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Pope Air Force Base Site Of Link Simulator

Almost daily, residents of Seven Lakes looking skyward can admire C-130 Hercules aircraft guided by pilots assigned to the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing. The wing is based at Pope Air Force Base. (PAFB)

Recently, two TIMES reporters were escorted about the base by 2nd. Lt. Les Carroll, deputy chief of Pope's public affairs office. PAFB is located adjacent to Fort Bragg, a short drive from Seven Lakes.

It was explained by Lt. Carroll that the Base with the 317th

has as its primary responsibility to provide airlift support for the paratroops of the 82nd Airborne Division based at Fort Bragg, and to fly humanitarian missions all over the world.

On October 25, 1983, the 317th took part in America's most recent official combat action. Just before dawn, 18 Pope C-130s airdropped and airlanded elite Army Rangers onto the 10,000-foot Cuban-built runway at Point Salinas, Grenada.

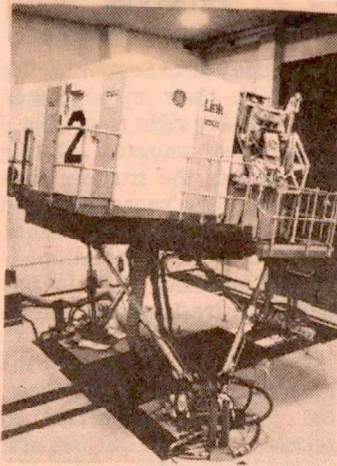
When killer tornadoes struck throughout southern North

Carolina in March 1984, the base sent more than 200 volunteers to assist with clearing efforts; provide communications and medical assistance; distribute food, water, tents and clothing; and direct traffic.

Some Seven Lakes persons may recall that the 317th flew relief missions to the snow bound Northeast during the winter of 1977.

The TIMES reporters, both former Naval aviators, were permitted to "fly" a \$28 million Link simulator. The Link is an exact reproduction of the C-130 flight deck. Assisted by Captain James Kaiser, take off and achieving altitude were accomplished without a serious mishap. Unfortunately, the monitors recorded a crash when the two reporters attempted to land.

Following this misfortune, Lt. Carroll emphasized, "Knowing how to respond to emergencies is one of the most important aspects of aircrew training. But since it's too dangerous to practice many



**Link Simulator at Pope
Air Force Base**

emergency procedures in an aircraft, Pope's flight simulators provide the change for aircrew members to see what a serious problem might look like, before actually encountering the emergency in an airplane."

Lt. Carroll also provided additional information:

☆The C-130 became operational in 1954. The planes are

older than many of their pilots.

☆The Hercules can transport 74 litter patients, 92 combat troops, or 64 paratroops.

☆The plane can land and take off on as little as 2000 feet of dirt runway.

☆Three squadrons (48 planes) comprise the 317th.

☆During the Berlin Airlift, the 317th flew 28,830 trips between Celle and Berlin.

☆The versatile four-engine prop-jet C-130 has served roles as cargo-troop carrier, flying hospital, inflight refueling tanker for helicopters and fighter planes, special operations aerial gunship, aerial photo-mapper, search and rescue, airborne command post, airmobile communications center, hurricane hunter, fog fighter, weather observer and drone launcher and director.

