

# 12<sup>th</sup> AIR SERVICE GROUP



## LINEAGE

## STATIONS

## ASSIGNMENTS

## COMMANDERS

## HONORS

### Service Streamers

### Campaign Streamers

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

## Decorations

## EMBLEM

## EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

## MOTTO

## NICKNAME

## OPERATIONS

12th Air Service Group (Old Type)

Lineage: Organized as 81 Aero (Service) Squadron on 6 Mar 18. Redesignated Squadron D at Post Field, OK on 22 Jul 18. Consolidated with other post field squadrons on 2 Jan 19 to form Flying School Detachment, Post Field, OK. Detachment demobilized on 22 Sep 19.

81 Aero (Service) Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 12 Air Base Squadron (organized 1 Mar 35) at Kelly Field, TX as 81 Service Squadron.

Redesignated 12 Air Base Squadron on 1 Sep 36. Designated 12 Air Base Squadron (Special) on 1 Sep 40. Redesignated 12 Air Base Group (Special) in 1940. Departed Kelly Field on 6 Jan 43 and arrived Santa Maria, CA on 9 Jan 43. Personnel engaged in first phase training at Santa Maria. Departed Santa Maria for Biggs Field, TX in Jun 43. Group commander was Maj Charles Z. Ridgeway. Maj Ridgeway replaced by Lt Col Floyd M. Lindley on 25 Jul 43. Departed Biggs Field on 11 Aug 43 for Air Depot Training Station, Albuquerque AAB, NM. Lt Col Lindley replaced by Maj Hugh Lowery on 17 Sep 43. Two hundred personnel left for training at Santa Fe, NM on 5 Sep 43, returning on 17 Sep 43. Maj Lowery replaced by Lt Col Robert J. Koshland. Mobile units of group sent to Kirtland Field, NM on 16 Oct 43 for final training before shipment overseas. Group departed for Camp Anza, Riverside, CA on 26 Oct 43. Group embarked for foreign service on 9 Nov 43.

Arrived Bombay, India 26 Dec 43. On 15 Jan 44 part of group left for China. First casualties suffered during air travel to China with disappearance of aircraft.

Arrived Kweilin, China 17 Jan 44. Enemy made ten raids on group at Kweilin from Mar through Sep. On 7 Sep 44, began evacuation of Kweilin for bases in western China. Arrived Luliang, China 13 Sep 44. Attached to Sector Number 1, China Air Service Area Command on 20 Nov 44. Group assumed command of 12 Service Center 16 Feb 45. Redesignated 12 Air Service Group 23 Feb 45. Group relocated from Luliang to Chanyi, 24 Feb 45. Group exchanged some areas of responsibility with 14 Air Service Group. New areas included air bases at Peishiyi, Liangshan, Lifing, Aankang, and Enshih (possibly also detached service on bases at Hengyang, Chickiang, Chanyi, Ankang, Luichow, Nanning and Tanchuck). Group moved to Hankow, China on 8 Oct 45. Personnel continued to depart for United States via replacement service. On 20 Oct 45, group relieved from 10 Air Force and became part of China Air Service Command. Received word on 25 Oct that Group would become surplus unit in theater on 1 Nov 45.

*The first contingents of the 12th Air Service Group arrived in the China Theater in January 1944. By the time all the components had arrived, the 12th included the headquarters squadron, the 1066th Quartermaster Company, the 1102nd Signal Company, the 2124th Quartermaster Truck Company, the 1835th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, and 397th Air Service Squadron.*

*Robert Koshland commanded the 12th A.S.G. from the time it left the States until February 1945 when his second in command, Robert Wise, replaced him. Wise was later replaced by Maurice Hollman, and the last officer to command the several units was Neil Maurer who came home with the men on board the "Adabelle Lykes" which sailed out of Shanghai on November 17, 1945.*

*The first air service group in China was the 54th. This squadron grew out of the needs of the American Volunteer Group and later the China Air Task Force. It was absorbed by the 12th early in 1944.*

*The 12th A.S.G. was responsible for the maintenance of all aircraft of the 14th Air Force, for provisions and supplies to feed and house all 14th Air Force personnel. Its area of responsibility took in everything east of Kweilin to the China coast south of Hankow and Shanghai. Chinese-*

*American Composite Wing units and elements of the 69th Composite Wing, based in Yunnan province, were also serviced by the 12th whenever their aircraft staged off Liuchow and Nanning.*

*ALL FOUR commanding officers of the 12th were on hand at the dock in Shanghai when the group returned to the United States in November 1945. Col. Robert J. Koshland (second from right) who took the unit overseas, is shown extending best wishes to Lt. Col. (then Major) Neil L. Maurer, who brought it home. Looking on are Col. R. H. Wise (left) and Lt. Col. Maurice J. Hollman.*

*The head shed of the 12th was at Yang Tang air base, located a short distance west of the city of Kweilin. (Erh Tang air base lay a short distance east of Kweilin.)*

*Partial evacuation of the Yang Tang base began on June 23, 1944 when enemy forces occupied Lingling and were threatening Kweilin. Units of the 12th A.S.G. came under constant attack from Japanese aircraft, especially in night raids, which kept the men in their caves and slit trenches night after night whenever there was moonlight. The final evacuation of Kweilin for the 12th began on September 14th and the last group left Liuchow on November 8, 1944.*

*Men and equipment were moved by air, by riverboat, by truck and by rail west to Luliang and Yangkai in Yunnan province. In February 1945, the headquarters squadron moved from Luliang to Chanyi, and in March to Peishiyi to service the Chinese-American Composite Wing. From July to October 1945, the 12th was based, in part, at Chihchiang and after the war, these units moved to Hankow, and finally down river to Shanghai for the long-awaited trip home.*

*Three other units, the 369th Service Squadron, the 1836th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, and the 2459th Quartermaster Truck Company, which had remained behind at Liangshan (northeast of Chengtu), was returned to India for shipping out of Calcutta.*

*On November 15, 1945, as remaining units of the 12th Air Service Group prepared to leave China, the Shanghai Evening Post & Mercury carried an article briefly outlining the group's China history. We reprint it as it appeared, and with it present a number of pictures submitted by members of the group.*

*Members of the 12th Air Service Group, the first to arrive in China, are packing up this week to sail home on the Adabelle Lykes.*

*Just two years and two days from the time they left the states, GIs of the 12th were flown down from their base at Hankow and started through the processing center at the China Theater Replacement Service. The 374 enlisted men and 16 officers remaining of the old 12th will go up the gangplank Friday. Sailing date is Saturday.*

*Those leaving on the Adabelle from the 12th are members of the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 1066 Quartermaster Company, 1102 Signal Company, 2124 Quartermaster Truck Company, and the 1835th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company.*

*The 397th Air Service Squadron, its high point men replaced by low point men, is being retained at the Shanghai Air Depot for a few weeks to complete an assignment.*

*GOING HOME, men of the 12th line the rail of the S. S. Adabelle Lykes.*

*ALL FOUR commanding officers of the 12th were on hand at the dock in Shanghai when the group returned to the United States in November 1945. Col. Robert J. Koshland (second from right) who took the unit overseas, is shown extending best wishes to Lt. Col. (then Major) Neil L. Maurer, who brought it home. Looking on are Col. R. H. Wise (left) and Lt. Col. Maurice J. Hollman.*

*ON HAND to see the 12th off from Shanghai on the return voyage in November 1945 were Lt. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer, theater commander, and Col. Clarence Talbot, shown here as they left the ship.*

*Maj. Neil L. Maurer, who recently replaced Lt. Col. Maurice J. Hollman as C.O., will return with the group. Colonel Hollman is remaining in China to serve with the Liaison Mission.*

*On hand to assist in the processing of the organization was Col. Robert J. Koshland, Commanding Officer of the unit from the time it left the states until last February when Ccl. R. H. Wise assumed command. Colonel Koshland, Asistant Chief of Staff, Administration, at Headquarters China Air Service Command, added a sentimental interest to his official chores as his department worked over the records of the men going home.*

*The 12th's first days in China date back to the time when seven C-46 transport planes was a lot of planes, supply lines were shoestrings, and the men were expected to do a lot with a little. Those were the days of improvisation.*

*The men started corning over the Hump in January of 1944 and completed the move in February after which the second eldest service group, the 68th, flew in from Chabua, India. The 54th Air Service Squadron, which had been here since the days of the American Volunteer Group, was absorbed by the 68th.*

*TIRED members of the 12th, enroute home, sleep on deck of the SS Adabelle Lykes.*

*ROADSIDE SERVICE is conducted in China by Capt. James Kelly, 12th Air Service Group chaplain.*

*As its service center area, the 12th was given the responsibilty for the maintenance of all aircraft of the Air Forces and provision of all supplies, east of the 108th Meridian and south of the Yangtze, with headquarters at Yang Tong field, Kweilin. Sector commanding officer at the time was Colonel Wise; Colonel Kashland was Group Commanding Officer. Lt. Col. Albert J. Binsfield, now at Hq. AAFGT, was executive officer.*

*The job of the 12th was to serve all units of the 68th Composite Wing and the forward echelon of the 14th Air Force in that area. The 12th went so far as to service the Chinese-American Composite Wing, as well as units of the 69th Composite Wing at Liuchow and Nanning.*

*Units of the 12th were all over China, repairing and maintaining Army Air Forces planes. Its personnel were included in that group of American soldiers who did vital jobs without accompanying glamor and publicity. Theirs was a sordid, dirty, thankless job. They went about their work at bases like Suichwan, Hengyang, Lingling, Chihkiang, Liuchow, Nanning, and were often subjected to aerial bombings. Such was the possibility of paratroop attacks that an extensive group defense system to cover that potential threat had to be set up.*

*When the Japs began moving south threatening the Kweilin headquarters, the partial evacuation of Kweilin began on June 23, 1944. Some of the 12th A.S.G. men left by rail, motor and air for Luliang, Yangkai and Chengkung. The 12th continued to operate, however, with reduced personnel. During the time the entire group was in East China the Japs made many raids and caused much additional loss of sleep through air threats which alerted all persons.*

*The Group will find it difficult to forget the 17 consecutive nights spent in caves in the hills surrounding Yang Tong Field. Finally being forced to evacuate on September 14, they reopened operations at Luliang and Yangkai. The sizable detachment still at Liuchow was evacuated November 8.*

*The 12th continued to service the 14th Air Force, particularly the 68th Composite Wing, from its new location at Luliang. It reached out to lend support to squadrons of the 341st Medium Bombardment Group of the 69th Composite Wing stationed at Yangkai.*

*Because its men got to see more of China than any other outfit, the 12th has often been referred to as the luckiest group in China. In February 1945, headquarters was moved from Luliang to Chanyi, and then on March 31 to Peishiyi to service the Chinese-American Composite Wing. Chihkiang was designated as its headquarters from July until October when it was moved to Hankow. Its work at Hankow consisted of servicing troop carrier outfits of the 10th Air Force in the movement of Chinese troops to Peking. Then, their work done, the men were flown to Shanghai on November 12 for processing and departure stateside.*

*Three other units, the 396th Service Squadron, the 1836th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Co., and the 2459th Quartermaster Truck Co., which had remained at Liangshan, have been flown back over the Hump for departure from India within the past week.*

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Air Force Order of Battle  
Created: 23 May 2013  
Updated:

Sources

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