

1946

March 13—Air Rescue Service (ARS) headquarters established at Andrews Field, MD, and assigned to Air Transport Command. Primary mission is search and rescue activity in United States.

June-August—ARS joins in experimental U.S. Forestry Service "container missile" project. ARS drops containers of fire extinguishing fluids on forest fires to determine feasibility of this fire fighting technique.

July-October—ARS helicopters take part in two projects to test airmail transport between air terminals and large city post offices. Los Angeles (July 8-26), Chicago (Oct 1-18).

Dec. 31—ARS is authorized 304 officers and 831 enlisted men but is assigned 300 officers and 488 enlisted men. ARS' 116 aircraft include C-47s, B-17s, OA-10s, L-5s, R-5s and AT-11s.

1947

May 23-June 2—Capt. Pope Holliday, para-doctor, jumps from OA-10 to aid B-17 crash survivor in Nicaraguan jungle.

Sept. 9—Rescue Control Centers established at Lowry AFB, CO; Hamilton AFB, CA; and MacDill AFB, FL.

1948

June 1—ARS mission goes beyond continental United States. Rescue units organized in Newfoundland, Labrador, the Azores, Bermuda, Saudi Arabia and Libya.

1949

Sept. 1—Military Air Transport Service four-digit ARS units discontinued and one-digit rescue squadrons take their place.

1950

June 25—Korean War begins. Enemy attack prevents rescue evacuation from Kimpo Airfield, Seoul.

August-September—All "Rescue" squadrons redesignated "Air Rescue" squadrons.

Oct. 12—1st Lt. David McDaniels, pilot, and Capt. John Shumate, pararescue specialist, rescue a downed British pilot behind enemy lines in Korea

earning both men the Silver Star Medal.

Nov. 16—Three ARS SA-16 amphibian aircraft complete a 2,400-mile endurance flight from Travis AFB, CA, to Hickam AFB, HI.

1951

July—1st Lt. John Najarian rescues a downed fighter pilot from North Korea. He lands on and takes off from the Taedong River without lights at night in his HU-16.

Dec. 23, 1951-Jan. 11, 1952—The 3rd Air Rescue Squadron evacuates 218 front-line wounded to the hospital ship Consolation, one of the first ships with a helicopter pad.

1952

July 15-31—Two ARS H-19 helicopters complete the first trans-Atlantic helicopter flight, touching down five times enroute between Westover Field, MA, and Prestwick, Scotland. Flights show the possibility of ferrying helicopters over long distances.

July 27-30—Capt. Kendrick Reeves pilots an ARS SA-16 aircraft and rescues 32 survivors of a commercial airliner crash in the Mediterranean Sea to earn the Cheney Award.

1953

Jan. 31—A2C Reis Leming, although unable to swim, saves 27 people during one of Great Britain's worst floods. He receives the United Kingdom's George Medal for his bravery.

July-December—ARS personnel strength drops to 6,333 people in 55 units at the end of the Korean War.

1954

October—Hurricane Hazel kills 150 people in the Republic of Haiti. The 28th Air Rescue Squadron aids the injured and provides a town's only outside link for a week. In appreciation, Haiti dedicates a stamp to the squadron.

1955

July 29—An SA-16 amphibious airplane rescues 19 survivors of a ditched C-47 from the Mediterranean Sea. Because of the extra passengers' weight, the plane could not take off from the sea so it taxied 90 miles to the coast. Enroute, survivors were placed on crash boats and taken to shore.

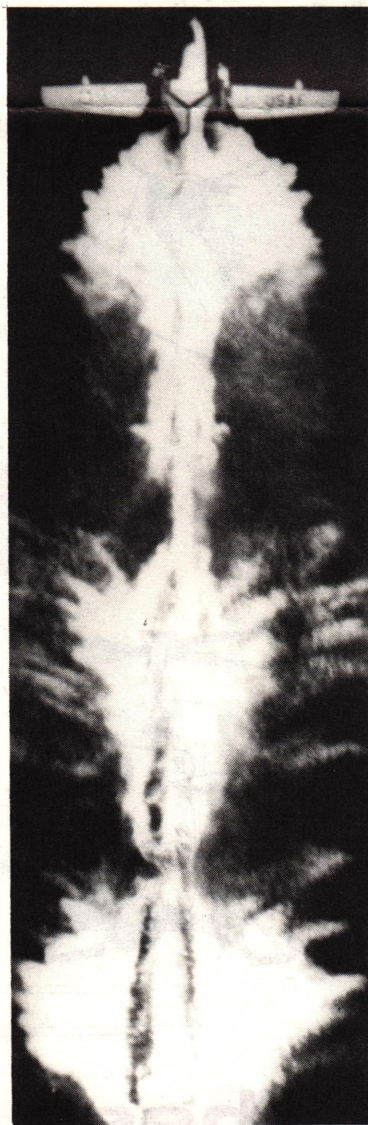
1956

March—The first National Search and Rescue (SAR) Plan is published to coordinate all United States SAR resources and activities. Air Force is made responsible for U.S. inland region; and the U.S. Coast Guard for the maritime region.

May 25—Operation Wring Out reduces the number of ARS groups and squadrons. Small detachments with lightweight helicopters increase. The detachments are spread over a broad area after a study shows that most aircraft accidents happen within 20 miles of air bases.

1957

June 25—The 8th Air Rescue Group establishes three detach-



SPLASH — HU-16 Albatross amphibious aircraft were an important part of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service mission. This view from above shows an HU-16 takeoff from the South China Sea. (U.S. Air Force photo)

ments for rescue and recovery of Strategic Air Command (SAC) aircrews.

1958

Feb. 1—The 2157th Air Rescue Squadron is organized at Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico to support the High Altitude Air Sampling Program.

September—An SH-19 crew saves 48 people from an aground Portugese ship by hoisting them in a rescue basket to a hovering helicopter.

1959

June 7—Capt. Merle Clapsaddle hovers his SH-19 helicopter above 25-foot high waves to rescue seven SC-47 crash survivors to earn the 1959 Aviator's Award.

Oct. 19—Capt. Herbert Mattox Jr., SH-19 pilot, helps evacuate 29 crew members from a floundering Japanese fishing vessel for which he receives the Cheney Award.

1960

March—Air Force asks ARS to study consolidation of all rescue functions under ARS. Consolidation would include administering Inland SAR Region, overseas joint SAR centers and the Local Base Rescue program at bases in the United States.

March 18-Dec. 31—ARS is cut to 61 aircraft and 1,450 people leaving total resources lower than when ARS began in 1946.

July 23-Sept. 31—ARS provides Congo Airlift rescue support.

1961

Jan. 31—An ARS pararescue specialist and a U.S. Navy diver find a missing T-33 pilot's body in Florida. This is the first known scuba operational mission by an ARS rescue specialist.

April 12—ARS supports the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Mercury man-in-space recovery operations, the first of many unmanned space shots supported by ARS. ARS supported all of NASA's manned space flight operations from Alan Shepard's May 1961 sub-orbital flight to the July 1975 Apollo-Soyuz mission.

May 15—ARS is assigned to plan military aircraft evacuation during hurricanes along the U.S. Atlantic Coast.

Oct. 1—ARS becomes the Air Force's single air rescue manager.

1962

April 1—Detachment 3, Pacific Air Rescue Center, is organized at Saigon, Republic of Vietnam (RVN); the first ARS unit there.

May 13—1st Lt. William Luther and MSgt. Lawrence Seckley win the Cheney Award for the rescue of a climber from a ledge in the Cascade Mountains.

June—Cpts. Richard Coan and Chester Ratcliffe Jr. establish new world distance records in the HH-43 during tests in California.

Oct. 22-Nov. 21—ARS deploys forces to Florida bases to support U.S. contingency operations during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

1963

March 19—Capt. Glen Higginson and 1st Lt. Kenneth Glass set an aircraft speed record (133.4 knots) in an HU-16 near Eglin AFB, FL.

March 20—Cpts. Henry Erwin Jr. and Luther Brown set an HU-16 altitude record at 19,747 feet.

Nov. 1—An HU-16 crew of the 48th Air Rescue Squadron, Eglin AFB, FL, recovers a "piggyback" cassette from a Titan II rocket fired 5,000 miles downrange from Cape Canaveral, FL, the first recovery made after a Titan II firing.

1964

Jan. 1—ARS gains recovery mission of balloons and payloads launched by the 59th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (WRS) from Goodfellow AFB, TX.

March 27—Joint Rescue Coordination Center, Elmendorf AFB, AK, directs entire humanitarian effort after earthquake levels sections of Anchorage and Seward, AK.

May 18—ARS accepts delivery of first HC-97 aircraft. HC-97 replaces HC-54 aircraft until HC-130H becomes operational.

Sept. 1—Four provisional ARS detachments are organized in Southeast Asia (SEA) at the start of an 11-year buildup of combat rescue activity there.

Oct. 1—Detachment 15, Eastern Air Rescue Center, is organized at Patrick AFB, FL, as the first ARS unit specifically tasked for space flight recovery missions. ARS' first two CH-3 helicopters are assigned to this detachment.

1965

Feb. 1—The 48th Air Rescue Squadron is redesignated the 48th Air Recovery Squadron, the first ARS squadron so named.

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July 26—ARS accepts the first of about 60 HC-130H Hercules aircraft from the Lockheed-Georgia Company.

Sept. 20—Four ARS men downed by enemy fire in Vietnam are captured. They are **Capt. Thomas Curtis, pilot**; 1st Lt. Duane Martin, copilot; A1C William Robinson, flight mechanic; and A2C Arthur Black, pararescue specialist. Lieutenant Martin was later killed attempting escape. All four receive the Air Force Cross (AFC) in absentia later.

Nov. 6—Three other ARS men become prisoners of war. They are Capt. Warren Lilly, pilot; 1st Lt. Jerry Singleton, copilot; and SSGt. Arthur Cormier, pararescue specialist.

1966

Jan. 8—ARS is redesignated Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS).

Jan. 8—The 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group is organized at Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN. Organization represents long term ARRS commitment in SEA.

April 11—A1C William Pitsenbarger, pararescue specialist, is killed in action in SEA. He

became the first enlisted man to receive the AFC, second only to the Medal of Honor. The annual Pitsenbarger Memorial Trophy, first given in 1975, recognizes the outstanding operational pararescue section of the year.

May 3—Col. Allison Brooks, ARRS commander, and A1C Ronald Doll become the first two men picked up together by an HC-130H equipped with the Fulton surface-to-air recovery system. Capt. Gerald Lyvere was picked up alone earlier. All were retrieved from the surface of Rogers Dry Lake, Edwards AFB, CA.

May 26—Air Force Chief of Staff approves distinctive ARRS uniform featuring maroon beret and bloused trousers over combat boots.

Oct. 5-20—Maj. Leland Kennedy and Capt. Oliver O'Mara, in separate helicopters, attempt rescue of two downed F-4 crew members despite heavy enemy fire. Both men receive the AFC. Fifteen days later Major Kennedy's helicopter is hit by ground fire during a rescue attempt. For this mission he became the first man to twice earn the AFC.

Oct. 11—ARRS begins picking up water samples with an HC-130H Hercules aircraft as part of U.S.

Navy Radiological Defense Laboratory surface-to-air sea water sampling test program.

Dec. 14—The first inflight transfer of fuel (790 gallons) from an HC-130 Hercules tanker is made to an HH-3 Jolly Green Giant helicopter.

1967

Feb. 6—A1C Duane Hackney, pararescue specialist, survives helicopter explosion and crash after rescue attempt in SEA to earn the AFC for bravery.

April 2—ARRS performs first

Rescue's



air-to-air recovery with an HC-130 fitted to recover air sampling equipment launched by Air Weather Service.

April 26—Capt. David Westenbarger receives the 1967 Arnold Air Society's Valor Award for the rescue attempt of two pilots in the Gulf of Tonkin.

May 12—ARRS receives the Grover E. Bell Award of the American Helicopter Society for development of inflight refueling techniques which extend the range of helicopter flight.

June 1—Two ARRS HH-3 helicopters, piloted by Maj. Hubert Zender and Donald Maurras, begin the first non-stop trans-Atlantic helicopter crossing, from New York NAS, Brooklyn, NY, to Le Bourget Field, Paris.

June 19—ARRS receives its first HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopter.

June 21—First planned operational inflight refueling of an HH-3 helicopter in SEA.

Oct. 14—ARRS starts training exchange program with U.S. Coast Guard. Three Coast Guard pilots begin training at Fairchild AFB, WA.

Nov. 9—Capt. Gerald Young attempts rescue of U.S. soldiers surrounded by enemy forces in SEA, but his helicopter is hit by automatic weapons fire and crashes. Although severely burned, he evades the enemy for 17 hours and is rescued. President Lyndon B. Johnson later presents him the Medal of Honor.

1968

Jan. 26, 1968-June 18, 1969—ARRS forces alerted when North Koreans seize U.S.S. Pueblo. Reserve forces activated and provisional squadrons and detachments formed in South Korea.

May 30—Sgt. Thomas Newman, pararescue specialist, rescues a downed Air Force pilot in SEA and is awarded the AFC.

July 2—A1C Joel Talley, pararescue specialist, rescues a downed pilot from a North Vietnam jungle for which he receives the AFC.

1969

May-July—ARRS takes part in the Barbados Oceanographic and Meteorological Experiment, a project to help weather men predict weather accurately two weeks or more in advance. Project results to be applied in mid-1970s.

1970

March 24—ARRS receives first of 15 new HC-130N Hercules aircraft with improved center wing section, armor plating on flight deck, and improved brakes and anti-skid system.

Aug. 15-24—Mission commander Maj. James Butera oversees first trans-Pacific helicopter flights of two HH-53 helicopters from Eglin AFB, FL, to DaNang AB, RVN.

Sept. 1—ARRS helicopters join in Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic program. The program provides transportation and emergency medical care for accident victims in remote areas.

Nov. 20-21—Forty-three ARRS men in one HH-3, five HH-53s and two HC-130s take part in the raid on the prisoner of war compound at Son Tay, North Vietnam. Five men later receive the AFC—Lt. Cols. Warner Britton and John Allison, Maj. Herbert Kalen and Frederic Donohue and TSgt. Leroy Wright. Twenty-three others receive the Silver Star Medal.

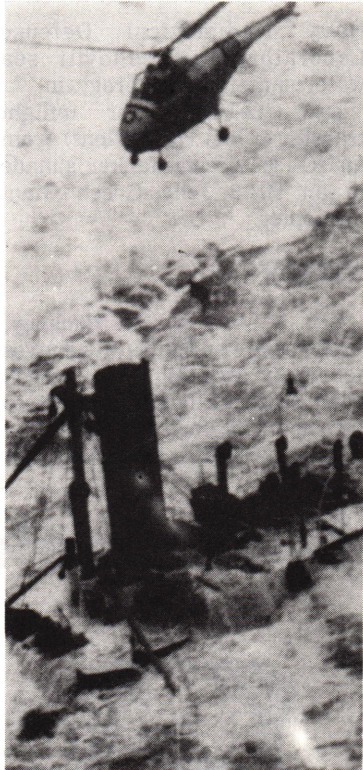
December—The last ARRS HH-3 Jolly Green Giant helicopter used in Vietnam is flown to Okinawa; HH-3s are replaced by larger HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopters.

1971

June—Maj. Travis Wofford, ARRS helicopter pilot, receives the 1970 Cheney Award for heroic action in SEA.

1972

Feb. 20—Lt. Col. Edgar Allison, HC-130 pilot, and crew of 12, set a world distance record for turbo-prop aircraft in a straight line in Operation Long Flight from Chung Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, to Scott
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SINKING — The Tanda Maru, broken by gale-force winds and huge waves, sank off Japan Dec. 27, 1955. Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service members saved 14 of the ship's crew clinging to the bridge, rigging and fantail. (U.S. Air Force photo).

Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

April 29-30—During Operation Frequent Wind, ARRS forces evacuate U.S. citizens and allies from Saigon, RVN.

May 13-15—ARRS men and helicopters play principal roles in the recovery of the S.S. Mayaguez and her crew. Capts. Ronald Purser and Donald Backlund later receive the AFC for their actions during the operation.

June 5—Air Force approves ARRS Memorial Museum at Hill AFB, UT. Museum moves to Kirtland AFB, NM, with the 1550ATTW in early 1976.

July 15-Aug. 5—ARRS forces provide launch abort, launch site, contingency and planned end-of-mission landing support for the U.S.-Soviet Apollo-Soyuz space mission.

July 19—Maj. Gen. Ralph S. Saunders, ARRS commander, presents Buffy, a Malaysian sun bear, to the St. Louis Zoo. The bear was mascot to the 40ARRSq. in SEA.

July-December—ARRS headquarters people sponsor a Vietnamese refugee family in the wake of the collapse of the RVN.

Sept. 1—ARRS assumes weather reconnaissance mission and redesignates 41st Aerospace

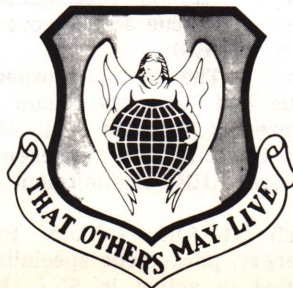
Typhoon June, worst typhoon recorded by Guam's Joint Typhoon Warning Center. June's winds reached an estimated 160 knots and sea level air pressure was recorded at a record low 876 millibars.

Dec. 31—Since 1946 ARRS has saved 16,141 people in combat and non-combat situations. Of these people 7,171 were civilians.

1976

Jan. 31—ARRS air operations in SEA cease.

March 13—ARRS aircraft, including Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve aircraft, include 198 helicopters and 72 fixed wing airplanes. ARRS' principal asset, its people, include more than 3,000 officers and enlisted men and women in active and reserve forces. ARRS celebrates its 30th anniversary today.





**These things we do
that others may live**