maintenance shops. Even before these projects could be completed, the Air Force proposed transferring yet another unit to Keesler the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron, which had previously been assigned to Pacific Air Forces and stationed in Southeast Asia. U.S. involvement ended in Vietnam and the 7th was no longer needed in the Far East. Keesler was selected as the new home for the 7th's EC-130, and the squadron arrived in August 1975, as a base tenant unit reporting directly to Tactical Air Command.

18 Aug 1975 The first of seven EC-130s belonging to the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron arrived at Keesler

14-24 Jan 1980 The 7 ACCS participated in EMPIRE GLACIER, a cold-weather exercise involving Air Force, Army, and Navy elements at Fort Drum, New York.

1980 24 April *Operation Eagle Claw* A contingent of American military aircraft embarks on a commando raid to rescue a group of American hostages held by Iran. An unexpected sandstorm forces 2 USMC Sikorsky RH-53D Sea Stallion helicopters to divert before reaching the first rendezvous point in the Great Salt Desert of Eastern Iran, near Tabas, and causes serious mechanical damage to a third, prompting commanders to abort the mission. While attempting to

evacuate personnel and equipment that had already arrived at the rendezvous point, the pilot of another Sea Stallion, BuNo *158761*, loses situational awareness in dustcloud during take-off and collides with a EC-130E, *62-1809*, of the 7th ACCS, killing five USAF aircrew aboard the C-130, and three USMC aircrew in the RH-53. Five other RH-53Ds had to be abandoned at the site after suffering shrapnel damage from the collision. These were BuNos. *158686*, *158744*, *158750*, *158753* and *158758*. At least one airframe was assembled from the abandoned helicopters, to join six RH-53Ds supplied by the United States to the Iranian Navy in 1978.

28 Aug 1990 Members of the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Desert Shield.

18 Jan 1993 The 552d Ground Computer Squadron's small computer flight completed testing of a computer software program called Battlefield Mapping Station (BMS) and released it for immediate operational use. The 7 ACCS used BMS to produce navigation maps during Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center III missions.

17 Jul 1993 The 7 ACCS deployed to Aviano AB, Italy in support of United Nations Operation DENY FLIGHT. DENY FLIGHT sought to help end the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Rotated aircraft and aircrews to Aviano AB, Italy in support of UN Security Council sanctioned Operation DENY FLIGHT to prevent Serbian aggression in the former Yugoslavia, Jul-Dec 1993.





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