

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION ISSUE

SOUTHERN FLYER



A Celebration of Service

908TH AIRLIFT WING

1963

2013



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: THE AIRMEN THE AIRCRAFT THE ACHIEVEMENTS
AIR FORCE RESERVE 908TH AIRLIFT WING, MAXWELL AFB DECEMBER 2013

SOUTHERN FLYER



Vol. 50 Issue 11
December 2013

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908th ends 2013 in style

I am looking forward to kicking off the 2013 holiday season in style on December 7th!

First, Santa will arrive at the Half-Bay hangar at 10 a.m. aboard one of our aircraft. This should be a great time to share with your children as Santa will visit with them and listen to their requests for Christmas. Photos will be taken and provided to parents.

On Saturday evening, I am ready to celebrate the incredible history of the 908th Airlift Wing with all of you, as well as alumni and friends, at the 908th's 50th Anniversary Party! Please take the time to meet some of the men and women who share your legacy. I will see you at the Embassy Suites ... it will be a great time!

This past year, 2013, has been a busy one for the 908th with deployments for Operations and Maintenance as well as the Security Forces and Aeromedical Evacuation Squadrons. Your dedication, expertise, and "get it done" attitudes made these deployments extremely successful.

You executed the missions with

such professionalism and skill that there can be no doubt about the value the 908th brings to the fight.

Thank you for serving our country with such distinction. I could not be prouder of the men and women who are "Ready ... Always!"

As we approach the holiday season, I hope each one of you will have the opportunity to celebrate and enjoy time with family and friends. It is

a great time of year to relax, enjoy the company of those we love, and reflect upon all of our blessings.

This time of year tends to be a busy time between work, shopping and holiday events. Accidents are more likely to happen when we are tired and distracted. As you are traveling, decorating, cooking, and celebrating this holiday season, please keep safety in your cross-check!

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I am looking forward to welcoming each and every one of you all back here in January to start 2014! It will be another great year at the 908th Airlift Wing.



COL. JENNIE R. JOHNSON
Acting Commander, 908th AW

A MOMENT WITH THE CHAPLAIN

CH. (LT. COL.) W. LANCE HOGGATT

I am Citizen Airmen proud!
Grateful to serve the 908th Wing!

Each of us serves our great nation with the strength of our families and we bring a philosophy of life.

My wife Penny and I have eight children and five grandchildren. She is a school teacher. Five of the children are grown-up but we still have one in college, one in middle school, and one



HOGGATT

in high school. They have supported me through six active duty and two reserve assignments; stood beside me as I deployed three times and traveled on numerous TDYs. As I meet each of you I would love to hear your family stories because our families support us as we serve our nation.

My philosophy of life is that God is always enough and moral courage is essential. The writer of the Psalms said "God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble. So we will not fear when earthquakes come and the mountains crumble into the sea."

These words combined with my life experiences give me confidence to say that GOD IS ALWAYS ENOUGH! Secondly, moral courage is the ability to act appropriately despite fear, peer pressure, or adverse consequences.

General Patton said "moral courage is the most valuable and usually the most absent characteristic in men."

I look forward to hearing your philosophy and stories of how your family supports you as Citizen Airmen.

It's time for bug season

Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. Serious outcomes of flu infection can result in hospitalization or death. Some people, such as the elderly, young children, and people with certain health conditions, are at high risk for serious flu complications.

The best way to prevent the flu is by annual vaccination.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, the upcoming season's flu vaccine will protect against the influenza viruses that research indicates will be most common during the season. This includes an A (H1N1) virus, an A (H3N2) virus, and one or two B viruses, depending on the flu vaccine.

What sort of flu season is expected this year?

Flu seasons are unpredictable in a number of ways. Although epidemics of flu happen every year, the timing, severity, and length of the season varies from one year to another.

What should I do to prepare for this flu season?

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against this serious disease. While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine is designed to protect against the three main flu strains that research indicates will cause the most illness during the flu season.

Getting the vaccine as soon as it's available each year is always a good idea, and the protection you get from vaccination will last throughout the flu season.

How much vaccine will be available during 2013-2014?

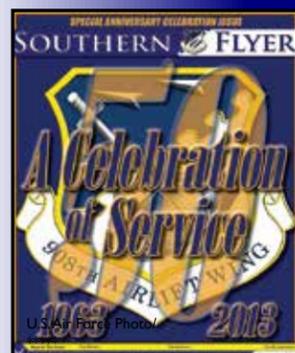
Vaccine manufacturers now estimate 138-145 million doses of influenza vaccine will be produced for the U.S. market this season. (This is an increase from the initial estimate of 135-139 million.) An estimated 30 million to 32 million of these doses will be quadrivalent flu vaccine. The rest will be trivalent flu vaccine.

What flu viruses does this season's vaccine protect against?

Vaccines are designed to protect against the viruses that experts predict will be the most common during the upcoming season. Three kinds of influenza viruses commonly circulate among people today: Influenza A (H1N1) viruses, influenza A (H3N2) viruses, and influenza B viruses. Each year, these viruses are used to produce seasonal influenza vaccine.

The 2013-2014 trivalent influenza vaccine is made from the following three viruses:

- ◆ an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- ◆ an A(H3N2) virus antigenically like the cell-propagated prototype virus A/Victoria/361/2011;
- ◆ a B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus.



SOUTHERN FLYER

COVER PHOTO:

This year, the unit that began as the 908th Troop Carrier Group Medium and eventually became the 908th Airlift Wing celebrates half a century of honorable service to the nation.

This funded Air Force Reserve Command newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of the "Southern Flyer" are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force. Editorial content of the "Southern Flyer" is edited, prepared and provided by the 908th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office. All photos are Air Force photos unless otherwise indicated.

We solicit articles, drawings and photographs and reserve the right to edit materials to conform to "Southern Flyer" editorial policies. Because of the printing and mail-out schedule the newspaper goes to press on Friday, two weeks prior to the unit training assembly.

The submission deadline for articles or information is the Monday two weeks prior to the UTA. Send inquiries and submissions to 908AW/PA, 401 W. Maxwell Blvd., Maxwell AFB, AL 36112 or e-mail them to 908aw.pa@maxwell.af.mil. Our phone number is (334) 953-6804 or DSN 493-6804; our fax number is (334) 953-2202 or DSN 493-2202. For information about this schedule, call this office at (334) 953-7874.



BIG WHEELS KEEP ON TURNIN'

Through 50 years of constant change, the 908th remains 'Ready... Always'

By definition, the mission of the 908th Airlift Wing is "to recruit, organize and train Air Force Reservists to provide unrivaled theater airlift and flexible combat support across the spectrum of military operations."

That mission has been forged through 50 years of the sacrifices and labors of thousands of Alabama's Citizen Airmen, who have taken time from their honorable "double lives," balancing military duty, civilian employment and responsibilities to family.

Throughout the half century of

the wing's existence, that devotion has been a constant. The unit itself has undergone changes in location, mission, makeup and personnel. Its pilots and maintainers have flown and serviced five varieties of aircraft, from bulky to near-ballistic and back again.

Its medics have seen changes in life-saving techniques and great advances in technology, as have members of the communication, personnel and support communities.

The maxim stating "the more things change, the more they stay the same" seems tailor-made for the 908th.



The 908th Airlift Wing was first established as the 908th Troop Carrier Group, Medium on Jan. 15, 1963, under the Continental Air Command (primarily responsible for the nation's air defense mission until January, 1951, when it was tasked with administering the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve).



FIRST CO: Lt. Col. William A. Willis, Feb. 1963 - Dec. 1966

The group was stood up Feb. 11 at Bates Field, Ala. (now Mobile Regional Airport), located in Mobile and commanded by the 533d Army Air Base Unit. The group incorporated the 357th Troop Carrier Squadron, which was already located there, having replaced the 78th TCS, which had been moved to Barksdale AFB, La. in 1961.

Chief Master Sgt. Charles W. Hesse, who retired in 1994 after 30 years, joined in 1962.

"Back then we were called the 78th Troop Carrier Squadron," he said. "We were out of Bates Field in



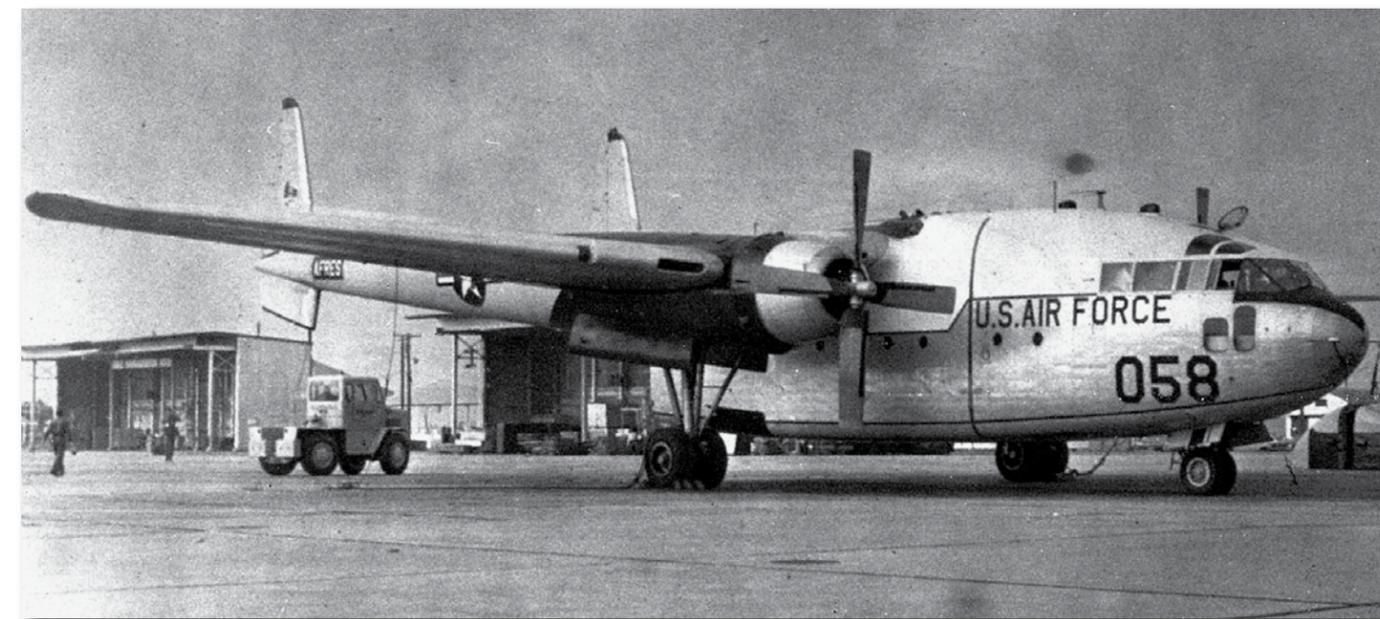
ORIGINAL MISSION: Crew members of the 357th TCS brief paratroopers. The 908th's first clients were Mobile Marine Reservists and 20th Special Forces, Army & Alabama's National Guard Unit.

Mobile, flying the C-119 - the loudest airplane you ever rode in. Every bolt in that plane rattled when it flew."

The 357th already had a distinguished history of its own. It had been activated in early 1942 as a B-24 Liberator training unit, been redesignated as a B-29 Superfortress heavy bomber squadron and taken part in the strategic bombing of the Japanese home islands and the mainland. Its last mission was a flyover of the Japanese surrender aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

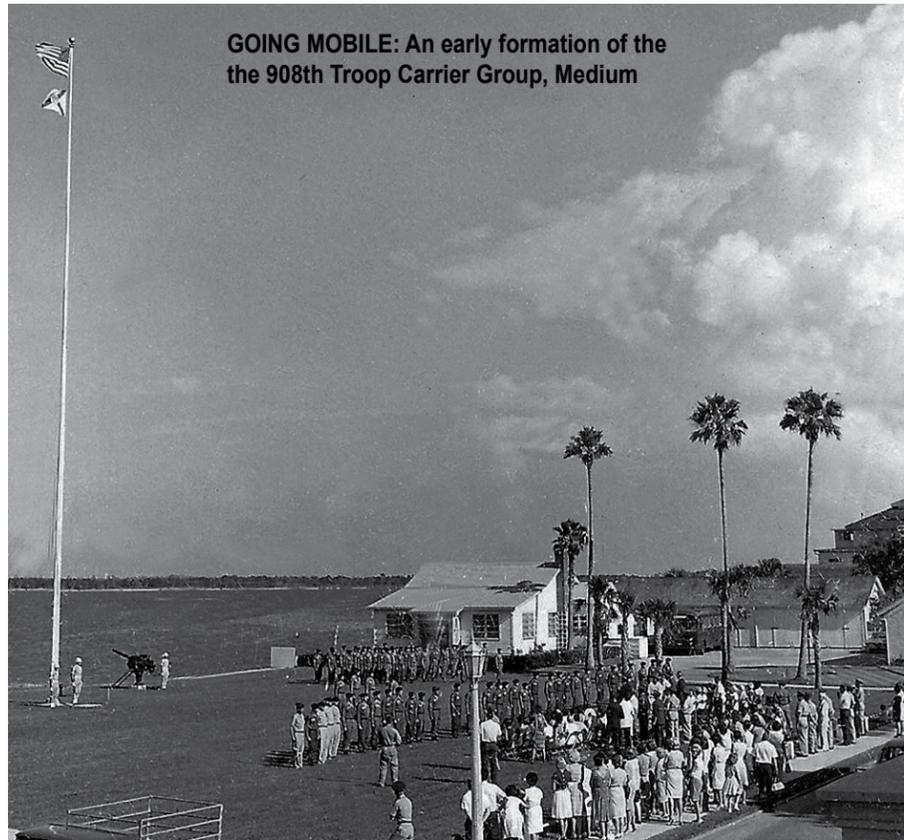
The squadron was deactivated, but the personnel were retrained for airlift and troop carrier missions from 1949 throughout the '50s. Before becoming part of the 908th, the squadron airlifted troops and equipment during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

At his disposal, group commander Lt. Col. William A. Willis had 130 officers and 626 Airmen. The Reservists came from towns further distant from Mobile. Originally, they hailed from approximately 30 towns within a 100-mile area. Within the



Original Leadership

- Commander:
Lt. Col. William A. Willis
- Executive Officer:
Mr. Thomas L. Coker
- Operations & Training Officer:
Maj. Harold D Weekley
- Maintenance Officer:
Maj. John P Cranford
- Civil Engineer:
Mr. William G Howard
- Civilian Personnel Officer:
Mrs. Bettye W Sims
- Procurement Officer:
Mr. William H Evers
- Accounting & Finance Officer:
Miss Vivian Lewis
- Commercial Transportation Officer:
Mr. Jay Spafford
- TAC Advisor:
Maj. Harry M Nash



fist six months, members hailed from 70 towns within a radius of 250 miles. One officer flew 500 miles in his own plane from Asheville, N.C., in order to train with the 908th.

The group was flying 16 Fairchild C-119s, a twin-engine, military transport aircraft designed to carry cargo, personnel, litter patients, mechanized equipment, and to drop cargo and troops by parachute.

Its transport capacity and unusual appearance earned it the name "the Flying Boxcar."

The headquarters element commanded the 908th Material Squadron, 908th Combat Support Squadron, the 908th Aerial Port Flight, The 908th Tactical Dispensary, the 357th, and the 13th Mobile Communications Squadron.

The group's initial mission was "to provide air transportation for airborne forces, their equipment and supplies, including air evacuation within the theatre of operations; and to organize, recruit, attain and maintain standards of proficiency which will enable the (435th) Troop Carrier Wing to perform its assigned mission."

The unit reached a milestone on Oct. 22, 1963, when its 500th Reservist was sworn in over Mobile television station WALA on a noon local news show.

The unit reached a milestone on Oct. 22, 1963, when its 500th Reservist was sworn in over Mobile television station WALA on a noon local news show.



The changes began almost immediately. The 908th received notice on May 12, 1964 that it would be moved from Bates to the larger Brookley Air Force Base, located near downtown Mobile, in October 1964 due to budget restraints. The task was accomplished by Nov. 15.

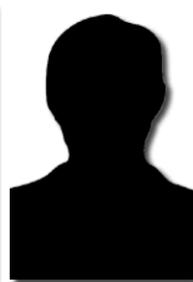
The group received a reputation for humanitarian airlift, such as the delivery of emergency supplies to New Orleans to aid victims of Hurricane Betsy and provided support and assistance in the installation of the U.S.S. Alabama in its state shrine.



Lt. Col. David P. Whiteside, Dec 1966 - July 1967



Lt. Col. Marcus C. West, July 1967 - June 1968



Lt. Col. John P. Cranford, 8 Jun 1968 - Dec 1968



Col. Andrew Chaplin, by Dec 1968 - 2 Feb 1970



Col. Marcus C. West, 2 Feb 1970 - Oct 1971



Lt. Col. Sloan R. Gill, Oct 1971 - 4 Jun 1973



Maj. Lelias E. Thomas, 4 Jun 1973 - 14 Aug 1973

It also took care of regular cargo and mail missions to free Military Airlift Command aircraft committed to Southeast Asia.

The unit closed out 1965 with participation in Operation Christmas Star, airlifting Christmas packages for the troops stationed in Vietnam.

The year 1966 began on a high note, as Governor George Wallace, stating that "whereas, all patriotic

Alabama citizens are proud of the unselfish dedication displayed by the men and women of the 908th Troop Carrier Group, Alabama's only Air Force Reserve Flying Unit, for their ever remaining alert," signed a proclamation naming the third week of February as 908th Troop Carrier Group Week.

On July 16, a 908th C-119 crashed near Jacksonville, Fla., after losing an engine in a fire. The four crewmen and all 30 Florida National Guard members on board bailed out safely, thanks to the pilot, Maj. Robert C. Coyle of Biloxi, Miss. Before ditching the aircraft, Coyle saw to it that every passenger and his three crewmen had jumped.

For his heroism, Coyle was



awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Florida Cross.

In July of 1967, the unit, now assigned to the 446th Troop Carrier Wing based at Ellington Air Force Base, Texas, was redesignated as 908 Tactical Airlift Group.

In February 1969, another move was announced. The 908th would move to Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Ala., the following spring, change its mission and fly another type of aircraft.

From the front page of The Carrier, the 908th's newspaper dated March 1969:



"Our unit will move to Maxwell AFB, Ala., and convert from C-119 Flying Boxcar transports to an interim aircraft, the twin-engine U-3.

The unit will be redesignated the 908th Tactical Support Group.

Manning will be based on the 24 aircraft authorized the group, which is slated to receive such FAC aircraft as the O-1 or O-2 light reconnaissance aircraft at a later date.

Our unit will be reassigned from the 433rd Tactical Airlift Wing, Kelly AFB, Texas, to the Third Air Force



Reserve Region, headquartered at Dobbins AFB, Georgia. As of this date there are no plans for our unit to be assigned to another wing unit.

The Air Force Reserve FAC units will provide support to Reserve Army units. The mission will include training in searching out and identifying the enemy, marking targets and controlling strike elements on close support missions. The Air Force active-duty FACs are used extensively in Southeast Asia.

With our move to Maxwell scheduled in April, our March UTA will remain the same, the 8th and 9th of March. Our April UTA will be changed and moved up to the 12th and 13th of the month."

The new horse in the 908th stable was the small, twin-engine U-3, a forward control aircraft. Popularly known in the U.S. Air Force as the "Blue Canoe," the U-3 was the military version of the Cessna 310 twin-engine transport.

But the 908th's mission, name, and the aircraft, were not to be long lived. The 908th Tactical Air Support Group, as it was now designated, soon received, in historic fashion, the Cessna O-2.



IN BIRMINGHAM THEY LOVE THE GOVERNOR: Maj. Lelias Thomas, 908th commander, left, stands by as Alabama Gov. George Wallace makes a proclamation.

As Sgt. Wayne Poston wrote: "The 908th Tactical Air Support Group, assigned at Maxwell, is the first Reserve Unit in history to receive aircraft directly from the factory.

They just took-charge of ten brand new (FZ-As, delivered to their Maxwell doorstep from the Cessna factory in Wichita, Kan. Previously known as the 908th Tactical Airlift Group, Air Force Reserve, the 908th moved to Maxwell nearly a year ago from Brookley AFB in Mobile with a new mission and a new name, but they are



JUST SIGN HERE AND THEY'RE ALL YOURS: 908th commander Col. Marcus West signs the receipt for the group's new Cessna O-2s.

Lineage

- ◆ Established as 908th Troop Carrier Group, Medium 15 Jan 1963.
- ◆ Organized on 11 Feb 1963, Bates Field, AL.
- ◆ Stationed at Brookley AFB, Ala., 1 Oct 1964.
- ◆ Redesignated as 908 Tactical Airlift Group 1 Jul 1967
- ◆ Redesignated as 908 Tactical Air Support Group 25 Apr 1969, Maxwell AFB, AL.
- ◆ Redesignated as 908 Tactical Airlift Group 15 Dec 1971
- ◆ Redesignated as 908 Airlift Group 1 Feb 1992
- ◆ Redesignated as 908 Airlift Wing 1 Oct 1994.

Assignments

- ◆ **Continental Air Command**, taked with nation's air defense mission until January, 1951, when it was tasked with administering Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve.
- ◆ 302nd Troop Carrier Wing, 11 Feb 1963
- ◆ 435th Troop Carrier Wing, 18 Mar 1963
- ◆ 446th Troop Carrier (later, 446 Tactical Airlift) Wing, 1 Dec 1965
- ◆ 433rd Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Mar 1968
- ◆ Third Air Force Reserve Region, 25 Apr 1969
- ◆ Eastern Air Force Reserve Region, 31 Dec 1969
- ◆ 434th Special Operations Wing, 1 Jul 1971
- ◆ 302nd Tactical Airlift Wing, 25 Oct 1971
- ◆ 94th Tactical Airlift (later, 94th Airlift) Wing, 1 Jul 1972
- ◆ 403 Airlift Wing (later, 403 Wing), 1 Aug 1992
- ◆ 10th Air Force, 1 Oct 1994
- ◆ 22nd Air Force, 1 Apr 1997-present.



Lt Col Jonathan Gardner, 14 Aug 1973 - 17 Jan 1976



Lt Col Billie H. Parker, 17 Jan 1976 - 30 Aug 1976



Col Jack P. Ferguson, 30 Aug 1976 - 4 Sep 1977



Col Robert Q. Head, 4 Sep 1977 - 18 Jul 1980



Col Robert S. Martin, 18 Jul 1980 - 1 Oct 1989



Col Anthony Tassone Jr., 1 Oct 1989 - 13 Jan 1991



Col Thomas W. Spencer, 13 Jan 1991 - 21 Aug 1994

still Alabama's only flying Air Force Reserve unit.

The 908th is one of only three AF Reserve units in the United States whose mission is that of forward air control. They train in searching out and identifying enemy, marking targets and controlling strike elements on close-support missions. Air Force active duty AFCs are used extensively in Southeast Asia.

Pilots of the 908th are training at the FAC school at Hurlburt Field, Fla. They get orientation and instrumentation training and courses in flying sectors (map reading and flying over a certain path over terrain).

Radio equipment operators are also being trained now during an 11-month technical school at Keesler AFB, Miss. The first electronic communications graduate for the 908th will be in late May. If the unit were activated, these radio men operate from jeeps in forward ground positions and keep communication between the ground troops and the FACs directing the air strikes."

At that time, the group was about 80 percent manned. Of the 96 officers authorized, they had 87, and of the 540 enlisted slots, they had 434



LOOK! UP IN THE SKY: The Cessna O-2 flies over Montgomery.

men serving, as well as 60 fulltime Air Reserve Technicians.

The O-2s didn't last long either. A year after the March 1970 conversion, word arrived that the unit would convert to the A-37 Dragonfly, a jet fighter. Amidst plans for receiving the jets, there was yet another change: the 908th would soon be returning to its roots, providing superior airlift.

The unit was presented with the De Havilland C-7A, a Canadian-built, twin-engine, short takeoff and landing (STOL) utility trans-

port with the unusual capability of extremely low-level navigation, field landings and takeoffs. The C-7A could transport 25 fully equipped paratroopers or 20 litter patients and a flight nurse.

It had been in Army service since 1961, and with the Air Force since 1967, when all fixed-wing transports were transferred.

The 908th Tactical Airlift Group made good use of the "Caribou," and kept it in service for more than a decade, but while the mission and aircraft of the group had changed, the superior performance of its members had not.

It wasn't long before the unit was up and running with its new aircraft. As though making up for lost time, the 908th declared itself combat ready in February 1973 – the first C-7 unit in the Reserve to achieve the status – as reported in the following story from 1974:

"The combat readiness of the



BACK TO THE BUSINESS OF AIRLIFT: The 908th returned to its original mission with the acquisition of the C-7 Caribou



Outstanding Achievement

The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is awarded by the secretary of the Air Force to numbered units that have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service or outstanding achievement that clearly sets the unit above and apart from similar units.

The services include; performance of exceptionally meritorious service, accomplishment of a specific outstanding achievement of national or international significance, combat operations against an armed enemy of the United States, or military operations involving conflict with or exposure to hostile actions by an opposing foreign force.

The 908th Airlift Wing has been honored with this award seven times in its history, for the following time periods:

1 Jul 1972 - 15 Mar 1974
 1 Jan 1976 - 30 Nov 1977
 1 Feb 1980 - 31 Jan 1982
 1 Sep 1986 - 31 Aug 1988
 1 Sep 1991 - 31 Aug 1993
 1 Oct 2003 - 30 Sep 2005
 1 July 2008 - 31 May 2010



THE HERD ON LINE: Thirteen C-7 Caribous rest on the Maxwell flightline.

908th Tactical Airlift Group (Air Force Reserve), Maxwell AFB, has been confirmed by a Tactical Air Command inspection team from HQ, 9th Air Force, Shaw AFB, S.C.

According to Lt. Col. Jonathan Gardner, 908th commander, the purpose of the inspection was to evaluate the organization, management and mission capability of the Reserve Group and subordinate units.

Highly professional standards are required of all personnel in performing air drops of troops, assault landings, tactical medical evacuations, as well as unit personnel and equipment mobility exercises.

Colonel Gardner praised all the members of the Group saying, "It took a great team effort to achieve these outstanding results. Every man knew his job and performed it well."

The TAC inspectors commended the outstanding manner, attitudes and courtesy of all members of the 908th. They said these were indicative of the high esprit de corps of the unit and a direct reflection on the commander's influence throughout the chain of command.

Besides its airlift, medical evac and troop carrier missions, the group, at this time

manned by nearly 600 Reservists, occasionally got an unusual tasking, such as releasing sterile male screw worm flies over Puerto Rico during Operation Coronet Roundup.

Back at Maxwell, 908th members were accomplishing more firsts for the unit. One member became the first non-ART Reservist to graduate from the Air Force Senior NCO Academy while ten others became the first group of Reservists to be certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), tested and certified by the State of Alabama Health Department.

Aircrews were also being recognized.

In 1975, a C-7 crew directed aerial search and rescue operations for downed crewmen of a B-52 which crashed near Augusta, Ga., Sept. 3.

"The 908th aircraft was between Augusta and Columbia, S.C. enroute to



LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE: 908th Maintainers check under the hood of a C-7 Caribou.



Col Christopher M. Joniec, 21 Aug 1994 - 24 Aug 1996

Col William P. Kane, 24 Aug 1996 - 1 Jun 1998

Col Thomas R. Brown, 1 Jun 1998 - Feb 2002

Col James N. Stewart, Feb 2002 - 4 Apr 2004

Col Heath Nuckolls, 4 Apr 2004 - 8 Jan 2006

Col Michael J. Underkofler, 8 Jan 2006 - 8 Jun 2008

Col Brett J. Clark, 8 Jun 2008 - Oct 2013



BOU-HOO: After 12 years of service with the 908th, the C-7 Caribou was replaced by the C-130E.

Andrews AFB, Md., when the incident occurred. The C-7 crew included Lt. Col. Jonathan Gardner, 908th commander and aircraft commander and SSgt. Larry Glasscock, crew chief.

After hearing an RF-4 report sighting a fireball and then smoke on the ground, Colonel Gardner, acting on a request by FAA controllers, diverted to the area for a closer look.

The wreckage was scattered over a wide area. "Sergeant Glasscock spotted a wheel truck and an engine pod," Colonel Gardner said. "It was then we knew the aircraft was a B-52."

Flying at 70 knots and 1,000 feet, the C-7 crew began a methodical search for the B-52 crewmembers. They picked up a rescue beeper signal

and established voice contact with a survivor, who guided the Caribou over his position in the pine forest. The C-7 flew in a tight circle and vectored an Army helicopter, which had just arrived, to the downed airmen."

In 1978, aircrew members of the 908th took 45 flight examiner, instructor, and basic aircrew examinations under the scrutiny of the Aircrew Standardization Evaluation Team from 14th Air Force, passing them all.

It was the unit second such award in a row.

"An excellent rating is difficult to come by," said Maj. Gen. Edward Dillon, commander of 14th Air Force (Reserve). "Two in succession

is a 'first' and requires the positive efforts of each and every member of the unit team."

Most important, however, was the unit's outstanding safety record. To date, the unit has accumulated more than 83,000 accident-free flying hours at Maxwell.

However, another change was coming. In October 1983, the 908th converted to the C-130E Hercules.

The Es arrival was remembered by longtime member, Carl Poteat, former 908th executive officer:

"I believe it was in August of 1983 when we got E models from the Alaska Guard and phased out the C-7. It was hot. It was my first major event. 'The City of Montgomery' was our very first C-130 we ever got. We didn't have a crew of our own trained to fly it yet.

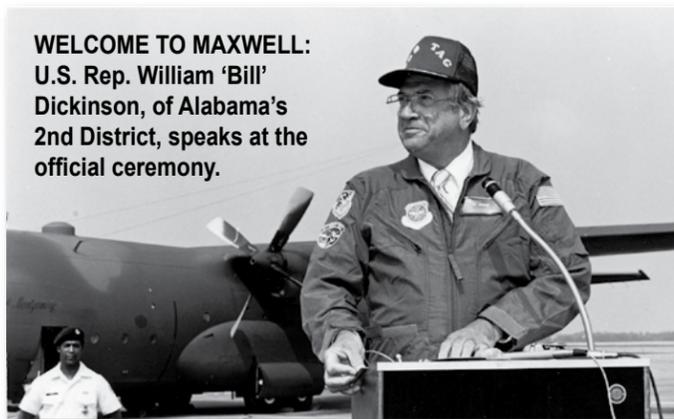
It was flown in and taxied up to the reviewing stand (with Cong. Dickinson on board) by a crew of mostly MAC advisors with the exception of navigator Dick Gilchrist who had just transferred from the 187th but was checked out in the C-130E.

We had another welcome ceremony in 1986 when we got the new H models."

The C-130 gave the 908th a much-needed lift, accommodating a wide variety of oversized cargo, including everything from utility



FIRST HERC: 908th commander Col. Robert Martin and guests await the arrival of 'City of Montgomery I.'



WELCOME TO MAXWELL: U.S. Rep. William 'Bill' Dickinson, of Alabama's 2nd District, speaks at the official ceremony.

helicopters and six-wheeled armored vehicles to standard palletized cargo and military personnel. In an aerial delivery role, it could airdrop loads up to 42,000 pounds or use its high-flotation landing gear to land and deliver cargo on rough, dirt strips.

The plane had the ability to perform short takeoffs and landings. Maxwell did not. Assault landing training formerly conducted using Little Rock AFB, Ark., Pope AFB, N.C., and Dobbins AFB, Ga. and involved several hours of flight time. But it wasn't long before that problem was solved, with the addition of the assault ramp, in 1974.

For after nearly a year and a half of legwork and paperwork, the 908th TAG's very own assault landing strip is now reality.

"The strip is east of the main runway," says Lt. Col Paul K. Stehlik,

Deputy Commander for Operations at the 908th. "It is currently used by the Aero Club. Now the Air Force Reserve will carry out some improvements to the strip, such as resurfacing a portion and adding special markings."

The colonel adds that the traffic pattern for the airfield will be "virtually the same," with no effect on other flying activities.

"Assault landings are a special event," says Colonel Stehlik. "The pilot needs special qualifications to perform them. Though these landings are routine, they constitute a special area tested during check rides."

With only a year in the 130 business, the 908th was leading the pack in mobility capability, and was selected by Headquarters, Military Airlift Command, to serve as the pilot unit for all organizations tasked in wartime to provide eight C-130Es.

In less than three years, the unit received the brand new C-130H, beginning in June 1986.

During this time, the group was active in real-world operations. The late '80s saw three deployments to Panama. The busy learning period in the new aircraft culminated in May 1987 at the international Airlift Rodeo competition at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., where the 908th placed first overall C-130 unit in the world, and fourth place overall among all aircraft competing.

The '90s was a decade of high activity for the group. Redesignated as the 908th Airlift Group, a number of members supported Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In 1992, more than 30 Reservists were extras for "Body Snatchers," and Capt. Judy Hughes, intelligence officer, was a body double for star Ga-



THAT NEW PLANE SMELL: The 908th's new C-130H2 aircraft undergo final touches on the factory floor.



NEW DIGS: Congressional, municipal, AFRC and 908th leaders dig the first shovelfuls of dirt for the wing's new hangers in 2003.



A FAMILIAR SCENE: A member of the 908th bids farewell to his family before deploying to Operation Desert Shield.

rielle Anwar. In '93, Capt. Kathy Byars, the 908th Airlift Group's first female C-130 pilot, joined the group, which also began taking part in a decade-long connection with relief operations in Sarajevo, Kosovo and Bosnia.

In 1994, the 908th Tactical Airlift Group was redesignated as the 908th Airlift Wing.

As the decade came to a close, 908th Airmen assisted in relief and recovery efforts following the destruction wrought by Hurricane Mitch throughout Central America, and winter aid efforts to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Reservists airlifted food, water, clothing, and medical and building supplies.

The new millennium saw an aircrew from the wing taking honors as Best C-130/160 Airdrop Crew in the World at Rodeo 2000 at Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

More changes came in the form of September 11, 2001.

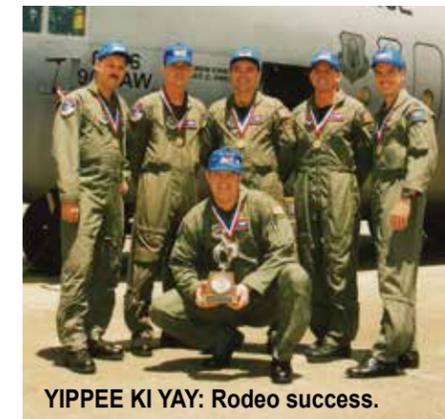
Within two days of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, 26 908th Security Forces Squadron

members were called to active duty to augment security at Maxwell and Gunter, and soon joined the legions of Reservists called to support Operation Noble Eagle.

Since then, more than 500 wing Reservists have participated in the nation's Global War on Terror, serving at stateside and overseas locations. The largest contingent of Reservists, nearly 250 unit personnel, were called to active duty in December 2003 to support combat operations in Afghanistan, with more than 180 aircrew members, maintenance and support personnel deploying to Central Asia.

Subsequently, the 908th Airmen relocated to provide airlift support to Operation Iraqi Freedom. The call up lasted nearly two years, ending in November 2005. During that period, wing aircrews flew more than 10,000 hours, including 7,000 hours in and around Afghanistan and Iraq.

From the war-ravaged mountains and deserts of Afghanistan and Iraq to the U.S. Gulf Coast decimated by Hurricane Katrina, the men of women of the 908th Airlift Wing served with remarkable distinction, dedication, and superb ability to ac-



YIPPEE KI YAY: Rodeo success.

complish the mission under the most adverse conditions.

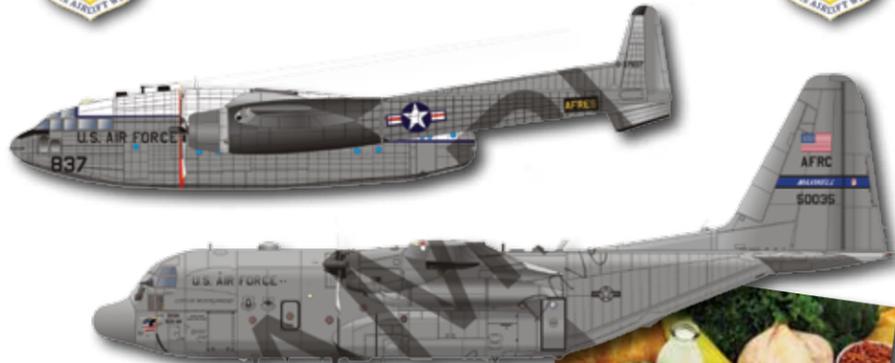
Every day, 908th Reservists are training and performing missions in support of U.S. humanitarian and peacekeeping efforts worldwide. In 2010, 908th Reservists provided aid to victims of an earthquake in Haiti and flooding in Pakistan.

Today, the wing's members continue to serve with honor and distinction whenever and wherever they are called. Whatever the mission may be, from providing security, maintenance and medical care to humanitarian relief and support of combat operations through superior airlift, the Reservists of the 908th Airlift Wing are still...

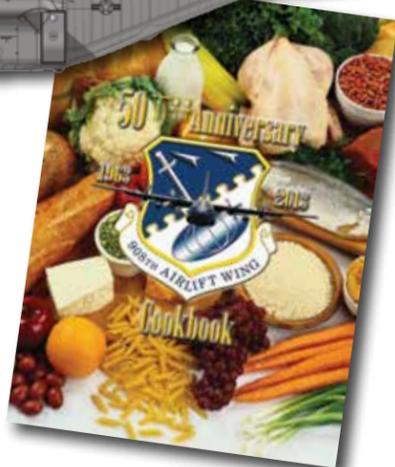


SIGN OF THE TIMES: Members of the 908th prepare to depart on a deployment.

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- Tech. Sgt. Morgan A. Folmar, AW
- Staff Sgt. William J. Gunnin, AMXS
- Staff Sgt. Kenneth S. Harris Sr., 25 APS
- Staff Sgt. Demetrius, K. King, MXS
- Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Matthews, LRS
- Staff Sgt. Kenneth Price, LRS
- Senior Airman Tyler P. Cast, MXS
- Senior Airman Enrique Castillo, SFS
- Senior Airman Matthew Chandler, FSS
- Senior Airman Robert B. Bland, MXG
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