

40 HELICOPTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

40 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron constituted and activated, 21 Mar 1968
Organized, 18 Mar 1968
Inactivated, 31 Jan 1976
Activated, 1 Jul 1978
Inactivated, 31 Dec 1987
Redesignated 40 Rescue Flight, 1 Apr 1993
Activated, 1 May 1993
Redesignated 40 Helicopter Flight, 1 May 1998
Redesignated 40 Helicopter Squadron, 11 Oct 2005

STATIONS

Udon Afd (later, Udon RTAFB), Thailand, 18 Mar 1968
Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand, 28 Jul 1971
Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 15 Sep 1975-31 Jan 1976
Hill AFB, UT, 1 Jul 1978-31 Dec 1987
Malmstrom AFB, MT, 1 May 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

3 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, 18 Mar 1968
41 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery (later, 41 Rescue and Weather Reconnaissance) Wing, 20 Aug 1972-31 Jan 1976
39 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing, 1 Jul 1978-31 Dec 1987
341 Operations Group, 1 May 1993

WEAPON SYSTEMS

HH-3, 1968-1970
HH-53, 1968-1976
HH-43, 1971-1975
HC-130, 1975-1976
UH-1, 1978-1987
UH-1, 1993
HH-53C

COMMANDERS

Lt Col James M. Dixon, 18 Mar 1968
Lt Col Chester R. Ratcliffe Jr., Aug 1968
Col Charles R. Campbell, 21 Jul 1969
Lt Col Edward S. Modica, 10 Jun 1970
Lt Col Ervin F. Rees, 8 Feb 1971
Lt Col Phillip R. Gonzales, 15 Apr 1971
Lt Col John H. I. Morse, 25 Jun 1971
Lt Col William E. Moore, 11 Sep 1971
Lt Col Phillip R. Gonzales, 21 Dec 1971
Lt Col Clifford E. Brandon, 7 Mar 1972
Lt Col Hubert M. Berthold, Dec 1972
Lt Col Ned G. Duffield, 9 Apr 1973
Lt Col Hubert M. Berthold, 7 May 1973
Lt Col Herbert R. Zehnder, 7 Sep 1973
Maj Ralph K. Gee, 4 Oct 1973
Lt Col Herbert R. Zehnder, 16 Oct 1973
Lt Col Norman B. Kamhoot, 10 Nov 1973
Maj Laurence W. Burnett, 26 Feb 1974
Lt Col Norman B. Kamhoot, 9 Mar 1974
Lt Col Joseph P. McMonigle, 18 Oct 1974
Maj Gordon L. Hall, 8 Dec 1974
Lt Col Joseph P. McMonigle, 2 Jan 1975
Lt Col Eldon D. Woodward, 9 Jul 1975
Lt Col Walter L. Lindsey, 1 Oct 1975-31 Jan 1976
Lt Col Fredrik M. Bergold, 1 Jul 1978
Lt Col Peter J. Connelly, 1 May 1979
Lt Col William F. Austin, 4 Dec 1980
Lt Col Carl E. Anderson, 16 Nov 1980
Lt Col Kenneth M. Lewis, 7 Jan 1985-31 Dec 1987
Unkn, 1 May 1993
Maj Michael B. Compton, 1994
Maj William R. Snow, 20 Oct 1995-unkn
Maj Curtis Kong, 4 Aug 1999
Maj Roger A. Dellinger, 1 Jun 2000
Maj Robert T. Wickum, 2 Jun 2004

Maj Lee D. Newton, 2 Jun 2006
Lt Col William B. Thomas, 29 Jun 2006
Lt Col Timothy A. Zacharias, 25 Jun 2008

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Vietnam
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
Tet 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1969-1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Commando Hunt VI
Commando Hunt VII
Vietnam Cease-Fire

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
[18 Mar 1968]-31 Jan 1969
1 Feb 1969-30 Apr 1970
1 May 1970-31 Mar 1972
1 Apr 1972-27 Jan 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

24 Jan-2 May 1975
2 Jul 1986-31 Dec 1987
[1 May]-31 Aug 1993
1 Sep 1994-31 Aug 1995
1 Oct 1995-30 Sep 1996
1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1999
1 Oct 2002-30 Sep 2003
1 Jan-31 Dec 2003
1 Oct 2002-30 Sep 2004
1 Oct 2006-30 Sep 2008
1 Oct 2008-30 Sep 2009

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/Palm
18 Mar 1968-28 Jan 1973

EMBLEM



40 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron emblem: The emblem is symbolic of the unit and the Air Force colors, ultramarine blue and golden yellow, are used in the design. The color blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations, and yellow to the sun and excellence of personnel in assigned tasks. The gridlined globe symbolizes the entire scope of coverage in which the unit can be employed and also to the Military Airlift Command emblem. The hand depicts the helping hand, which will be extended to those in need of assistance and the wings denote the speed with which that aid will be rendered. **SIGNIFICANCE:** On a medium blue disc with a narrow yellow border, issuing from sinister base a gray arm and hand, winged yellow at the wrist, grasping a blue sphere with axis bendwise, rimmed and gridlined yellow. Attached above the disc a blank white scroll edged yellow. Attached below the disc a white scroll edged yellow and inscribed ' "Wherever the Need" ' in medium blue letters.



40 Helicopter Flight emblem: On a disc Azure, an ear of wheat bendwise stem to base Or, a sword saltirewise point to chief blade Argent, hafted Sable, overall a helicopter rotor blade palewise of the like, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "DETER DETECT DEFEND" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "40 HELICOPTER FLIGHT"

in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The wheat symbolizes the fields of Montana and the Great Plains, the unit's primary area of responsibility. The sword indicates strength, honor and determination and the forward edge of airborne security. The helicopter rotor blade signifies the primary aircraft of the unit. (Approved, 10 Jul 2003)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Search and rescue operations during the war in Vietnam.

On Christmas Eve, 1968, an F-105, call sign "Panda 01", was shot down over Laos between the city of Ban Phaphilang and the Ban Karai Pass. Its pilot, Major Charles R. Brownlee, successfully ejected and his parachute drifted into an area known to be occupied by enemy troops. These troops had in the past aggressively pursued downed pilots and contested SAR efforts. Two HH-3E's, Jolly Green's 15 and 17, on airborne alert immediately proceeded to the incident site. Upon arrival, the Sandy's placed them in a high orbit. The on-scene commander discovered a parachute in the trees. Numerous attempts were made to raise Major Brownlee on his survival radio. It was late in the day and darkness quickly covered the jungle. There was no survival radio contact from Major Brownlee. The rescue helicopters did not have a night combat rescue capability and were ordered to return to NKP.

A first light SAR was organized to return to the area on Christmas Day. The crew of Jolly low were all volunteers: Major Reinhart, aircraft commander, Captain Gibson, co-pilot, Sergeant Gallagher, flight engineer, and A1C Charles D. King, pararescueman. Once again the Jolly's were placed in a high orbit and the Sandy's began trolling for ground fire. Enemy troops did not take the bait. Not drawing any ground fire Sandy lead told Jolly low to attempt a pickup. As the helicopter came into a hover over the parachute, Sergeant Gallagher saw a man hanging from the parachute by his harness. The man was not moving and was hanging only a couple of feet off the ground. Sergeant King volunteered to descend on the forest penetrator to rescue the downed pilot. Major Reinhart was not thrilled about the idea of lowering his PJ to the ground, but realized that it was the only way to rescue Major Brownlee. Just as Doug King reached the ground, enemy troops began firing, first at the helicopter and then at the men on the ground. King freed Major Brownlee from his parachute and secured him to the penetrator. He signaled Sergeant Gallagher to reel them up.

Only a few feet off the ground, Doug King called on the radio, "I'm hit, I'm hit, pull up, pull up." Normally, the men on the penetrator would be hoisted clear of the trees prior to the rescue helicopter resuming forward flight. But enemy troops were hosing the helicopter with effective small arms fire. Staying in the hover until the two men cleared the tree tops would certainly result in the helicopter being shot down, crashing right on top of Major Brownlee and Airman King. Out of options and seriously battle damaged, Major Reinhart was forced to leave the stable hover. To optimize the chances of the men on the penetrator, he elected to ascend straight up. He hoped that this maneuver would lift the two men clear of the trees, prior to instituting forward flight. As the helicopter moved up, the hoist cable or the forest penetrator caught on a

tree and the hoist cable snapped, dropping King and Brownlee about 10 feet to the ground. Badly injured from the fall and wounded by enemy small arms fire Airman King made one last radio call, "Jolly, get out of here, they're almost on top of me."

The seriously damaged helicopter was forced off the scene due to the intense ground fire. Enemy troops swarmed over Major Brownlee and Airman King. The Sandy's could not fire on the enemy because they would hit their own men.

Two days of searching and numerous radio calls from air rescue aircraft to Airman King went unanswered. He was declared missing in action and later promoted in sequence with other MIA's to Chief Master Sergeant. He was never heard from again. Sergeant Charles Douglas King was officially declared killed in action on 5 December 1978. He was awarded the Air Force Cross posthumously. King was also awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal and Purple Heart for earlier rescue missions he participated in.

No news surfaced about King or Brownlee until February 1986, when a Lao refugee came to the United States and reported that he had witnessed King's capture, and watched as he was taken away in a truck. The refugee's story matched most details of King's loss incident. Less clear were the details of Brownlee's fate.

In 1993 US officials were allowed into the Central Army Museum in Hanoi, where personal items from American casualties were kept. They found an identification card with Charles Douglas King's name, service number and date of birth. A North Vietnamese witness was found who stated "a pilot was pulling up another pilot to the helicopter when the cable broke. Both pilots died."

HH-53B 66-14430: Combat loss, 18 Jan 1969, 40 ARRS, Udorn RTAB, no fatalities. Call sign JOLLY GREEN 67, mission was SAR for SANDY 02, an A-1H pilot who was shot down on 17 January. The helo was recovering Lt Col Morris when the aircraft was hit by ground fire, lost its hydraulic system (SAR log reports first stage servo) and made an emergency landing at 1245G, nine miles southeast of Tchephone Laos. At 1251G, JG-70 landed and picked up everyone on board JG-67 as well as the survivor. At 1300G, the order was given for fast movers to destroy JG-67; at 1508G the SAR log reads "RUSTIC flight got a good hit on JG-67 – it's burning - lots of green backs going up in flames."

On 05 Dec 1969 two F-4C Phantoms from the 558th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Cam Ranh Bay were tasked against a choke point on the Ho Chi Minh Trail near Ban Phanop in southern Laos. The wing position was flown by Capt Benjamin F. Danielson, pilot, and 1stLt Woodrow J. Bergeron, navigator, in F-4C tail number 63-7444 using the call sign "Boxer 22".

As Boxer 22 was passing through 6000 feet while pulling off after its first attack the F-4 was hit by 37mm anti-aircraft fire. Danielson turned toward South Vietnam but lost aircraft control and the crew was forced to eject a few miles east of the target. Both men reached ground safely but were several hundred yards apart and on opposite sides of a river. Worse yet, they landed in an area heavily populated by well-armed and unfriendly NVA troops. The only good news was that Danielson and Bergeron could communicate with each other and with supporting aircraft using their survival radios.

SAR efforts began at once but the rescue helicopters found themselves flying into a virtual storm of fire. At least 7 helicopters from Nakhon Phanom and Udorn made rescue attempts, and all

were shot up with one crewman killed in action: A1C David M. Davison, 40 ARRS, in HH-53C tail number 68-8283. A total of 88 SAR sorties were flown before sundown on the 5th, but to no avail.

The SAR forces returned at first light on the 6th, with fixed-wing aircraft hosing down the area in an attempt to suppress the ground fire. During the morning hours Bergeron advised that he heard shouts and gunfire from the area where Danielson was hiding and that he'd not been able to contact Danielson since. Fixed-wing aircraft laid smoke screens for the helicopters, but repeated rescue efforts ended with shot-up helicopters and no success (one HH-53 got stuck in a tree and was able to break loose only by breaking the tree). A total of 154 sorties were flown on the 6th, but at sundown Bergeron still was on the ground. After sundown, Bergeron could hear NVA troops using dogs in an attempt to find him amongst the bamboo and tall grass in the river valley.

The SAR attempts began again at sunrise on the 7th with fixed-wing strikes on the NVA positions, but the first HH-53 in was driven off by ground fire. Following additional air strikes, another smoke tunnel was laid and an HH-53C was brought in, flanked by A-1 Skyraiders blasting away at everything in sight. Bergeron saw the approaching helicopter and broke cover, heading toward the river. The HH-53C crew spotted Bergeron, dropped a rescue hoist, and reeled him in.

The SAR effort extended over 51 hours and involved a total of 366 aircraft sorties. Although Bergeron's evidence indicated Captain Danielson had been located by the NVA and apparently killed in a shootout, there was no positive evidence of Danielson's death. He was carried as Missing in Action until 19 July 1976, when the Secretary of the Air Force approved a Presumptive Finding of Death.

PACOM Joint Personnel Accounting Command recently recovered partial remains of Captain Danielson, one of the downed pilots that A1C Davison and his crew mates were trying to rescue.

A1C David M. DAVISON, was killed while on a combat rescue mission. He was manning the rear gun of the HH-53C helicopter during the rescue attempt when he was hit by ground fire. The aircraft commander proceeded directly to Nakhon Phanom Airfield, Thailand, where Airman Davison was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

Tail No.: 66-14434 Model: HH-53B Date of Loss: 28 Jan 70

Country of Loss: NVN Call Sign: Jolly Green 71

Pilot: Holly G. Bell

Co-Pilot: Leonard C. Leeser

Flight Engineer: William C. Shinn

P.J.: William D. Pruett

P.J.: William C. Sutton

Gregory L. Anderson (Photographer)

Notes: hit by missile fired from MIG during SAR for SEABIRD 02 (F-105G). The Mig-21 was piloted by Vu Ngoc Dinh who then had 6 total kills.

Tail No.: 68-8283 Model: HH-53C Date of Loss: 30 Jun 70 Unit: 40 ARRS

Country of Loss: Laos Call Sign: Jolly Green 54

Pilot: Leroy C. Schaneberg

Co-Pilot: John W. Goeglein

Flight Engineer: Marvin E. Bell

P.J.: Paul L. Jenkins

P.J.: Michael F. Dean

Hit by ground fire during SAR for NAIL 44 (OV-10A), crash site excavated Dec 93, remains identified as a group 7 March 1995. Captain Leroy C. Schaneberg, 40 ARR Squadron, qualified for the Air Force Cross as a result of operations on 30 June 1970. Piloting an HH-53, Captain Schaneberg and his crew were attempting to rescue an OV-10 pilot who went down in Laos. Earlier attempts by H-3 aircraft from the 37th ARR Squadron had been unsuccessful. On Captain Schaneberg's second pass, he reported heavy ground fire, The aircraft went out of control and crashed about one-fourth mile from the OV-10 crash site. The OV-10 pilots were later picked up by an H-3, but there were no survivors from the HH-53 crash.

65-12785 HH-3E 21 Nov 70 40 ARRS NVN Banana 1 Herb Kalen Herb Zender Leroy Wright 14 man SF assault force Son Tay Raider, Crashed into compound

HH-53C 68-8285: Combat loss, 21 Jul 1971, 40 ARRS, Udorn RTAB, no fatalities; Son Tay Raid (Apple 4), Nov 1970; Shot down in a hover on a drone recovery mission north of the PDJ. Crew recovered by Air America H-1 and two H-34s. Destroyed by friendly forces once it was determined to be unrecoverable.

HH-53C 68-10359: Combat, 27 Mar 1972, 40 ARRS, Nakhon Phanom RTAB, all killed; Son Tay Raid (Apple 5), Nov 1970; Shot down on escort mission in Southern Laos and burned.

Country of Loss: Cambodia Call Sign: Jolly Green 61

Pilot: David E. Pannabecker (02W-120)

Co-Pilot: Richard E. Dreher (02W-119)

Jim Henthorn Page 24 12/20/2007 USAF Helicopter Crew Losses - Vietnam War

Flight Engineer: James Manor (02W-120)

P.J.: Raymond J. Crow, Jr. (02W-119)

P.J.: Raymond A. Wagner (02W-120)

Capt. Richard Dreher and Capt. David E. Pannabecker were assigned as escort pilots as part of a day rescue mission and departed NKP at 0830 on the morning of March 27, 1972. Dreher and Pannabecker's Super Jolly was the second aircraft in a flight of two. Aboard the aircraft was the pararescue team consisting of James Manor and Raymond A. Wagner. SGT Raymond J. Crow, Jr. was the helicopter crew chief. Following aerial refueling over southeastern Thailand, they departed the tanker to complete the mission, maintaining interplane communications on FM and UHF radios. The lead aircraft called a "tally ho" on the aircraft they were escorting. When the lead aircraft did not receive an answer, the pilot attempted to find him visually without success. After completing a 180 degree turn, the pilot of the lead aircraft reported sighting a column of black smoke coming from the dense jungle five miles away. Their position at this time was in Stoeng Treng Province, Cambodia, about 10 miles southeast of the city of Siempang. A pararescue specialist was lowered to the ground at the site of the crash to check for survivors, but due to the intense heat from the burning helicopter, he could not approach near enough to determine if there were crew members inside the aircraft. Some three hours later a second rescue specialist was deployed in the immediate area, who reported the wreckage was still burning, precluding

close inspection. It was never determined if any aboard the Super Jolly survived, but all aboard were declared Killed/Body Not Recovered.

30-31 Mar 1972 An AC-130, "Spectre 22," with 15 crewmen aboard was hit by enemy antiaircraft fire near Paksong, Laos, but all crewmen were able to hail out on the following day the 40 ARR Squadron sent out five HH-53s and brought back all 13 crewmen.

13 Apr 72 Captain Bennie D. Orrell earned the Air Force Cross as a result of a rescue mission in Southeast Asia. Following the enemy spring offensive through the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on 30 March, rescue activity increased dramatically. On 13 April the 40 ARR Squadron was tasked to find United States Marine Corps Major Clyde D. Smith who was down between Tchepone, Laos, and the DMZ. Captain Orrell, piloting an HH-53, approached the search area, and Major Smith "popped his smoke" to show his location. The smoke drifted uphill before it emerged from the trees. When Captain Orrell hovered at that spot, Major Smith made a "max effort" run uphill to the hoist. He grabbed it, but Captain Orrell encountered enemy fire and was forced to retract the hoist and didn't know Major Smith was there until the hoist cleared the trees.

1 Jun- 2 Jun 72 The 3d ARR Group, augmented by A-1s and other forces, rescued Captain Roger C. Locher, who had lost his F-4 over North Vietnam on 10 May and had evaded capture for 23 days. Captain Dale F. Stovall, 40 ARR Squadron, and his HH-53 crew successfully evacuated Captain Locher on 2 June.

21 Dec 72 The 40 ARR Squadron performed its first night combat recovery in Southeast Asia by an HH-53 using a new Night Recovery System.

HH-53C 69-5788: Combat, 27 Dec 1972, 40 ARRS, Nakhon Phanom RTAB, no fatalities; 1st helicopter trans-Pacific flight (wingman), 1970; Aircraft took round through probe and couldn't refuel, abandoned and destroyed by A-7 Sandy with napalm. Multiple hits in main and aux fuel tanks and engines. Copilot wounded.

68-10788 CH3 27 Dec 72 40 ARRS NVN Jolly Green 73 Richard D. Shapiro Miguel A. Pereira Charles J. Rouhier Robert W. Jones John R. Carlson Down in Laos, no names for crew, SAR for JACKEL 22, F-111A crew downed on 22 Dec 72 (both crew captured and released). USAF loss listing reads "Aircraft unable to take on fuel, lost due to fuel starvation, aircraft destroyed by A-7." SAR log entries indicate refueling probe shot up, last entry reads " JG73 hit at 2049N10534E (In NVN), in a hover, down at 1957N10347E (NE of Ban Ban), destroyed by SANDY six.

Tail No.: 68-10362 Model: HH-53C Date of Loss: 14 Jun 73 Unit: 40 ARRS

Country of Loss: Cambodia Call Sign: Jolly Green 64

Pilot: Gilbert A. Rovito

Co-Pilot: Francis E. Meador

Flight Engineer: David V. McLeod, Jr.

Logistics, 14 Jun 1973, 40 ARRS, Nakhon Phanom RTAB, 3 of 5 killed; Aircraft went out of control

in roll axis and crashed inverted into Lake Tonle-Sap, Cambodia - suspected primary servo hardover. Cambodia Jolly Green 64 Gilbert A. Rovito Francis E. Meador David V. McLeod, Jr Karl C. Morgan Stephen L. Caldwell Tail rotor lost, crashed into Tonle Sap
David V. McLeod was aboard an HH-53C helicopter when he became missing on June 14, 1973 in Northeastern Cambodia. It is not known what happened to the rest of the crew. Few American planes were shot down in Cambodia during this time frame. An F-4 piloted by Douglas Martin and with backseater Samuel James had been shot down April 18. An F-4 piloted by Samuel Cornelius with backseater John Smallwood was shot down June 16. These were the only Americans missing during the spring and summer of 1973 in Cambodia. In July 1973, a South Vietnamese agent reported talking to a refugee who had seen three Americans dressed in flight uniforms in captivity near Kompong Barey Hamlet in Prey Veng Province. (Remember that all events described are occurring AFTER the war with Vietnam "ended" and 591 American POWs were released from Vietnam.) The agent was able to make contact with a Communist cadre who said the three were airmen who had been downed in July 1973. The cadre went on to say that they were being taken to Loc Ninh (South Vietnam) to be held for exchange at a later date. No exchange ever occurred. It is assumed, since these three aircraft are the only ones missing in Cambodia that this report pertains to three of the five Americans involved. Nothing has been heard of the five since

12 Apr 75 Eagle Pull. Eight HH-53s and three HC-130s from the 40 and 56th ARR Squadrons, respectively, participated in Eagle Pull, the evacuation of United States personnel from Phnom Penh, Cambodia. One HH-53 inserted a combat control team prior to the evacuation and two HH-53s removed the last 15 military personnel from Phnom Penh following the completion of the evacuation. The Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) operated by the 3d ARR Group at Nakhon Phanom, exercised operational control of rescue forces. There were no ARRS injuries or casualties although two HH-53s incurred hits from small caliber ground fire

29 Apr 75 Frequent Wind Eight HH-53s and three HC-130s of the 40 and 56th Squadrons, respectively, participated in Frequent Wind, the evacuation of United States personnel from Saigon, Vietnam. Two of the HH-53s airlifted 362 evacuees from Saigon to the USS Midway. Both aircraft returned enemy ground fire. The HC-130s provided command and control communications and aerial refueling. The 3d ARR Group coordinated rescue operations. No ARRS personnel were injured.

The 40 ARRS received four HC-130P from the inactivated 56th ARRS on 15 Oct 75 and flew them until their own inactivation on 31 Jan 1976. The 40 ARRS performed search and rescue operations during the war in Vietnam. They participated in the evacuation of Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Saigon, South Vietnam, when those cities fell to communist forces in 1975. After hostile forces seized the American merchant ship Mayaguez that same year, they took part in an assault on Koh Tang Island, Cambodia.

31 Jan 76 The 3d ARR Group and the 40 ARR Squadron were inactivated in Thailand. These actions marked the termination of ARRS activities in Southeast Asia.

Rescue missions and exercises, 1978-1987 and 1993-.

The Fortieth Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron was activated at Hill Air Force Base as a tenant organization. The mission of the newly activated 40 ARRS was the maintenance of its combat rescue capabilities while supporting the Air Force Survival School at Fairchild AFB, Washington the test ranges at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, and Hill Air Force Base. The Nephi Navigational Aid Site at Nephi, Utah and the Montello Navigational Aid Site at Montello, Nevada.

Tasked with securing Minuteman III ICBMs, crews of the 40 Helicopter Squadron at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., have begun 24-hour alert operations with their UH-1N Hueys. This is part of a nine-month look into ways to diminish response times to threats across the vast missile fields that they protect. Officials will evaluate everything from effects on aircraft and crews to "manning requirements, safety factors . . . currency and proficiency implications, and basic overall tactical effectiveness," to develop best operational procedures, said Lt. Col. Carl Mullen, 40 HS director of operations. During the alert shifts, flight and maintenance crews eat, live, and sleep on site, ready to deploy a tactical response force on demand within minutes. For the second stage of this evaluation, helicopter crews at the Air Force's two other missile bases—Minot AFB, N.D., and F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.—will likewise begin alert.

6/23/2006 A UH-1N "Huey" crew from the 40 Helicopter Squadron recorded the unit's first night-save of 2006 when they rescued an injured woman near Canary Peak northwest of Gardner, Mont., Sunday. The woman, a 25-year-old U.S. Forest Services employee, broke her leg and back while doing a survey of Aspen trees in the area. A mercy-flight helicopter was called into the area to extract the victim but was unable to land because of the rough terrain. Unlike the 40 HS "Huey" helicopters, the mercy-flight aircraft does not have hoist capability. "We got the call from the Air Force Joint Rescue Coordination Center Saturday night," said Maj. Lee Newton, 40 HS commander. "We called the crew into the unit and received the go-ahead to launch the night mission. It was up to us to get the injured woman out quickly or she risked the possibly of losing her leg or life." When the crew arrived at the squadron, they went through a flight brief and then departed directly for the Beartooth Mountains at 11 p.m. The crew consisted of Major Newton, aircraft commander; Capt. Shane Werley, co-pilot; Tech. Sgt. Jay Orr, flight engineer; Dr. (Capt.) Ki Lee Milligan, flight surgeon; and Capt. Holli Bellusci, flight medic. "This was probably one of the most intense situations I've experienced in my career," said Captain Werley, an instructor-pilot with the 40 HS. "We were at a very high altitude and were operating on night-vision goggles which reduce your field of vision by about 30 to 40 percent. It required everyone to be at their best." The crew arrived into the Beartooth Mountains area at 1:30 a.m. Sunday and inserted Dr. Milligan to stabilize the patient. Once the injured woman was stabilized, Sergeant Orr used the hoist to raise the victim and Dr. Milligan 150 feet to the helicopter. "The key person on this rescue was Sergeant Orr," said Major Newton. "The pressure was on him to accomplish aircraft and hoist preflight checks quickly but thoroughly as the doc's and survivor's lives would depend on a healthy system. His skill, situational awareness and poise were critical in getting us as close to the mountain wall edges as we needed and safely accomplishing 150 foot hoists." Once the

crew had the patient secured in the helicopter they flew to the Gallatin County Regional Airport, where they were met by an ambulance that took the injured woman to a local hospital. "Shortly after arrival at the hospital the patient received the surgery she required," said Dr. Milligan. "She was listed in stable condition Sunday." This was the unit's 364th save and its fourth since being redesignated from a flight to a squadron in October 2005.

August 17, 2007 A UH-1N "Huey" helicopter crew assigned to the 40 Helicopter Squadron here, rescued an injured hiker Aug. 10 near Cook City, Mont., just north of the Montana-Wyoming border. The rescue, executed at approximately 9,000 feet, raises the unit's total number of "saves" to 369 and marks its fourth rescue in 2007. The isolated site was about six miles southwest of Granite Peak, the highest point in Montana, at an elevation of 12,799 feet. The crew consisted of four members, including Capt. Brian Rhoades, the aircraft commander; 1st Lt. Clell Knight, the copilot; Tech. Sgt. Scott Andrews, the flight engineer; and Capt. (Dr.) Mitchell Parrish, a flight surgeon. Once they arrived on the scene the crew worked closely with ground coordinators who directed the helicopter to the location of the injured hiker. "We were informed of the general location of the lost hiker and told he would be in a gray tent in a ravine," said Captain Parrish, on his fifth search-and-rescue mission. "On arrival we realized locating the hiker would be more difficult than expected. Luckily, shortly after arriving in our search area, the ground party was able to reach the patient and then vector us to his position." The weather made this rescue difficult, as the crew had to navigate around thunderstorms and forest-fire smoke to make the extraction, Captain Rhoades said. "If a rescue situation does not lend itself to landing, Malmstrom AFB's UH-1N's have a hoist capability that can raise the victim to the helicopter while it's hovering up to 200 feet above the ground," said Captain Rhoades, who has more than 1,100 flight hours in the UH-1. "However, for this rescue we determined the safest option was to sit (the helicopter) down in a nearby field." The crew landed approximately 200 yards from the victim and with the assistance of the ground crew moved the injured hiker to the helicopter by stretcher. The patient was in stable condition with an apparent left ankle fracture and right ankle sprain, Captain Parrish said. The crew took the hiker to the Billings International Airport and delivered their patient to an ambulance for transport to the hospital. "The entire crew performed very well," Captain Rhoades said. "The experience and teamwork of the entire aircrew ensured mission accomplishment for a very challenging mountain operation." The squadron's last save was July 8 when a crew rescued a 19-year-old male who sustained a leg injury while in the Absaroka Range just south of Livingston, Mont.

MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont. (AFNS) -- The 40 Helicopter Squadron saved two girls and their dog from the Sluice Boxes State Park about 30 miles southeast of Great Falls May 30, 2017. The two girls were reported missing after they failed to return from their hike in the evening of May 29 and the 40 HS received the call to assist with the search and rescue in the early morning of May 30. "Maj. Matthew Sims, Capt. Kyle Lenz, Staff Sgt. Bryan Mill, and Staff Sgt. Matthew Tidball got the call around midnight and launched shortly after 1 a.m. this morning for their first flight," said Capt. Matt Thompson, the 40 HS aircraft commander. The crew flew two flights in eight hours but were unable to locate the girls. They were relieved by a second crew consisting of Capts. Matt Thompson and James Harris, both pilots; Tech. Sgts. Daniel Marchick and Andrew Blankenship, both special mission aviators; and Maj. Melonie Parmley, a flight surgeon.

“Our deputy commander said the first crew could fly two sorties throughout the night but after that the day crew would pick it up,” said Thompson. “I think the thought process there is that if the SAR keeps going through the day then we would want them to be ready to fly tonight.” However, the alert crew would not need to continue the SAR that night. With daylight on their side the second crew was able to spot the two girls within minutes of officially beginning their search. “We did two initial passes just to orient ourselves to the area, we then turned back on the third pass to actually start searching and it took us maybe five minutes to find them,” said Harris. According to Thompson they were about two minutes into the third pass when Harris spotted them right away. Once the girls were located, the aircrew communicated and coordinated with the ground search parties to walk to the girls since they thought it would be faster than waiting for the helicopter to reach the gas amount required for a hover and hoist.

“The ground search party couldn’t get across the river so that’s when everybody knew that we had to make the decision to do something,” said Blankenship. The team worked to set up the hoist, then lowered the flight doctor down to a clearing where the two girls were waiting and waited for the doctor to do an assessment of the girls. When they heard back from the flight doctor they hoisted the two girls up and noticed the girls brought their dog, who was safe inside one of the SAR jackets the girls were wearing. “One of them didn’t even have shoes on because she lost her shoes in the creek,” said Parmley. “She fell in, her sister fell in, she went in after her sister and they ended up on the other side of the river and couldn’t get back.” According to Parmley, the girls hiked up the ridge to aid the helo crew in finding them so they were bruised, banged up and a little cold but otherwise OK. While this marks the 418th and 419th save for the 40 HS, the aircrew doesn’t take full credit for this save. “A lot of the credit goes to the older sister who made the decision to climb up the ridge and find an open spot so we could see them,” said Harris. The aircrew flew the girls and their dog to the parking lot of the Sluice Boxes where their parents, sheriffs and local emergency medical technicians were waiting for them. 2017

An Air Force helicopter crew rescued a man June 3 near Monarch, Montana, concluding ground and air search and rescue groups around 11 p.m. The 40 Helicopter Squadron received the request June 3 around 10 p.m. to assist the Cascade County Sheriff’s Department in rescuing the man after he fell from a steep cliff and was holding on to a tree root approximately 250 feet from the ground. A UH-1N Iroquois helicopter assigned to the squadron departed Malmstrom Air Force Base with four aircrew at approximately 10:20 p.m.

The aircrew included 40 HS pilots Maj. Jeffrey Miser and Capt. Kyle Lenz, and flight engineers Master Sgt. Joseph Cox and Tech. Sgt. Joshua Makepeace. After approving the request for assistance, the crew departed Malmstrom AFB and flew approximately 22 miles to Monarch where local ground crews were already on scene. The aircrew began working logistics and passed information to the on-scene commander. The pilots then flew over and hovered approximately 100 feet above the man to begin extraction.

Makepeace operated the rescue hoist and lowered Cox down on a forest penetrator, rescue strap in hand, who then secured the man with the strap. The crew then transitioned the aircraft down to the landing zone marked by ground teams while Cox and the man were lowered down via hoist. The man was passed down to the ground team and evaluated for injuries. He was not injured.

“As a long-time first responder’s wife and (mother of a first responder), and as a citizen who owes so much to those that sacrifice their lives daily for my family, I am truly grateful,” said the man’s mother-in-law. “Thank you so much to the incredible Malmstrom AFB chopper crew that saved my son-in-law Monday night and to all of our first responders on scene. I’m so happy to say he is doing well.” The responding agencies included the 40 HS, Belt Rural Volunteer Fire Department, Belt Ambulance, the Cascade County Sheriff’s Office, Cascade County Search and Rescue, Mercy Flight and Great Falls Emergency Services. “The mission last night resulted in a quick and successful rescue, made to look easy because of the exceptional helicopter crew and great partnership we have with our local civilian partners,” said Lt. Col. Bryan Tuinman, 40 HS commander.

This event marks the 428th save the squadron has made to date. The 40 HS ensures strategic security by providing flexible, rapid-response helicopter airlift support to the 341st Missile Wing. The 40 HS also performs aerial surveillance of Department of Defense strategic weapon convoys and short notice emergency security forces responses; supports emergency war order taskings and priority personnel and logistical transportation. The 40 Helicopter Squadron has a proud rescue history and currently conducts search and rescue missions in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff National Search and Rescue plan

Detachments

- 1 Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand, 18 Mar 1968-1 Jul 1971
- 1 Homestead AFB, FL, 8 Jan 1981-1 Oct 1985
- 3 Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, 20 Aug 1972-20 Aug 1974
- 4 Hill AFB, UT, 1 Jul 1978-31 Dec 1987
- 5 Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 20 Aug 1972-30 Sep 1975
- 5 Edwards AFB, CA, 1 Jul 1978-31 Dec 1987
- 6 Holloman AFB, NM, 1 Jul 1978-31 Dec 1987
- 7 Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, 11 Dec 1972-10 Feb 1973
- 8 Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, Dec 1972-31 Jan 1973
- 10 Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, 31 Jan 1973-30 Jul 1974
- 10 MacDill AFB, FL, 8 Jan 1981-31 Mar 1981
- 12 U-Tapao RTAFB, Thailand, 20 Aug 1972-31 Jan 1976
- 14 Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam, 15 Sep 1972-10 Feb 1973
- 18 Plattsburgh AFB, NY, 8 Jan 1981-30 Nov 1987
- 22 Mountain Home AFB, ID, 1 Jul 1978-30 Nov 1987
- 24 Fairchild AFB, WA, 1 Jul 1978-30 Nov 1987

USAF Unit Histories

Created: 19 Nov 2010

Updated: 8 Dec 2022

Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.