

## 31 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

31 Air Transport Squadron, Heavy  
Redesignated 31 Troop Carrier Squadron, Heavy, 1 Jun 1965  
Inactivated, Jan 1969  
Redesignated 31 Military Airlift Squadron, Aug 1989  
Redesignated 31 Airlift Squadron  
Inactivated, 14 Jan 1994

### STATIONS

Westover AFB, MA, 20 Jul 1952-19 Jun 1955  
Dover AFB, DE, 19 Jun 1955-8 Apr 1969

### ASSIGNMENTS

1600 Air Transport Group, Heavy

### WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-124

### COMMANDERS

Maj William E. Yates  
Maj Jack M. Warren, #1957

### HONORS

Service Streamers

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

**EMBLEM**



31 Air Transport Squadron emblem



31 Military Airlift Squadron emblem

**MOTTO**

**OPERATIONS**

18 April - 6 August 1962: FRIENDSHIP VII: wing was chosen to airlift FRIENDSHIP VII, Lt Col John Glenn's space capsule, on a global tour of The major cities of the free world. The trip, divided into

three parts, was flown by each of the wing's C-124 squadrons, each squadron flying a different part. The 31 ATS flew the capsule through Central and South America; the 20th ATS took the capsule through Europe and Africa; the 15th ATS flew the last part of the trip, touring Asia and Australia before terminating the trip at the Seattle World's Fair on 6 August. More than 284 flying hours were logged in support of this mission.

27 August 1964: A Dover C-124 from the 31 ATS flew a mercy mission to Guadaloupe Island to airlift emergency supplies to the inhabitants after the island was hit by hurricane Cleo.

31 MAS Flies Difficult Mission To Kulusuk Island In early June 1966, a hand-picked C-124 crew of the 31 MAS flew a challenging and unique mission by flying over the icecaps of Greenland to deliver equipment to Kulusuk Island. The island is a Danish outpost approximately two miles wide, off the east coast of Greenland. It has a gravel landing strip 3,400 feet long and 100 feet wide. The strip is built on a permafrost layer and is flanked on either side by gullies. In addition, it is flanked on three sides by high terrain, The crew made two trips to the island from Sondrestrom AB to deliver a much needed truck and truck bed. Visibility at the strip was near Visual Flight Rules (VFR) minimums and there were no published approaches for the field. The trips in and out were accomplished without incident, despite a virtual non-availability of navigation aids, no ground handling equipment and the complexities of utilizing the Globemaster II systems under extremely cold and primitive conditions.

In December 1968, the squadron's C-124 crews flew 53 missions in support of operation PATHFINDER EXPRESS II. In January 1969, 12 Globemaster II missions were flown in support of REFORGER/CRESTED CAP I. The unit disbanded during the same month, the aircraft departing Rhein Main in groups of four and the last aircraft leaving on the 19th.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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#### Sources

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

Unit yearbook. *Westover AFB, MA. @1954*