

**305th Air Mobility Wing
1942–Present**



Defending Freedom

Prepared by 305 AMW History Office

March 2022

Col Curtis LeMay at work as Commander, 305th Bomb Group. He revolutionized daylight precision bombing while leading the “Can Do” Bomb Group (USAAF photo)



History of the 305th Air Mobility Wing

2022 marked the 28th anniversary of the 305 Air Mobility Wing’s arrival to McGuire Field. However, the Wing’s long and storied history began decades prior with the activation of the 305th Bomb Group on 1 March 1942. After activation and training at Salt Lake City, Utah, the 305th ground echelon assembled at Ft. Dix in preparation for deployment to England on the liner SS *Queen Mary* in early September 1942 while the aircraft and crews self-deployed in early October. First setting up camp at RAF Station 106 at Grafton Underwood where the group was assigned tail code “Triangle-G” for their new B-17F bombers, Airmen began combat operations on 17 November, 1942. The group was assigned to the “Mighty Eighth” Air Force, 1st division, 40th Combat Wing.

Over 7-8 December of that year, with then-Col Curtis E. LeMay as commander, the group moved to Chelveston Airfield, RAF Station 105, where they would remain until close to the end of the war. The group flew 337 combat missions against German targets across Europe. Under Col LeMay, the group pioneered innovations like the combat box formation and lead crew system—both significant to the success of the bomber offensive. The 305 BG earned two Distinguished Unit Citations and two pilots earned the Medal of Honor. The 305th Bomb Group was unique in that both of its Medal of Honor recipients survived the war.

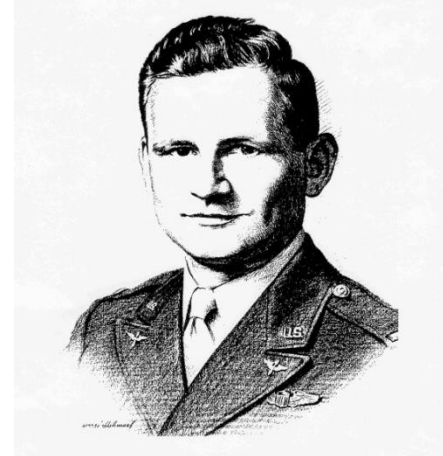
1st Lt William R. Lawley, Jr., was the first of two 305th Bomb Group Medal of Honor recipients for his



actions on 20 February 1944 during a mission to Leipzig, Germany as the Eighth Air Force's "Big Week" opened. After the bomb run, the crew realized their bombs hadn't dropped due to a malfunctioning bomb release. Still heavy, they lagged behind the formation and were set upon by Bf-109G fighters. A 20mm cannon shell soon exploded in the cockpit, wounding Lawley and killing the co-pilot. The co-pilot's body pushed the yoke forward and Lawley had to pull the body off the controls to regain control from a steep dive. With an engine fire extinguished and seven crew members wounded, he

elected to try for home. Crew members continued to fire on attacking fighters until they finally broke off and the bombardier, severely wounded himself, finally salvoed the bombs and flew the plane after Lawley passed out. Lawley came to near the English Channel and safely landed the bomber at a small fighter field—RAF Redhill—just as the remaining engine died of fuel starvation. He had but one pass to make a perfect landing, turning upwind into one engine and succeeded.

1st Lt Edward S. Michael earned a Medal of Honor for heroism 10 April 1944 for completing a bombing mission over Stettin on the German North Sea coast. The formation was fiercely attacked by both fighters and flak and his B-17 "Bertie Lee," was severely damaged, on fire and they could not drop their bombs. Convinced they were going down, he ordered the crew to bail out and seven men did, but the bombardier's parachute was damaged and unusable. Wounded himself, Lt Michael had the bombardier manually crank the bomb bay until it finally opened and the bombs dropped. He then flew the plane more than 400 miles back to England at tree-top level, despite regular flak and fighter attacks, landing without further injuries. President Roosevelt personally presented this—the second Medal of Honor for the 305th Bomb Group and 364th Bomb Squadron—to Lt Michael in January, 1945.



The "Can Do" Bomb Group inactivated after completing the post-war mapping mission "CASEY JONES." The 305th and its' sister group, the 306th, were specially chosen for this mission because of their illustrious reputations. Receiving low-time B-17s from other units, especially the 351st Bomb

Group, the 305th became the unit that had more B-17s assigned than any other bomb group, having lost 148 during the war, and receiving a full complement for CASEY JONES.

The 305th Bomb Wing at MacDill AFB

After World War II, the newly independent Air Force used the wing structure as its most basic organizational establishment, but operational wings of today grew from their antecedent groups—in most cases keeping the original unit emblem, and receiving the bestowed heritage of its predecessor establishment. For the 305th, the activation of a new wing-based establishment took almost five-years. At the behest of Gen Curtis LeMay, and in recognition of the group's fine war record, the 305th Bombardment Wing activated on 2 January 1951 at MacDill AFB, Florida. As with the World War II unit, the 364th, 365th and 366th Bomb Squadrons, formed the combat elements of the new wing. This activation was part of a major increase in the Strategic Air Command (SAC) in response to both the Korean War and the growing Cold War with the Soviet Union and Communist China. The wing was initially equipped as a B-29 unit with refurbished WW II aircraft from a storage depot in Arizona. Staffed by a small core of active duty personnel coming from other SAC and Air Force units, most personnel were Reservists recalled for Korean War service, representing the entire range of WW II experience. They were soon joined by some of the first B-29 combat crews to return from the Far East. Col Elliot Vandevanter, a decorated bomber pilot and 385th Bomb Group commander from World War II assumed command.



A 305 BW B-29, 1951—Still using the G they had used in WW II, but this time the square designation of the 2nd Air Force. (USAF Photo)

The 305 BW's immediate mission was two-fold; first, to train mission ready crews for combat units in the Far East Air Force's Bomber Command, including their sister 306 BW at MacDill AFB and other U.S. based B-29 units, and second, to qualify crews in anti-submarine warfare techniques and procedures (although this mission was soon deleted). They received their first airplanes on 1 February 1951 and a standardization and evaluation crew received their check rides from the 306 BW on 8 February. The very

first training mission to the near-by range at Avon Park on 31 March resulted in a “shack job,” only the second direct hit recorded in the range’s history to that time.

Despite a heavy training schedule and aging aircraft, there was only one serious mishap; a crew who ditched in the Gulf of Mexico on 1 May 1952, with seven of the 14 personnel aboard surviving thanks to excellent training. While the wing was initially activated with all necessary support units, a SAC reorganization soon followed. At bases with more than one wing, one was designated a host wing and provided all base support functions; at MacDill AFB this was the 306 BW. In 1952, Air Divisions were activated at all bases with two or more combat wings, each with a subordinate Air Base Group for support functions, allowing wing commanders to focus on their mission of combat readiness. The 305th Air Base Group and other mission support units were inactivated and held for future use as was the 305th Bomb Group.

From the B-29 to the B-47

On 1 October 1951, the USAF tabbed the 305th to join the 306 BW in converting to the new Boeing B-47 Stratojet bomber. This plan had been in the works for several months and some crews had already trained at Boeing Wichita. To extend the B-47’s range, the 305th Aerial Refueling Squadron was activated on 2 July and received their first KC-97E for crew training on 22 September. A development of the B-29, the KC-97 first flew in November 1944 as the XC-97. The Air Force had already received 27 for Military Air Transport Service use in a passenger/cargo configuration and 808 were produced as KC-97’s, the last delivered in 1956. When the KC-97’s first arrived at the 305th, the aircraft were not capable yet of aerial refueling due to a shortage of internal fuel pumps and other critical parts. In a role repeated in future years, these KC-97’s provided airlift for SAC support and were also detached to assist units deploying to overseas bases. The first fully operational KC-97E was delivered on 1 January 1952.

The pressure to get three squadrons of new bombers ready with mission-qualified crews was intense; the 305 BW was slated to follow their sister 306 BW on a rotational deployment to England before the end of the year. Thus, on 3 September 1953, Colonel Vandevanter led the Can Do wing to RAF Brize Norton to stand its first Cold War alert duty. While there, they also forward-deployed to a new air base at Sidi al Slimane in what was then French Morocco with a force of 40 B-47’s and 20 KC-97’s. After returning to England, they wrapped up the deployment in mid-December with the last personnel returning to MacDill AFB on the 23rd, just in time for Christmas.

MacDill AFB and the 305th became a showplace for the Air Force and Strategic Air Command. Having the Air Force’s newest jet bomber in a nice location, not to mention being General LeMay’s World War II command, resulted in a steady stream of VIP’s. General LeMay and other senior SAC officers arrived

throughout early 1954 for a B-47 check out. They were followed by Jimmy Stewart who filmed the B-47 sequences for his movie “Strategic Air Command,” released in 1955.

The 305 Bomb Wing at Bunker Hill (later Grissom) AFB

The late 1950s brought rapid change. In October of 1957, the wing received notification of a move to Indiana as part of SAC’s dispersal program in response to the growing Soviet bomber and potential missile threat. Bunker Hill AFB, previously a Navy base, was located in central Indiana and needed considerable upgrades before the wing could move. As the wing now had to run its own base, the 4041st Air Base Group activated on 1 September 1957 to oversee base construction. Additionally, the group managed operations of the 68 ARS, which had transferred on 4 September 1957 from Lockbourne AFB, OH. The first 305 BW personnel and their families reported on 15 April 1959 and the first B-47’s arrived on 15 May. The 4041st ABG was redesignated the 305th Combat Support Group on 1 June 59.

The 305th Bomb Wing officially moved the same day, without the 305 ARS. Initially transferred to the 306 BW, they moved with their KC-97s to McGuire AFB, NJ in January 1960 to support SAC and TAC trans-Atlantic deployments. The 68 ARS was just starting their KC-135 conversion as this happened. They received their first Stratotanker on 2 October that year and were mission ready with a full complement of 20 planes on 29 April 1960.

The 305 BW was in fact undergoing a double conversion as the bomb squadrons were preparing to receive Convair’s B-58 Hustler, USAF’s first supersonic bomber.



Convair B-58A “Hustler.” A truly powerful and fast bomber—capable of Mach 2+ speeds, The 305 BW was one of only operational two wings equipped with it. (USAF Photo)

With its sleek lines distinctive pod underneath combining a fuel tank and nuclear weapon, was a potent deterrent whose speed complicated Soviet air and ground defenses. The tremendous workload it placed on maintenance and supply personnel, requiring special tools, parts and training, initially restricted its usefulness. The flying characteristics made it a demanding aircraft to fly—even for experienced aircrew. Aircraft cost and complexity, along with introduction of operational intercontinental ballistic missiles

(ICBM's), limited SAC to just two B-58 wings. Even before the 305th received its first B-58, the 68 ARS was getting vital experience as they used their new KC-135s to refuel B-58s from the 43 BW at Carswell AFB (later moving to Little Rock AFB) on every speed run setting international records that they flew over the next three years.

By December 1961, the B-47 had transferred out and the wing was well into their B-58 conversion. Still, it was 1963 before the wing had its full complement of 40 authorized aircraft (there was a total of 54 different B-58's assigned, including three TB-58A trainers), peaking at 44 planes in place in January 1964. Obstacles to mission readiness ranged from lack of parts and tools; complex maintenance-intensive systems; a high turn-over of trained personnel; and increasingly negative public reaction about sonic booms along training corridors. The wing nonetheless achieved its goal and passed its operational readiness inspection (ORI) on 23 April 1963, beating the 43 BW to mission ready status. Already part of the SAC war plans, mission-ready B-58 planes and crews stood alert during the Cuban Missile crisis in October 1962. The 305th got its turn to set B-58 speed records on 16 October 1963 when "Greased Lightning" set a speed record flying over the pole from Tokyo to London at an average speed of 938 miles per hour. On 1 February 1965, the 305th Bomb Wing honored one of its own for the last time with three B-58s as part of the flyover for General Curtis LeMay's retirement.

Unlike a near perfect safety record with the B-47, ten 305 BW B-58s crashed between 12 April 1962 and 18 April 1969, with accidents in all phases of flight from takeoffs to landings, killing 16 crewmembers. Another aircraft was destroyed in a taxi mishap and fire that killed the Defensive Systems Operator; and in a freak accident on 16 July 1962, yet another DSO was killed by impeller turbine fragments when a faulty valve stayed open in flight, causing the 3# engine starter to over-speed and shatter at Mach 1.73. Not all accidents were fatal as a navigator successfully bailed out at supersonic speed with a new ejection capsule on 15 November 1965.

On 25 March 1965, the 68 ARS was inactivated and the 305 ARS flag was transferred from McGuire AFB, taking over the crews and planes on station. This move reunited the 305 ARS with the wing. Tanker crews continued to sit alert at Bunker Hill and deployed overseas locations, supporting B-52 deployments and airborne alerts known as CHROME DOME missions. They also supported the YOUNG TIGER tanker task force in Vietnam with aircraft and crews. As the decade progressed, the 305 BW presided over a large dedication ceremony as Bunker Hill AFB was renamed Grissom AFB on 12 May 1968. The base was named in honor of astronaut and Air Force pilot Lt Col Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom, an Indiana native son who perished in the tragic 1967 Apollo One fire at Cape Kennedy, Florida.

The continuing costs of the B-58 and the Vietnam War, as well as a growing ICBM force, sounded the death knell of the Hustler. On 8 December 1965, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara personally announced the aircraft would be retired by 1971. Budget pressures and continuing aircraft problems accelerated that timeline and the first B-58 left on 13 November 1969; “Greased Lightning,” the wing’s last assigned bomber, departed for the SAC Museum on 16 January 1970.

The 1970s and the Air Refueling Mission

On 1 January 1970, the wing was redesignated the 305th Air Refueling Wing (Heavy) and the 70 ARS was transferred from Little Rock AFB with total KC-135 aircraft authorized jumping to 30. This would later rise as high as 40 planes and numbers varied over the years with periodic organizational changes. The wing also assumed the Post Attack Command and Control System (PACCS) mission as an alternate to the LOOKING GLASS airborne command post at Offutt AFB, NE. The 3rd Airborne Command and Control Squadron (3 ACCS) was activated at Grissom AFB on 1 April 1970 and, on 9 November 1970, they launched their first scheduled LOOKING GLASS mission in place of the normal Offutt AFB crew. The first unscheduled alert relief mission was launched on 10 December due to bad weather at Offutt AFB, validating their alert and emergency operational capabilities. They periodically flew scheduled and unscheduled missions thereafter. The 3 ACCS became part of an Air Force historical first on 5 April 1975 when Lt Col John B. Spence assumed command; the first navigator to command a tactical flying unit in SAC. This was short lived however as 3 ACCS was inactivated that 31 December and its aircraft, crews and mission absorbed into the 70 ARS. As a refueling wing, the 305 ARW became a workhorse on behalf of the rest of the Air Force. They were regularly tasked to support SAC’s B-52 wings in exercises and ORI’s, along with overseas alert taskings.



Test of air-refuelable KC-135's at Edwards AFB
(USAF Photo)

In fall 1978, the 305 ARW received their first KC-135's modified as Air Refuelable Tankers, able to receive and deliver fuel while airborne. The wing continued to excel, earning four Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards between 1972 and 1980 despite reduced flying time, decreased experience levels and manning and increased maintenance demanded by aging aircraft. They also won the Gen Bruce K. Holloway trophy

in 1979 for out-standing humanitarian operations and the Tanker Navigation Trophy at the 1980 SAC Bombing and Navigation Competition. The 305 ARS followed this in 1981 by winning the Spaatz Trophy as SAC's Best Air Refueling Squadron.

The 305 AREFW picked up responsibility for maintenance support of a two plane TTF at Howard AFB, Panama in January 1983 and full responsibility the following year, becoming Detachment 1, 305 ARW. Aircraft and crews rotated through on 30 day deployments and it was here a KC-135 crashed on final approach on 17 June 1986, killing all four crew members. This marked the first time a tanker had crashed since the wing assumed the aerial refueling mission in 1951. Detachment 1 was later phased out; the last airplane rotated home on 28 December 1988 and the detachment closed out on 1 February 1989.

Grissom AFB was SAC's ninth base to receive the upgraded KC-135R with new CFM-56 high bypass turbo-fan engines and multiple other improvements and upgrades. They took delivery of their first one on 7 April 1988 and their last one on 4 October 1989, just in time for Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama on 20 December 1989.

The 305th Aligns With Air Mobility Command

The greatest challenge of the post-Vietnam all-volunteer/Total Force military were Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM in Southwest Asia (SWA) from September 1990 through June 1991. Besides normal TTF operations in the Pacific and European theaters, 305 ARW crews and personnel scattered across Europe and the Middle East to 17 different locations, with most at King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia. Totaling 7266.8 flying hours with 1327 sorties and pumping 49,419,495 pounds of gas in their SWA deployment, no mission was more appreciated by a customer than the save of an F-117 deep inside Iraqi airspace the second night of the air war. The successful crew then briefed their mission all the way up the SAC/USAF chain of command to the Secretary of Defense.

In July 1991, the 1991 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission actions were announced and approved, which included inactivation of the 305 ARW and transition of Grissom AFB to a Reserve base. In the first major post-Cold War change, the wing, along with the rest of SAC, stood down their alert aircraft on 28 September 1991. The 305 AREFW also reorganized itself during this time under the objective wing structure and on 1 June 1992, came under control of the new Air Mobility Command after 41+ years of service with the now inactivated Strategic Air Command.

The first BRAC action focused on ending the EC-135 mission; the first EC-135 left on 10 February 1992, designated for static display at Offutt AFB, and the last one departed for Davis Monthan AFB on 22 May 1992. On 19 May 1992, a Closure and Realignment Execution Office was established to manage the inactivation/drawdown process.

The 70 ARS inactivated on 1 April 1993 and the wing's flying mission came to a close on 15 August 1993 with departure of the 305 ARS's last KC-135R, although 434th Wing (AFRES) KC-135's and A-10's continued operations there. Until the 29 September 1994 inactivation ceremony, the wing slowly retired or transferred its equipment as its people retired, separated or moved on to new assignments.

Based on a USAF Chief of Staff directed review of unit lineage and honors, the 305 AREFW was selected for retention in the active force even as the USAF downsizing was in progress due to its bestowed World War II heritage and peerless readiness in the Cold War. In a 28 February 1994 announcement, the 305th Air Refueling Wing was designated for transfer (without personnel or equipment) to McGuire AFB, New Jersey on 1 October 1994. Because the KC-10 mission was moving to McGuire as well, it was also redesignated as the 305th Air Mobility Wing, taking over the personnel and equipment of the inactivated 438th Airlift Wing and flying the C-141B Starlifter and KC-10 Extender.



First 305 AMW Joint refueling training mission, October 1994. The wing inherited a mixed bag of “white top” KC-10s, Euro I C-141Bs, and a fleet standard AMC gray for both planes. (USAF Photo)

At McGuire AFB, the 305 AMW became part of an exciting new chapter in Air Force History after 1 October 1994. McGuire became the eastern Air Mobility Wing with the inclusion of the KC-10A tanker—its mission complemented the 21 AF and 621 AMOG. The base directly supported every contingency operation JTF SOUTHERN WATCH to the many humanitarian disasters throughout the decade.

As the CAN DO Wing heralded the new millennium, the 305th built on its proud heritage and met the continuous challenge of defending freedom, and ameliorating suffering worldwide. Since 1994, the

wing had supported virtually every major military contingency including, NORTHERN WATCH, SOUTHERN WATCH, DESERT FOX, JOINT ENDEAVOR and ALLIED FORCE. The wing transitioned from training to wartime operations after September 11 2001, and has remained on a war footing ever since, contributing mightily to NOBLE EAGLE, ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. During October 2001, Wing aircraft regularly flew sorties over enemy territory—the first such continuously flown sorties since World War II.

Another aircraft change was in the works for the Wing in the early years of the new century. With a high operations tempo and a C-141B phase-out in progress that eventually inactivated two squadrons--the 18 AS and the 13 AS in 1995 and 2001 respectively--all in anticipation of the phase-out of the C-141B in September 2004, McGuire began building more than \$80B in C-17 support facilities in 2002. In September, 2004, the 305 AMW had the honor of being the last active duty C-141B wing. In its place, the C-17A Globemaster III took over the wing's primary airlift mission.



Roll out of “The Spirit of New Jersey” 2004. The first dedicated C-17 at McGuire. (USAF Photo)

The C-17 redefined the term “strategic.” The C-17A had limitless range with in-flight refueling like the C-141B, but it could land on unimproved airstrips throughout the world. With the anti-infrared missile technology in its LAIRCM tail package, along with additional armor and assault tactics honed at the specially designed training strip at Lakehurst, the 305 AMW's C-17 ranged throughout the combat theater. After the 305 AMW and 514 AMW completed the first-ever operational KC-10 OPLAN 8044 operational readiness inspection in July 2007, the 6 Airlift Squadron “Bully Beef Express” which is also the oldest airlift squadron in the Air Force, became the first C-17 unit to deploy wholesale to the AOR in 2007-2008. Not since the Korean War had this proud squadron deployed as an entire unit. While downrange, the squadron flew over 6000 combat hours and safely accomplished over 4500 sorties. The 2nd Air Refueling Squadron traces its lineage back to 1915 in San Diego, when it organized as the 2nd Aero Squadron and assigned to the Philippine Department in 1916. After years of dedicated and heroic service, the 2nd became

part of the 305th Operations Group in 1995. The 32nd similarly activated in 1917 and served valiantly in every American war of the 20th century. The wing added to its busy responsibilities by taking on the “Red Ball Express” (named in honor of the World War II heroic resupply of advancing allied armies in France, 1944) to resupply Afghanistan from Charleston AFB, SC. The wing continued to deploy its personnel and equipment to Southwest Asia, including the commanders of its aerial refueling squadrons. The operational pace of McGuire and its mission remained virtually unsurpassed.

Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

Legislation from a November 2005 BRAC committee that mandated the creation of “joint bases” across the country saw McGuire AFB consolidate with Ft. Dix and Lakehurst Naval Air Station to form Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. On 3 March 2009, the 305 AMW, Host Wing since October 1994, turned over the reins to the newly activated 87th Air Base Wing which assumed installation command and began providing installation management support for all of the mission partners and tenant units. The new installation became fully operational 1 October 2009. At that time, the 305th Air Mobility Wing became the “Mission Wing” with two groups assigned—Maintenance and Operations—which allowed the Wing to focus on its mission of combat readiness. The Maintenance Group consisted of the Aerial Port Squadron, the 305th Maintenance Squadron, and the 305th and 605th Aircraft Maintenance Squadrons—which dated back to WWII as well. The 2nd and the 32nd Air Refueling Squadrons, the 6th Airlift Squadron, and the 305th Operations Support Squadron composed the 305th Operations Group.

Not So Steady State...and New Challenges

In recent years the 305 AMW has remained engaged with missions in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and numerous humanitarian assignments. In 2012, the wing spearheaded the military response to Hurricane Sandy, as New Jersey’s single staging airfield for aerial emergency management. When President Barack Obama pledged American support to stop Ebola outbreaks in West Africa, the 305 AMW provided the first airlift missions to deliver 621st Contingency Response Wing port opening teams. After the initial beddown in Monrovia, Liberia, 305 Aerial Port Squadron members continued Joint Task Force Port Opening operations to make Operation UNITED ASSISTANCE a success. Unrest in Syria and Iraq, primarily instigated by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), led the United States to form a coalition to disrupt and destroy the terrorist group. Operation INHERENT RESOLVE began in September 2014 to loosen ISIL control in Syria. Members of the 2d Air Refueling Squadron and 32d Air Refueling Squadron refueled the first fighter aircraft committed to combat operations over ISIL held territory. Tanker rotations to the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) were a regular part of life in the 305th through the second decade of the 21st Century with fluctuating requirements based

on emerging requirements. Likewise, the 6 Airlift Squadron, “The Bully Beef Express,” remained busy supporting its various world-wide transport missions, deployed taskings of personnel to CENTCOM and BANNER BRAVO presidential support missions. With JB MDL’s proximity to the National Capitol Region (NCR), the Bully Beef was heavily tasked to support these high visibility missions especially as the single airlift squadron in this location!

The year 2020 saw the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing crisis which took the nation and the world by surprise. The Airmen of the 305 AMW responded to the “new abnormal” brought about by the virus and the conditions of “social distancing” and distributed operations in stride. The maintenance of the wing’s mission to “generate-fly-deliver” remained of paramount importance in the minds of the unit’s leadership from the declaration of the national emergency on 13 March through the end of that year with the promise of vaccinations becoming available. From mission and maintenance readiness of the aircrew and aircraft to the maintenance of the health of the Airmen on the front lines of the pandemic, from the flyers to the “Port Dawgs” responsible for screening Joint Task Force – Civil Support (JTF-CS) personnel and staging cargo to the Joint Operations Area (JOA) by New York City, the CAN DO Wing kept true to its motto and persevered through this time of crisis. Vaccination of all members, civilian and military alike, was the priority for the command through much of the following year.

Meanwhile, the anticipated topic of major importance for the wing during 2021 was the arrival of the first Boeing KC-46A Pegasus scheduled for the fall. From the very start of the year, the 305 AMW prepared the wing for the arrival of the first jet and from his first interview, Colonel Scott M. Wiederholt, the 305 AMW commander, termed 2021 as “The Year of the KC-46.” It was the topic that most concerned the wing after the execution of its “generate – fly – deliver” mission. This was the case until 13 August 2021 when the rapid (and unanticipated) decline of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan took center stage in the world’s, the nation’s and the CAN DO Wing’s attention. After President Joe Biden declared U.S. intentions to withdraw the U.S. from that South Asian nation in April, the rapid advance of the Taliban on Kabul and the departure of the Afghan government on 15 August set the scene for the largest air evacuation since the fall of Saigon in April 1975 at the end of the Vietnam War in what became known as Operation ALLIES REFUGE (OAR). Overnight, the importance of rapid global mobility, and the efforts of CAN DO aircrew and maintainers in particular, took on prime importance in American affairs and dominated international media attention. During OAR from 13-31 August, the CAN DO Wing flew over 277 hours in support of the withdrawal, transported 3,278 vulnerable Afghans out of Kabul and lifted 2.2 million pounds of cargo via C-17 alone. Highlighting this “swan song” for the well-liked KC-10 in its ongoing retirement, the Extenders transported 3,329 passengers and offloaded 120 thousand pounds of fuel during the operation while 79 maintainers deployed to support in-theater staging operations and the Aerial Port

processed 155.7 tons of cargo. Shortly thereafter and pivoting back the 305th and JB MDL partners welcomed its first KC-46 to the base on 9 November 2021, “Pudgy 01,” to great fanfare and attention by area politicians, military and civilian leaders.



Left: An Afghan child wrapped in the OCP Blouse of A1C Nicolas Baron, 6 AS, aboard “REACH 871,” 15 Aug 2021. (Courtesy Photo by 1st Lt Mark Lawson) Right: “Pudgy 01” JB MDL’s first KC-46 lands at McGuire on 9 Nov 2021. (USAF Photo)

During OAR, today’s 305 AMW Airmen wrote the next chapter in the storied legacy of this proud unit. As such, they stood alongside their forbearers from the 305 Bomb Group of World War II, to the Military Air Transport Service (MATS) of the Berlin Airlift from 1948-49, and the Military Airlift Command (MAC) of Operation FREQUENT WIND from Vietnam in 1975 in generating, flying and delivering hope and aid when the nation needed it most. CAN DO!

305th LINEAGE:

Established as 305 Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 28 Jan 1942. Activated on 1 Mar 1942.
Redesignated 305 Bombardment Group, Heavy, on 20 Aug 1943. Inactivated on 25 Dec 1946.
Redesignated 305 Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, on 11 Jun 1947. Activated on 1 Jul 1947.
Inactivated on 6 Sep 1948.
Established, 305th Bombardment Wing, Medium, on 20 Dec 1950, activated on 2 Jan 1951.
Redesignated 305th Air Refueling Wing, 1 Jan 1970.
Redesignated 305th Air Refueling Wing, Heavy, on 1 Feb 1978.
Redesignated 305th Air Refueling Wing on 1 Sep 1991.
Redesignated 305th Air Mobility Wing on 1 Oct 1994.

STATIONS:

Salt Lake City AAB, UT, 1 Mar 1942.
Geiger Field, WA, 11 Jun 1942.

Muroc, CA, 4 Jul 1942.
Fort Dix, NJ, 29 Aug-4 Sep 1942.
Grafton Underwood, England, 13 Sep 1942.
Chelveston, England, 11 Dec 1942.
St Trond, Belgium, 25 Jul 1945.
Lechfield, Germany, 19 Dec 1945-25 Dec 1946.
Andrews Field (later, AFB), MD, 1 Jul 1947-6 Sep 1948.
MacDill AFB, Florida, 2 Jan 1951;
Bunker Hill (later, Grissom) AFB, Indiana, 1 Jun 1959.
McGuire AFB, New Jersey, 1 Oct 1994 - present.

AIRCRAFT :

B-17E/F/G Flying Fortress, 1942-1946
B-18 Bolo, 1942
B-24D Liberator, 1942
B-29 "Superfortress," 1951 - 1953
KC-97E/G "Stratofreighter," 1951 - 1959
B-47B/E "Stratojet", 1952 - 1961; RB-47, 1958
KC-135A/RT/R "Stratotanker," 1959 - 1993
B/TB-58 "Hustler," 1961 - 1970
EC-135, 1966 - 1992
C-141B "Starlifter," 1 Oct 1994 - Sep 2004
C-12 "Huron," Nov 1994 - Sep 1996
KC-10A "Extender," 1 Oct 1994 - present
C-17A "Globemaster III" 24 Sep 2004 - present
KC-46A "Pegasus" 9 Nov 2021 - present

COMMANDERS:

Capt John H. deRussy, 1 Mar 1942 (int)	25 Dec 1946, inactivated
Lt Col Ernest H. Lawson, 1 Apr 1942 (int)	Col Elliott Vandevanter, Jr., 2 Jan 1951
Lt Col Fay R. Upthegrove, 27 May 1942 (int)	Col James F. Wilson, 17 Jul 1954
Col Curtis E. LeMay, 3 Jun 1942	Col Frank A. Kurtz, 14 Feb 1956
Lt Col Donald K. Fargo, 18 May 1943	Col Julian M. Bleyer, 27 Jun 1956
Lt Col Thomas K. McGehee, Oct 1943 (int)	Col Frank L. O'Brien, Jr., 24 Feb 1958
Lt Col Delmar E. Wilson, Oct 1943	Brig Gen Paul K. Carlton, 18 Nov 1963
Col Ernest H. Lawson, Nov 1943 (KIA 6-18-44)	Brig Gen Gerald W. Johnson, 1 Jul 1965
Lt Col William E. Sault, 18 Jun 44 (int)	Col Howard J. Fry, 1 Jul 1966
Col Anthony Q. Mustoe, 22 Jun 44	Col Frank L. Voightmann, 28 Jul 1967
Col Henry G. McDonald, 23 Oct 44	Col Hugh B. Robertson, Jr., 15 Jul 1968
Lt Col James M. Graybeal, 2 May 1945	Col William T. Gentry, 9 Feb 1970
Lt Col James D. Motyl, 17 Jun 1945	Col George L. Miller, 5 Jun 1972
Col Henry G. MacDonald, 24 Jun 1945	Col Walter B. Ratliff, 20 Jun 1974
Col Paul L. Barton, 22 Apr 1946	Col Jerome R. Barnes, Jr., 11 Feb 1975
Lt Col James D. Motyl, 29 Sep 1946	Col Lyman E. Buzard, 14 May 1976
Col George M. Palmer, 2 Oct 1946	Col Donald K. Winston, 5 Aug 1977

Col Richard S. Wallace, 6 Apr 1979
Col Lawrence F. McNeil, 26 Feb 1981
Col John R. Farrington, 1 Jun 1982
Col Norman R. Butler, 5 Oct 1984
Col Howard L. Kravetz, 5 Feb 1985
Col Gary R. Ebert, 15 Jan 1987
Col Robert G. Stampfli, 8 Feb 1988
Col Russell W. Fitch, Jr., 22 Jun 1989
Col Russell A. Rinklin, Jr., 22 Jan 1991
Col Marc L. Drinkhahn, 31 May 1992
Col Irving W. Boswell, 24 Jun 1994
Brig Gen George W. Gray, III, 1 Oct 1994
Gen Stephen R. Lorenz, 16 Dec 1994
Maj Gen Craig P. Rasmussen, 12 Aug 1996

Maj Gen John D. Becker, 29 Jun 1998
Maj Gen Richard A. Mentemeyer, 24 May 1999
Maj Gen Teresa M. Peterson, 6 Mar 2002
Brig Gen Jimmie C. Jackson, Jr 15 Jul 2003
Maj Gen Frederick H. "Rick" Martin, 4 Oct 2005
Brig Gen Balan R. Ayyar, 2 Oct 2007
Maj Gen Scott F. Smith, 3 Mar 2009
Col Paul R. Murphy, 2 Sep 2010
Col Richard E. "Rick" Williamson, 20 Jul 2012
Col John F. Price Jr, 11 Jul 2014
Brig Gen Darren R. Cole, 7 Jul 2016
Col Jacqueline D. Breeden, 15 Jun 2018
Col Scott M. Wiederholt, 10 Jul 2020
Col Elizabeth A.D. Hanson, 14 Jul 2022