

6th AERIAL PORT SQUADRON



LINEAGE

STATIONS

Burtonwood, England
Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand
U-Tapao AB, Thailand
Howard AB, Panama

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Maj George W. Johnson, #1955

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Jul 1965-Jun 1966

Detachment 2
Presidential Unit
11-12 Aug 1967

Detachment 5
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Dec 1965-Dec 1966

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 6th Aerial Port Squadron was activated in the US in June 1954 and it moved to Burtonwood in February 1955. Upon arrival it assumed operational control of the Burtonwood Air Terminal, and shortly afterwards established detachments with similar functions at Bovington, Rhein-Main, Laon, Dreux and Evreux (Fauville, France). With a threefold function, commanded by Major George W Johnson, operated designated air terminals, maintained technical proficiency in aerial drop techniques and utilized Combat Control Team capabilities for the maintenance of Drop Zone control. Frequent visitors to Burtonwood were units of the British Army's Parachute Regiment who worked alongside the unit in combined troop and equipment drops. In October 1958 the Squadron was deactivated and personnel were reassigned to the 5th Aerial port Squadron, a small unit only remaining at Burtonwood to retire records and equipment.

Steele City obviously was not an auspicious birthplace for the 6 APS. Yet the pioneering hardships of sagging floors, fighting through mud and rain for a shower and the magnificent problem of heating prepared us well for what was to come. And today a Quonset hut appears as a palace.

USAFE was in trouble, it was natural then to form a new Aerial Port to straighten things out and the finger of fate and frustrated personnel officers picked us. Activated 18 Jun 1954, the Big Six popped off in a race to see who could get to coffee first.

The trickle turned into stream in Nov and with assignment of large blocks of airmen from basic, organization and training could begin in earnest. Christmas 1954, our last in the states was fast approaching and as the stack of overseas orders grew present for duty shrank and the holidays were upon us most came back just in time to pack, police up and get on the train for the New York Port.

The next morning all were on board ship, surrounding by the luxury of six canvas bunks and not yet fully understanding the joys of travelling in such accommodations through the North Atlantic winter. To airmen, such niceties of sea travel as salt water showers and the backing up of toilets in a rough sea were something to marvel at.

The one advantage to seasickness is the feel of firm ground after continuously rolling and the sun shone brightly on England as we debarked at Southampton, the only sun we were to see for weeks. All day on the train enjoying the novelty of houses and trees after watching nothing but water for days and then Burtonwood.

Plenty of time for a shakedown, fix up the area, get settled but start work in a week. Daily formations in the snow, learning how to unload a C-124 in cold hard driving rain at night running out of heat in the Quonsets and it didn't take long to feel at home. But no sooner started than detachment assignments came. Bovington Anyone, who for Rhein Main and soon after it was

Evreux, Laon and the Dreux.

There was room for pride, tactical missions with army units in Germany were very successful. Tonnage continued to soar at the terminals. Some training and a lot of unit the elements of the British Territorials in defense exercises.

A magnificent summer and some hard work brought multicolored flowers to bloom making site 4 a standout garden spot of Burtonwood.

By autumn most could act as guides about the country, particularly Manchester. What charm that city has and the squadron's private club in Warrington, the Seven Stars increased in fame. If the adjustments to weather was difficult the adjustment to English been was perhaps more so. But the pubs became a popular institution especially with winter and the near close down of the Hoagy wagon and allied functions. The barn was off limits so where else to go but to town.

The 6th Aerial Port Squadron had detachments in many locations in Thailand. These detachments coordinated the airlift of freight and personnel in and out of the air bases. They also included Combat Control Teams, composed of airborne qualified members. The Combat Controllers were able to parachute into any location and provide ground control for airdrops or landings. In May 1972, the USAF reopened Takhli RTAFB because of the North Vietnamase "Easter Offensive" in South Vietnam. CCT members were among the first to reach the base, and they kept the flight line running with mobile control facilities until permanent systems could be reactivated.





Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 4 Sep 2010
Updated: 10 Jan 2014

Sources

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