



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

## **This Week in USAF and PACAF History** **18-24 August 2008**



18 August 1910 At Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Oliver G. Simmons, the Army's first civilian airplane mechanic, and Cpl. Glen Madole added wheels to Signal Corps Airplane No. 1, producing a **tricycle landing gear** and eliminating the need for a launching rail or catapult.

20 August 1910 **Origins of Close Air Support.** Second Lieutenant Jacob Fickel fired a .30-06 Springfield rifle from a Curtiss biplane at the Sheepshead Bay Race Track, near New York City. Taking careful aim from an altitude of 100 feet, Fickel scored two hits on a 3 foot by 5 foot target and became the first U.S. military member to shoot a firearm from an airplane.

19 August 1933 Waimanalo Military Reservation (Oahu) was redesignated as **Bellows Field** in honor of 2Lt Franklin B. Bellows, 50th Aero Squadron. Lt Bellows was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action near St. Mihiel, France. He was killed 13 September, 1918 while performing a reconnaissance mission.

21 August 1939 **Hickam's Fire Station and Guardhouse** building (original building No. 25) was completed at Hickam Field, at a cost of \$59,362.10, with a stated capacity of "4 trucks, 36 men, and 33 prisoners."



21 August 1948 In his final report as CSAF, Gen Carl Spaatz disclosed the development of a **supersonic guided atomic missile** with a 5,000-mile range.

20 August 1953 Dr. Wernher von Braun and his team joined US Army personnel at Cape Canaveral in firing the first Redstone (Redstone No. 1). It was our **first truly ballistic missile**.

23 August 1958 **The Second Taiwan Strait Crisis.** On 23 August 23 1958, Communist Chinese forces once again began a large artillery attack on the islands of Quemoy and Matsu. When the Chinese threatened to invade the islands, the USAF moved a Composite Air Strike Force (CASF) into the Far East Theater (**Operation Jonah Able**) to assist the Nationalist forces in the event the Communists invaded. The invasion never took place, and the CASF eventually returned to the United States. (Photo of F-104A of 83<sup>rd</sup> FIS, at Tao Yuan AB, Taiwan, September 1958, right).





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21 August 1959 **Hawai'i was admitted as the 50th state** of the United States of America on August 21, 1959 by proclamation of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. In anticipation, the Hawaii Air National Guard had four pilots standing by at Honolulu Airport. When the official proclamation was delivered, HIANG pilots scrambled to waiting F-86Ls (pictured at right) and delivered the documents to the mayors of neighboring islands.



19 August 1960 Flying a specially-modified C-119, the 6593d Test Squadron, 6494th Recovery Control Group, made the first successful mid-air catch of a DISCOVERER satellite capsule. For



this accomplishment, the 6593<sup>rd</sup> TS received the 1960 Mackay Trophy. Based at Hickam since 1958, the test group's satellite capsule recoveries were part of the **classified CORONA project**, America's first operational space reconnaissance project. History and images from the CORONA project were declassified in 1995 and are available at the National Reconnaissance Office @ <http://www.nro.gov/corona/facts.html>. (See photo of C-119J of the "Catch a Falling Star" program).

21-28 August 1960 In August, a severe **polio epidemic in Hokkaido**, Japan's northernmost main island, struck more than 600 people. Fifty died, many from paralysis of the lungs. President Eisenhower authorized an airlift of iron lungs and chest respirators from the U.S. to Japan. C-130s of the 315<sup>th</sup> Air Division delivered eight iron lungs and 12 chest respirators from the United States to Hokkaido.

19 August 1969 The Air Force began airlifting relief equipment and supplies to southern Mississippi to relieve the victims of **Hurricane Camille**, the strongest hurricane ever to hit the United States. By September 16, the service had airlifted more than 5,900 tons of relief cargo, flying at least six kinds of transport aircraft. This **humanitarian airlift operation** was one of the largest such efforts in history.



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21 August 1970 Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird announced the **Total Force Concept** of the armed services, making the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard, rather than the draft, the initial sources for augmentation of the active force.

19 August 1972 **Hurricane Celeste** struck Johnston Island with winds gusting to 115 knots, causing widespread damage estimated at \$3.4 million. All 550 personnel were evacuated to Hickam AFB, including members of Detachment 3, 15 ABW, who operated and maintained facilities at Johnston in support of the Nuclear Test Readiness Plan. This was the first known instance of the island being completely evacuated of personnel since the Navy began construction in 1939.

20 August 1975 SECDEF James R. Schlesinger directed the USAF to provide **refueling support** to US Navy and Marine Corps tactical aircraft involved in peacetime training and transoceanic movements. He also tasked the USAF to provide refueling support to general-purpose forces in periods of increased tension. The directive allowed SAC to acquire additional tankers.

19-21 August 1976 **Operation PAUL BUNYAN**. Following the murder of two American Army officers in the Demilitarized Zone by North Koreans, MAC used 11 C-141 missions to airlift 212 F-4 air and ground crewmembers and 132 tons of their equipment from Kadena AB to Kunsan AB. Later, three C-5 and 13 C-141 missions airlifted an F-111 force of 348 people and 299 tons of cargo from Idaho to Taegu AB, Korea. With KC-135 refuelings, the C-5s flew their missions nonstop. Two more C-141 missions moved 38 passengers and 26 tons of ammunition from Eglin AFB to Osan AB.

20 August 1986 Having been inactivated in 1975, the **Seventh Air Force** was assigned to Pacific Air Forces on this day and re-activated at Osan AB, South Korea, on 18 September 1986.

22 August 1990 President George H. W. Bush authorized a **90-day call-up** of 200,000 reservists for **Operation DESERT SHIELD**. Eventually, more than 20,000 USAF reservists and 12,000 Air National Guard personnel served in that operation and DESERT STORM.

18 August 1992 **Operation SOUTHERN WATCH begins**. The operation restricted Iraqi flights south of 32 degrees north latitude. AMC airlifted US forces to Saudi Arabia to support the operation. The command also deployed tankers to refuel fighters flying combat air patrols.

21 August 1998 **Major Michael Brill**, a full-time air reserve technician with the 419 FW, 466 FS, at Hill AFB, became the first Air Force pilot to amass **more than 4,000 total flying hours in the F-16 Falcon**. According to Lockheed-Martin officials, more than 3,000 pilots have topped the 1,000-hour mark in an F-16; more than 400 pilots have surpassed 2,000 hours; and 21 have more than 3,000 hours.



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21 August 2002 The first Lockheed-Martin Atlas V lifted off from Cape Canaveral to inaugurate a new type of launch missile. Under the USAF's **Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle Program**, the system used a standard booster and added supplemental boosters to handle various payloads.

19 August 2004 A **groundbreaking ceremony** is held at Hickam AFB for **C-17 infrastructure facilities** to be built in the coming year: C-17 flight simulator, operations building, and consolidated maintenance. (See photo of Kahu Kordell performing a traditional Hawaiian blessing, at right).



18 August 2005 **JASSM IOC**. The 7th Bomb Wing became the first unit to achieve initial operational capability of the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM). The JASSM is an all-weather, low observable, standoff cruise missile capable of taking out heavily defended, high-priority enemy targets deep behind enemy lines. A key mission for the JASSM is to destroy enemy threats early in a conflict, allowing manned aircraft to penetrate enemy airspace to attack other targets in the air campaign.

