

61 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



LINEAGE

61 Troop Carrier Squadron constituted, 13 Oct 1942
Activated, 26 Oct 1942
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1946
Redesignated 61 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 20 Sep 1949
Activated, 17 Oct 1949
Redesignated 61 Troop Carrier Squadron, 1 Mar 1966
Redesignated 61 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 1 May 1967
Redesignated 61 Airlift Squadron, 1 Dec 1991

STATIONS

Bowman Field, KY, 26 Oct 1942
Knobnoster, MO, 5 Nov 1942
Lawson Field, GA, 20 Feb-3 May 1943
Berguent, French Morocco, May 1943
Kairouan, Tunisia, 26 Jun 1943
Castelvetrano, Sicily, 1 Sep 1943-16 Feb 1944
Saltby, England, 24 Feb 1944
Poix, France, Feb 1945
Frankfurt, Germany, 15 Oct 1945-30 Sep 1946
Smyrna (later, Sewart) AFB, TN, 17 Oct 1949-27 Aug 1950
Ashiya AB, Japan, 4 Sep 1950-15 Nov 1954
Sewart AFB, TN, 15 Nov 1954
Little Rock AFB, AR, 5 Mar 1970

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Clark AFB, Philippines, 1 Dec 1965-30 Jun 1966
RAF Mildenhall, England, 5 May-14 Aug 1967, 28 Mar-29 Jun 1968
RAF Mildenhall, England, 28 May-7 Jul 1970; 3 Jan-17 Mar 1973, 5 Mar-17 May 1976, 3 Dec 1976-13 Feb 1977, 5 Jul-9 Sep 1977, 13 Jul-13 Sep 1978, 5 Apr-12 Jun 1980, 4 Dec 1982-15 Feb 1983, 8 Aug-10 Oct 1984, 1 Dec 1985-12 Feb 1986, 1 Feb-15 Apr 1987, 3 Apr-15 Jun 1988, 27 Dec 1990-12 May 1991, 3 Feb-6 Apr 1992
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 12 Oct-19 Dec 1970, 12 Jun-16 Aug 1973, 3 Oct-16 Dec 1974, 15 Jun-17 Aug 1975
Ching Chaun Kang AB, Taiwan, 16 May-1 Sep 1972

ASSIGNMENTS

315 Troop Carrier Group (attached to 314 Troop Carrier Group), 26 Oct 1942
314 Troop Carrier Group, 15 Mar 1943
441 Troop Carrier Group, attached in Oct 1945, assigned Dec 1945-30 Sep 1946
314 Troop Carrier Group, 17 Oct 1949
314 Troop Carrier Wing, 8 Oct 1957
839 Air Division, 1 Dec 1965
64 Troop Carrier (later 64 Tactical Airlift) Wing, 1 Jul 1966
314 Tactical Airlift Wing, 31 May 1971
314 Tactical Airlift Group, 1 Nov 1978
314 Tactical Airlift Wing, 15 Jun 1980
314 Operations Group, 1 Dec 1991
463 Airlift Group, 1 Apr 1997

ATTACHMENTS

Troop Carrier Wing Provisional, 4413, 1 Dec 1965-30 Jun 1966
513 Tactical Airlift Wing, 6 May-11 Aug 1967, 8 Apr-29 Jun 1968, 27 May-6 Jul 1970
322 Tactical Airlift Wing, 21 Oct-19 Dec 1970
374 Tactical Airlift Wing, 16 May-1 Sep 1972
513 Tactical Airlift Wing, 5 Jan-16 Mar 1973
322 Tactical Airlift Wing, 5 Jun-11 Aug 1973, 16 Oct-16 Dec 1974, 15-30 Jun 1975
435 Tactical Airlift Wing, 30 Jun-17 Aug 1975, 5 Mar-17 May 1976, 3 Dec 1976-13 Feb 1977, 5 Jul-9 Sep 1977, 13 Jul-13 Sep 1978
435 Tactical Airlift Wing, 5 Apr-12 Jun 1980
435 Tactical Airlift Wing, 4 Dec 1982-15 Feb 1983
313 Tactical Airlift Group, 8 Aug-10 Oct 1984, 1 Dec 1985-12 Feb 1986, 1 Feb-15 Apr 1987, 3 Apr-15 Jun 1988, 27 Dec 1990-12 May 1991, 3 Feb-6 Apr 1992)

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-53, 1942-1943
C-47, 1943-1945
CG-4, 1943-1945
L-4, 1945

C-82, 1949-1950
C-119, 1950-1957
C-130, 1956

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Campbell N. Smith, 26 Oct 1942
Lt Col William F. Colm, 30 Nov 1944
Capt Thomas E. Yarbrough, 21 Aug 1945
Capt Robert C. Wolf, Sep 1945
Unkn, Jan-30 Sep 1946
Maj Gerald M. McNulty, Oct 1949
Lt Col Theo R. Diltz, 25 Dec 1950
Lt Col James D. Gilmore, 1 May 1951
Lt Col John H. Redmon, 30 Apr 1952
Unkn, 1953-1954
Maj R. S. Saunders, By Jun 1955
Maj Roland Benson, By Dec 1956
Lt Col Wilbert Turk, 1 Sep 1957
Lt Col Lytle R. Perkins, 1 Aug 1960
Lt Col Jack D. Dieckman, 17 Jul 1961
Lt Col Kenneth A. Chatfield, 5 Jun 1963
Lt Col George M. Livers, By Jun 1964
Lt Col Rollin D. Childress, 3 Jun 1966
Lt Col Noble D. Wright, 13 Mar 1967
Lt Col William D. Small Jr., 23 Aug 1967
Lt Col John W. Maxwell, 22 Jul 1969
Lt Col Harry B. Doolittle, 29 Jan 1970
Lt Col Billie B. Mills, 9 Aug 1971
Lt Col Richard A. Peshkin, 1 Jun 1973
Lt Col John K. Stewart, 3 Jun 1974
Lt Col John D. Butterfield, 7 Jun 1976
Lt Col Phillip E. Jackey Jr., 8 May 1978
Lt Col Jerry M. Figgins, 26 Feb 1979
Lt Col Philip E. Bay Jr., 17 Mar 1981
Lt Col Kenneth E. Mclear, 10 May 1982
Lt Col Robert A. Cole, 7 Jun 1984
Lt Col Michael G. Jordan, 27 Nov 1985
Lt Col John J. Murphy, 15 Oct 1987
Lt Col Timmie D. Holmes, 25 May 1989
Lt Col Thomas M. Crawford, 1 Dec 1991
Lt Col Bruce E. Burda, 9 Oct 1992
Lt Col Jimmie L. Simmons Jr., 4 Mar 1994
Lt Col William L. Nichols, 11 Aug 1995
Lt Col John J. Evans, 13 Jun 1997

Lt Col Daniel P. Lentz, 18 Jun 1998
Lt Col John W. McDonald, 16 Aug 1999
Lt Col James C. Moulton, 23 Jun 2000

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Central Europe

Korea
UN Defensive
UN Offensive
CCF Intervention
First UN Counteroffensive
CCF Spring Offensive
UN Summer-Fall Offensive
Second Korean Winter
Korean Summer-Fall, 1952
Third Korean Winter
Korea, Summer 1953

Vietnam
Vietnam Defensive
Vietnam Air

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989-1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Sicily, 11 Jul 1943
France, [6-7] Jun 1944
Korea, 28 Nov-10 Dec 1950

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device: 1 Dec 1965-30 Jun 1967.

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

6 May 1953-10 Sep 1954

11 Jan-14 Feb 1955

23 Mar-22 Aug 1959

1 Jan 1960-31 Dec 1961

1 Sep 1962-15 Apr 1963

1 Jun 1969-31 May 1971

1 Jan 1975-30 Jun 1976

1 Jun 1985-31 May 1986

1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Jul 1995-31 Mar 1997

1 Apr 1997-30 Jun 1998

1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2001

1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2002

1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2003; 1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2004; 1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005; 1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2006;

1 Jul 2006-30 Jun 2007.

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

1 Jul 1951-27 Jul 1953

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966-7 Jul 1968

EMBLEM





On a disc quartered Celeste and Argent, overall a caricature of a hornet volant to dexter Vert, detailed Sable, wings Or, wearing a ball cap of the third, and earphones of the fourth banded of the second, gloves of the fifth, grasping the rigging lines of a parachute Proper suspending a

paratrooper habited in battle gear of the third, face of the second; all within a narrow border Black. Attached below the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "61 AIRLIFT SQ" in Black letters. Attached above the disc, a White scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "GREEN HORNETS" in Black letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The hornet represents the unit's predecessor, the 61 Troop Carrier Squadron. The paratrooper symbolizes the mission of the Squadron, and the earphones and billed cap signify the hornet as an aircrew member. (Approved, 13 Jun 1956; modified, 3 Mar 1997)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Provided airlift in MTO and ETO during World War II, taking part in airborne assaults on Sicily, Normandy, Holland, and Germany (1943-1945).

During the Korean War (1950-1953) furnished airlift between Japan and Korea and airdropped paratroops and supplies at Sukchon/Sunchon and Munsan-ni.

26 October 1956 A C-119G 51-8026A on a cargo airlift mission to Olmsted Air Force Base, Pennsylvania, crashes 7 miles N of Newburg, Pennsylvania at 1515 hrs. ET, killing four crew. The weather at Olmsted was fluctuating rapidly with rain and fog, and at 1400 hrs. the pilot reported a missed approach to the field. After being cleared to altitude over the Lancaster beacon the conditions at Olmsted improved to above minimums and the pilot requested another approach. At 1506 Eastern he was cleared for a straight-in approach from New Kingston Fan Marker to Olmsted. At 1509 he reported leaving the New Kingston Fan Marker inbound and at 1511 he reported leaving 3,000 feet. The aircraft crashed in mountainous terrain 22.5 nm W of the Kingston Fan Marker. KWF are 1st Lt. Robert Siegfried Hantsch, pilot, Walter Beverly Gordon, Jr., co-pilot, T/Sgt. Marvin W. Seigler, engineer, and 1st Lt. Gracye E. Young, of the 4457th USAF Hospital, Sewart AFB.

Transported supplies from the Philippines into Southeast Asia, Dec 1965-Jun 1966.

Part of squadron deployed to Vietnam in the summer of 1972 to test the Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System (AWADS) in combat for the first time. Provided flood relief in the Philippines during same deployment.

In October, while on TDY at Rhein-Main Air Base in Germany, the 61 Tactical Airlift Squadron airlifted medical supplies and food to displaced flood victims in Genova, Italy. After completing its aid mission to Italy, the 61 TAS was transferred from Rhein-Main to Incirlik Air Base in Turkey. From here, the flew food supplies to the under-supplied Ezerum Airfield northwest of Incirlik.

While these tests were being conducted, the base lake was transformed into an ideal fishing hole with the introduction of 960 channel catfish and 3,000 bluegills. Three-hundred more of the catfish fingerlings were shipped to the Azores by a 61 T AS crew under the People to People Program.

In the early months of 1971 the 61 and 62nd Tactical Air Squadrons of the 64th Tactical Airlift Wing were rotated to Rhein-Main in Germany and RAF Mildenhall, England. These missions would prove to be among the last conducted by the 64th Tactical Airlift Wing while stationed at Little Rock Air Force Base.

The 61 TAS, on rotation back at Ching Chuan Kang Air Base in Taiwan, deployed a command element of twenty aircrews and ten A WADS (Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System)-equipped C-130E's to Tan Son Nhut Air, Vietnam on May 21, 1972. The unit would see combat over the next four months, using the A WADS and delivery techniques in support of American ground forces. A WADS allowed for consistent precision High Altitude payload deliveries for the first time in Vietnam. This system incorporated the AN/PQ 122(V) forward-looking dual-frequency radar apparatus, ANI ASN 24(V) navigation computer, and ANI APN 169A station-keeping electronics. The 61 paved the way for America's airlifting forces to support ground troops with minimal losses and maximum efficiency from high altitude and in all weather.

History's first AWADS combat delivery was made on June 1, 1972 at Svay Rieng, located within the "Cambodian Parrot's Beak," one hundred miles south-southwest of Pleiku. Captain Ronald G. Brundridge flew the 61 T AS aircraft as navigators Captain David S. Dawson, Jr., and Captain Calvin Chastain coordinated the drop. The load was rigged for a HALO (High Altitude Low Opening) configuration and delivered from 10,000 feet. Accuracy of the first pass was within 300 yards of the target. The AWADS system was double-checked with the older GRADS (Ground Radar Air Delivery System) for accuracy during the mission. During these A W ADS operations in Vietnam, the 61 TAS detachment was temporarily designated the 374th Wing Airdrop Task Force.

Six 61 TAS aircrews, operating three aircraft between them, performed flood-relief missions in the Philippines out of Ching Chuan Kang, Taiwan from August 16 to September 1, 1972.

Four C-130's from the 50th TAS left for Torrejon AB, Spain on September 13. These aircrews would assist European transportation activities in the region until October 11. No sooner had these crews returned than three C-130's from the 61 T AS departed on October 14, for Minnesota. There, the aircrews took part in training exercises being conducted by the Minnesota Air National Guard.

From September 20 to 30, one of the 61's C-130's and a hand-picked support crew flew to Brazil to take part in Brazilian Army exercises dubbed "Operation Ticordio." The annual training exercise was used to hone Brazilian Army tactics for future conflict scenarios.

During 1984, the 61 TAS "Green Hornets" took part in "Volant Pine," acting as Bravo Squadron of the 322nd Airlift Division at RAF Mildenhall in England. From there, the "Green Hornets" deployed to Athens, Greece and Incirlik, Turkey. One crew airlifted supplies behind the Iron Curtain to the American Embassy in Romania while another took part in "Operation Intense Look," searching for mines in the Mediterranean and Red Seas. While in Turkey, the 61 st got a chance to show off the versatility of the C-130 Hercules. One "jump started" a sister ship whose engines had stalled, leaving its crew stranded. After positioning itself in front of the stalled aircraft, the C-130 was revved up, providing enough thrust from its propellers to cause the second aircraft's props to turn, thus restarting its engines. The crew dropped into Israel and Southern Italy on their way back to England, enjoying the beauty of Europe, one of the many perks of their chosen careers.

One aircrew from the 61 st TAS got a break from the frigid weather on February 7, when it was dispatched to the Caribbean for "Operation Island Breeze" in support of the Caribbean Peace Keeping Forces.

61 TAS wrapped up an exercise tour that involved four Central American operations including "Blaze Trails" and "Unitrek," showcasing allied coordinated airlift operations. The 61 then flew back to the U.S. for "Operation Solid Shield" at Pope AFB, North Carolina, "Sentry Independence" near Pittsburgh, and two local operations called "Purple Penny" and "Ozark Dawn." During this period, the 61 st carried 11,000 passengers and 1,600 tons of cargo in 2,700 flying hours.

On October 9, Captain Richard A. Strang flew a 61 T AS C-130E to Mercedita, Puerto Rico with supplies and search dogs to assist local rescuers in Ponce and Mameyes find the victims of the mudslide after torrential rains. The dogs were trained to locate bodies by the smell of decaying flesh, but the hounds were sometimes credited with finding survivors.

A 61 TAS C-130 performed a supply mission for the U.S. Marines' 2nd Field Service Group in Rochambeau, French Guiana from October 13-17. During the same period, seven aircraft with four aircrews from the 61 TAS and three from the 50th TAS flew support missions for the 75th Regiment, 82nd Airborne Brigade at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center. Operating from Pope AFB, North Carolina and Hunter Army Air Field, Georgia, the airmen performed airdrops and resupply missions for the trainees. While these crews were away, Little Rock Air Force Base conducted one nuclear airlift exercise and several antiterrorist exercises at the base and its remaining silos.

From April 24 through May 14, 1986, the 50th and 61 st T AS sent nine aircrews to participate in "Operation Ocean Venture '86." The three-week exercise dictated the movement of 2,759 passengers and 375 tons of cargo between various locations in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea. The aircrews visited Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Grenada as well as several other island nations. On the heels of this operation, a 61 st T AS aircrew found themselves braving -10 degree Fahrenheit temperatures above the Arctic Circle. Staging out of Winnipeg, Manitoba, the aircrew flew support missions to DEW Line stations at Shingle Point, Cape Parry, Lady

Franklin, Cambridge Bay, and Dewar Lake. During a landing at Lady Franklin, gravel from the airstrip damaged one of the plane's props. Braving the freezing temperatures, the aircrew replaced the damaged blade over the course of four hours.

September 18, brought Hurricane Hugo to the Caribbean. 125 mph winds tore into the Bahamas as a crew from the 50th TAS flew to Andros Town to assist in the evacuation of 600 people. Two 61 TAS crews at Pope AFB for "Exercise Market Square" remained on stand-by. Four days later, the 314th CES "Prime Beef" unit arrived in South Carolina to help repair Charleston AFB's storm-damaged runway.

Airdropped humanitarian relief supplies in northern Iraq, Apr-May 1991.

During "Operation Provide Comfort," in late May to early April, 1991, the 61 TAS returned to the gulf and dropped supplies to Kurdish refugees in Northern Iraq.

Little Rock Air Force Base's involvement in foreign affairs continued when twelve C-130's from the 61 AS departed for Bosnia January 16, 1997 on a relief mission to the unstable region. Flying from Little Rock Air Force Base to Newfoundland, the C-130's refueled before departing for Germany with their complement of over 350 personnel. The Little Rock Air Force Base pilots took the same precautions as before with Kevlar covering the flight deck and helmets covering their heads as they flew five and six hour missions into Bosnia to resupply peace-keeping forces.

10 December 1999, 2306 Zulu/0206 Kuwait local time; at Ahmed Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait. Mishap Aircraft: C-130E, Tail Number 63-7854, 61 Airlift Squadron, 463rd Airlift Group, Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas. The aircraft was assigned to the 9th Air Expeditionary Group, Al Salem AB, Kuwait, at the time of the mishap. Summary of Events: The mishap aircraft, call sign Flash07, departed Al Salem AB on 9 Dec 99 with 6 crewmembers and 80 passengers. It arrived at Kuwait City International (KCIA) and discharged its passengers. The aircraft next flew to Al Jaber AB, picked up passengers and returned to KCIA. These three sorties were accomplished without incident and there were no aircraft problems. At 0157L, 10 December, the mishap aircraft departed KCIA with 86 passengers bound for Al Jaber AB. The crew initiated a visual final approach descent from 2600 feet AGL approximately 4.5 miles (two minutes) from the approach end of the runway. The pilot began with about a 3-degree of glide slope, at about 640-fpm rate of descent. He soon transitioned to a 6 to 7-degree glide slope with a 1600 to 1700 fpm rate of descent for the remainder of the approach. The pilot never recognized his landing picture, with reference to the runway, and failed to transition to a normal visual glide path for landing. At about 125 feet AGL, descending at 28 feet per second, the aircraft entered a fog bank. The flight engineer called "Go Around" one to two seconds after entering the fog bank (70 to 100 feet AGL). The pilot initiated the go-around procedure (full power and nose up) about a second after the flight engineer's "Go Around" call. The aircraft was too low (approximately 50 feet AGL) to break its descent rate and start a climb. As a result, it impacted the ground 2890 feet short of the runway threshold. The main gear were driven upward and inward, buckling the fuselage sides and killing three of the passengers. Bouncing back into the air, the aircraft flew for another 1,000 feet at 10-15 feet altitude before slamming into an antenna system located near the end of the runway. The pilot then climbed as the gear broke

free and fell from the plane. With large holes along the sides of the cargo area, the C-130 made for open sea where fuel could be dumped prior to attempting an emergency landing. The plane made an emergency landing on a foamed strip at Kuwait City Airport without further loss of life. Number of Injuries/Deaths: Three fatalities, seven injuries—two were serious. Damage Description: The aircraft sustained approximately \$3.8 million in damage, primarily to the main landing gear assemblies and associated fuselage. Non-U.S. property damage included destruction of an ILS antenna belonging to the Government of Kuwait; cost of damage is yet unknown. I find, by clear and convincing evidence, that the cause of the mishap was the crew's failure to follow governing directives and complacency in flight operations. As a result, the crew suffered spatial disorientation at a critical phase of flight; thereby, resulting in the crew's loss of situational awareness and failing to recognize an unsafe descent. The following factors contributed to the cause of the mishap; lack of pilot leadership and discipline; lack of support from the copilot, navigator, and flight engineer; and overall lack of sound judgment by the flight deck crew.

Lockheed Martin delivered another C-130J to Little Rock AFB, Ark., from its production facility in Marietta, Ga., announced, the company. This airplane, serial number 5748, is the sixth of nine new-build C-130Js scheduled to join Little Rock's 61 Airlift Squadron, base spokeswoman 1st Lt. Mallory Thornton told Air Force Magazine on Tuesday. The aircraft touched down at Little Rock on June 5, piloted by Col. William Otter, vice commander of the squadron's parent 19th Airlift Wing. With the transition to the C-130J, the 19th AW has "between 40 and 50" legacy C-130Hs now on the flight line as its fleet is gradually reshuffled, said Thornton. The squadron received its previous C-130J just last month 2014

Another Factory-Fresh C-130J for Little Rock The 61 Airlift Squadron at Little Rock AFB, Ark., took delivery of another new-build C-130J transport. Maj. Gen. Michael Stough, Air Mobility Command's director of strategic plans, requirements, and programs, on Oct. 23 ferried the aircraft, tail number 5756, from Lockheed Martin's production facility in Marietta, Ga., to its new home, according to the company's release. The base's Facebook page stated that "the delivery of this aircraft marks the ninth C-130J to be delivered to the 61 Airlift Squadron." That means the unit has now received its full complement of C-130Js, which replaced its C-130Hs. 2014

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *314th Troop Carrier Wing, Sewart AFB. 1960*

Unit history. Little Rock AFB, AR. *Heartland, The History of Little Rock AFB*. Timothy Burford and Stephanie Burford. WireStorm Publishing. Las Vegas, NV. 2002.