

# 54 SERVICE SQUADRON

## MISSION

## LINEAGE

2 Materiel Squadron, 40 Air Base Group (R) *Constituted, 4 Feb 1941*

54 Materiel Squadron

54 Service Squadron, 16 Sep 1942

## STATIONS

Maxwell Field, AL

*Meridian, MS*

Orlando Air Base, FL

*West Palm Beach, FL*

Kunming, China

## ASSIGNMENTS

51<sup>st</sup> Service Group

## COMMANDERS

## HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

## EMBLEM

## MOTTO

## OPERATIONS

Early in 1941 the 51st Air Base Group was activated at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, but shortly after its inception moved on to MacDill Field at Tampa, Florida. The call for overseas duty reached the group while it was at Morrison Field, West Palm Beach, Florida. Morrison Field acted as a group collecting point for almost all the organizations then assigned to the group met there and collectively made plans for the trip across the United States to the San Francisco Port of Embarkation by way of the Sunset Trail Route.

Squadron left the United States on the former luxury liner and now Army Transport Mariposa at 3:25 A.M. January 13. The vessel sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and out to the harbor to join the cruiser Phoenix and USATs Monroe and Coolidge which made up the convoy. The small convoy crossed the Equator for the first time on January 25th. On February 1st the Mariposa docked at Melbourne, Australia and on the following day troops debarked for Bacchus Marsh to which they proceeded by rail and from that point to Camp Darley by foot. The walk seemed all up hill and after the five mile hike the men dropped onto straw filled mats to settle down to a ten-day feast of mutton.

On February 12th the troops left Camp Darley by truck for the dock area and at noon embarked on the USAT Katoomba which had carried troops in the last war. The Katoomba, Holbrook and the Duntroon arrived at Fremantle on the 18<sup>th</sup>. When the time came for disembarking the troops were moved into the huge Airship shed, Reinforcement Camp, west wharf, and there they began their round of working eating sleeping and living until a camp could be constructed for the Americans on the outskirts of the town. Some of the organizations managed to bring their equipment and were not so badly off. Others had packed their property on their motor vehicles. These latter units were the unfortunates for, although arrangements were made to send the vehicles by the next convoy from Australia, nothing more was ever seen or heard of vehicles and organizational equipment. The biggest handicap for all units was the absolute lack of transportation. On May 23rd, the 54th Service Squadron was relieved from assigned to the 51st Service Group and assigned directly to the 14th Air Force. Greatly under strength, the squadron and a greater number of Chinese craftsmen maintained the entire 14th Air Force from its base at Kunming.

#### 54th Service Squadron detachments

Chengkung, China

Hengyang, China

Kweilin, China

Lingling, China

Yunnanyi, China

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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.