

MSgt. R.D. Curtis

Makes 800th static-line jump

MARCH AFB, CA—MSgt. Raleigh D. Curtis, 303rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron (AFRes.) here, ended his 800th static-line parachute jump differently from all the rest. Thirty-five years after he began making military jumps he guided his parachute toward the drop zone only to be met by his fellow pararescuemen.

Throwing Sergeant Curtis to their shoulders, the PJs quickly carried him through a small crowd to refreshments and a cake laid out in honor of the 800th jump.

Sergeant Curtis began static-line parachuting in Chicago in 1940 as a member of the 82nd All American Airborne. During World War II he jumped behind enemy lines four times.

At war's end he remained in service and in 1948 transferred to the newly established Air Force.



Two years later he became a pararescue medic and rose to senior master sergeant. Sergeant Curtis retired from the Air Force in 1961. During his 21 years of active duty he made 196 static-line jumps.

After joining the Air Force Reserves, and as non-commissioned officer in charge of the 302ARRSq. paramedics, he continued jumping until a unit mission change eliminated PJs.

With the mission change he and several of his team members joined the 303ARRSq. here. Almost immediately the 303rd entered and won first, second and eighth places among 46 competing teams in the (Fifth) Annual Military Jumpfest.

On the day Sergeant Curtis completed his 800th jump, **MSgt. Bob Williamson** completed his 300th; **SSgt. Mike French** his 200th; and **MSgt. Al Richmond**, 129th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group, Heyward, CA., his 500th.