

302 AEROMEDICAL STAGING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

302 Medical Group constituted, 16 May 1949
Activated in the Reserve, 27 Jun 1949
Ordered to Active Service, 1 Jun 1951
Inactivated, 8 Jun 1951
Activated in the Reserve, 14 Jun 1952
Redesignated 302 Tactical Hospital, 18 May 1954
Ordered to Active Service, 28 Oct 1962
Relieved from Active Duty, 28 Nov 1962
Discontinued, and inactivated, 11 Feb 1963
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Jul 1976
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1981
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Apr 1985
Redesignated 302 Medical Squadron, 1 Nov 1990
Redesignated 302 Aeromedical Staging Squadron, 1 Oct 1994

STATIONS

McChord AFB, WA, 27 Jun 1949-8 Jun 1951
Clinton County AFB, OH, 14 Jun 1952-11 Feb 1963
Rickenbacker AFB, OH, 1 Jul 1976-1 Apr 1981
Peterson AFB (later, Peterson Space Force Base), CO, 1 Apr 1985

ASSIGNMENTS

302 Troop Carrier Wing, Medium (later, 302 Troop Carrier Wing, Heavy), 27 Jun 1949-8 Jun

1951

302 Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, 14 Jun 1952

302 Air Base Group, 28 Oct 1962-11 Feb 1963

302 Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Jul 1976-1 Apr 1981

302 Tactical Airlift (later, 302 Airlift) Wing, 1 Apr 1985

302 Medical Group, 1 Aug 1992; 302 Airlift Wing, 1 Oct 1994

COMMANDERS

Col Sheldon Omi, 7 Aug 2012

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1977-31 Dec 1978

1 Jan 1990-31 Dec 1991

1 Jan 1998-31 Aug 1999

1 Jan 2001-31 Aug 2002

1 Sep 2004-31 Aug 2006

1 Sep 2006-2 Sep 2008

1 Jan 2016-31 Dec 2017

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Everything started off status quo on the morning of May 30. Several members of the 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron were performing annual tour at Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany. They were assigned to the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility. It was their first day on the job - they processed paperwork, stocked and loaded the vehicles, and prepared to transport patients that arrive into Germany to the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center or hold them at the CASF. Little did they know, just doing their daily job would land them on CNN. Suddenly, they were caught up in an unexpected media frenzy. CBS News correspondent Kimberly Dozier was critically wounded in Iraq by a bomb that killed cameraman Paul Douglas and soundman James Brolan. She was brought in for treatment at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, where the 302nd members transported the wounded journalist to the hospital. At the time her condition was critical, and she was treated for multiple injuries with wounds to her head and legs. The three journalists, who were

embedded with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, were doing a Memorial Day story about what life is like for the troops in Baghdad when an explosive-packed car nearby blew up. Ms. Dozier, Mr. Douglas and Mr. Brolan had been riding in an armored Humvee. They were wearing helmets, flak jackets, and protective glasses when the bomb went off. Before being treated in Germany, doctors in Iraq were able to remove shrapnel from Ms. Dozier's head, but her more serious injuries are to her lower body.

The ASTS members were so focused on the mission that some didn't even notice the cameras along the flight line. It didn't hit them until family and friends told them they recognized them on every news station screen. An average of six news teams a day go out on patrol with the 4th Infantry Division in Baghdad. So far this year, insurgents have planted more than 3,000 roadside bombs in Baghdad alone. Nearly half of them are discovered before they go off, but they remain the number one killer of American soldiers. Master Sgt. Thomas Izzett, 302ND ASTS first sergeant, was proud of his troops, saying, "Germany is only a small glimpse of the potential we have and the willingness to serve those in need." It was a tough experience for the team all that day. They were with GIs who were also injured in the same IED blast, some more severely injured, and had extensive contact with them – unlike the journalist. Lieutenant Col. Joli Garcia, 302nd ASTS chief nurse, said this of the nurses, medical technicians and administrative technicians completing their annual tour at Ramstein. "Our mission is to give the best patient care possible and they do just that! They are professional, knowledgeable, and most of all compassionate. I know Ms. Dozier was receiving the best care from them and all the other members of the Aerovac system." 2006

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. – When was the last time you looked forward to visiting your dentist? Imagine walking nine miles to stand in line hoping to see a dentist who will pull your tooth using minimal anesthetic. This is life in rural Malawi, Africa. Every year, a team of Air Force Reserve dental specialists joins forces with health professionals from the Army National Guard and Reserve to provide medical service to an African nation in an exercise called MEDREACH. For MEDREACH 11, the team visited Malawi, a country of 15 million people with only 10 licensed dentists. The objective of MEDREACH 11 is to enhance the readiness of both Malawi and United States military forces medical personnel and increase understanding of the medical capabilities and proficiencies of both forces, enhancing their ability to operate together. Col. Sheldon "Shel" Omi, 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron commander and a practicing civilian dentist, commanded a team of six Air Force Reservists including Senior Airman Jennifer Sanchez, 302nd ASTS dental technician, during the exercise.

The team spent two weeks visiting rural areas of Malawi and extracting teeth without the luxury of basics such as electrical equipment or separate rooms to work on the patients. Of the clinics visited, only one had electrical power allowing the team to provide a handful of fillings and a few cleanings. Otherwise, the Reservists worked with equipment that didn't require electricity. "We had a generator to provide electricity to the dental sterilizer we had should we need it," said Colonel Omi. Although the working conditions were not ideal, the people of Malawi showed up in overwhelming numbers for dental care. When the team arrived at a clinic in the morning the lines of patients were long and some had to be turned away in the afternoon.

According to Colonel Omi, the team planned to see 50 patients per day. However, they averaged more than 130 patients at each clinic, extracting 555 teeth. "It was very hard to turn people away, but we started running out of supplies," he said. With the lack of modern facilities, complaints from patients might be expected, but the opposite was true. "The people were so nice and thankful; and brave," said Airman Sanchez. "They wouldn't flinch when we gave them a shot, sometimes we practically had them in a headlock pulling a tooth, and they never complained." Airman Sanchez, a dental assistant in her civilian job, took advantage of a unique opportunity to assist a team of Army ophthalmologists with cataract removal surgeries.

"I figured when will I ever have the chance to do this?" Airman Sanchez said. "Being there when they take the bandages off and can see is a very rewarding experience." Team members agreed that personal satisfaction is what made the trip memorable. This is not a new concept to Colonel Omi, who regularly volunteers his dental services to serve low-income families in Denver and he felt fortunate to be on the MEDREACH team. "Being able to see some happy faces and appreciative people was very rewarding," he said. Such satisfaction does not come easy though. The team worked long hours and gave as much as they could. Airman Sanchez even left behind some personal items such as mosquito repellent and flashlights she'd brought on the trip. "Even the Malawi Defense Force was impressed with how much we [the U.S. military] wanted to help their people," added Colonel Omi. "To my Air Force friends out there, keep your eyes and ears open for these opportunities, they are out there and worth it," he said. 2011

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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