

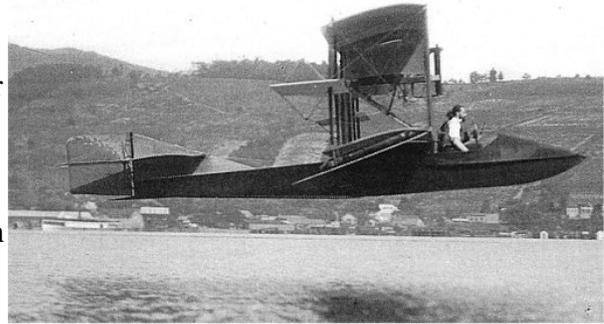


U.S. AIR FORCE



This Week in USAF and PACAF History 18-24 February 2008

24 Feb 1914 Due to a large number of accidents and deaths, an Army board at the Signal Corps Aviation School, San Diego, condemned all pusher airplanes. On these aircraft, the engine was mounted behind the pilot, and the propeller behind the engine. In a crash, the power plant was almost certain to break loose from its mountings and crush the pilot.



18 Feb 1918 The "Lafayette Escadrille" transferred to American forces as the 103rd Pursuit Squadron and began operations on the front under tactical control of the French. The "Lafayette Escadrille" was a unit in the French military comprised of American volunteers who joined the fight before the United States entered World War I. (See photo at left.)

On this same date, the first proper US fighter unit (95th Aero Squadron) arrived in France.

20 Feb 1934 The Army Air Corps was designated to take over all U.S airmail operations and made its first airmail flight. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 6591 on 9 February canceling existing airmail contracts because of fraud and collusion. The Air Corps continued to operate airmail services until July 1934. (See photo of B-7 at right; four were lost with their pilots during the 1934 Airmail Emergency).



18 Feb 1938 Jacqueline "Jackie" Cochran received the General William Mitchell Memorial Plaque for her achievements in aeronautics, based on her speed records. In 1937, Cochran set a national air speed record from New York to Miami in 4 hours, 12 minutes, 27 seconds, and she achieved a new women's national speed record at 204 miles per hour.



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20 Feb 1944 **BIG WEEK.** Through 25 February, Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces began Big Week air raids on German aircraft production. The planners intended to lure the Luftwaffe into decisive battle, achieve air superiority and then proceed with the invasion of Europe. Although damage to the German aircraft industry was only moderate, the newly arrived P-51 escorts decimated the pilot ranks of the heavy, twin-engined German fighters. These

fighter escorts lowered US bomber losses from 30 to six percent and won air superiority over Europe for the rest of the war.

24 Feb 1952 Wheeler AFB was reactivated following a period of inactivation and minimum caretaker status since 1949. This reactivation was part of the Air Force expansion during the Korean Conflict.

22 Feb 1967 Airborne Operation. Over 700 US paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade were dropped by PACAF C-130s into War Zone C, South Vietnam, in Operation Junction City on 22 February. The personnel drops were followed by heavy drops of equipment and supplies.

23 Feb 1967 End of the Charging Sparrow test program. The AIM-7 was a radar-guided air-to-air missile first developed shortly after World War II. During the Vietnam war, the AIM-7D/E had been virtually useless against maneuvering fighter-size targets, especially at low altitude. The Charging Sparrow program was designed to evaluate the Sparrow missile capabilities of the Southeast Asia fighter force, and it required that every F-4C aircraft launch an AIM-7 against an aerial target. The results indicated only two thirds of the F-4C force could successfully launch an AIM-7, and that only 80 percent of the missiles met functional requirements. The AIM-7F joined the Air Force inventory in 1976 as an almost completely new missile, and each new Sparrow version substantially improved the missile's performance.



20 Feb 1972 Lt. Col. Edgar Allison sets a recognized class record for great circle distance without landing (turboprop aircraft) of 8,732.09 miles, flying from Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan, to Scott AFB, Illinois, in a Lockheed HC-130. The record still stands.

20 Feb 1978 A forensic team from the government of Japan arrived on Wake Island to exhume bones of Japanese who died there during the Japanese occupation of World War II. U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Mike Mansfield, requested Air Force support for the team, who collected



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bones of several hundred skeletons between 20 February and 7 March 1978. The 30-man Japanese team included men who had survived Wake Island, descendants of men who had died at Wake and university students.

22 Feb 1978 The first test satellite in the Air Force's Navstar Global Positioning System was launched into Earth orbit.

Feb-Apr 2000 U.S. Air Force personnel and cargo aircraft participated in Operations Atlas Response and Silent Promise, airlifting humanitarian relief supplies to Mozambique and South Africa following severe flooding in those nations.
(AF photo at right: USAF MC-130P reconnaissance of damaged roads in Central Mozambique, March 2000).



22-25 Feb 2002 Senior leaders from the USAF and Indian AF joined for a conference at PACAF — the first between the Air Forces since the U.S. lifted anti-nuclear sanctions against India in October 2001.



20 Feb 2003 The 65th Airlift Squadron marked the initial operational capability of its new C-40B (#01-0015) with a dedication ceremony. Aeronautical Systems Center, Boeing, and 15 AW personnel attended and toured the aircraft. The C-40 B/C transports U.S. leaders to locations around the world and performs other operational support missions. The

C-40 B/C is based on the Boeing 737-700 but it has winglets. See photo at left.

21 Feb 2006 The second C-17 Globemaster III arrived at Hickam, with a celebration hosted by the Hawaii Air National Guard. Welcoming DVs included Major General Robert F. Lee, adjutant general of the Hawaii National Guard, and Major General Darryl Wong, Hawaii Air National Guard commander.