



U.S. AIR FORCE

This Week in PACAF and USAF History 1-7 September 2008



3 September 1909 Orville Wright began flight tests of the Wright Flyer at Fort Myer, Virginia.

2 September 1910 The **first American woman pilot**, Blanche Stuart "Betty" Scott, soloed in a Curtiss Pusher over the Lake Keuka Field of the Curtiss Company at Hammondsport, New York.

Always up for a challenge, the impetuous Scott took an interest in flying when she saw the Wright aircraft in flight as she drove through Dayton, Ohio (on a trip to become the first woman to drive an automobile coast to coast). After flight instruction, she joined Glenn Curtiss's Exhibition Team. Scott holds the title of **America's first female professional flier**, though at the time she was billed as "The Tomboy of the Air." In 1911, Scott made the first long distance flight by a woman when she impulsively flew sixty miles before returning to her starting airfield. Soon after that, Scott became the **first female test pilot**, contracting to fly Martin prototypes before the final aircraft blueprints were completed. In 1913, Scott joined the Ward Exhibition Team. She retired from active flying in 1916.

After a career in print and broadcast media, Scott returned to the headlines on September 6, 1948, when she became the **first American woman to ride in a jet** (a TF-80C, with Chuck Yeager as pilot). For Scott's fun, Yeager included some snap rolls and a 14,000 foot dive. Beginning in 1954, Scott began working for the **USAF Museum**. Acting as a travelling public relations unit, she acquired materials related to early flight for the museum's collection. Blanche Stuart Scott passed away on January 12, 1970.



2 September 1916 **First Plane-To-Plane Radio Transmission.** Army aviators first demonstrated airplane-to-airplane radio communication over North Island, San Diego, when Lt. William A. Robertson and Cpl. Albert D. Smith, flying in one plane, communicated by radiotelegraph with an airplane flown by Lt. Henry A. Dargue and Capt. Clarence C. Culver.

1 September 1937 The first contingent of 12 men and four aircraft moved from Luke Field on Ford Island to Hickam Field, which was still under construction. Under the command of 1st Lt Robert Warren, the **first Hickam base commander**, the group initially lived in tents.

2 September 1940 The United States agreed to transfer 50 destroyers to Great Britain in exchange for air and naval bases at eight strategic points on islands in the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

September 1942 The first members of the **Women's Army Auxiliary Corps** began to serve with the Army Air Forces at Aircraft Warning Service stations. During the same month, the **Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron** was activated at New Castle, Delaware, under the command of Nancy Harkness Love, and the **Women's Flying Training Detachment** under Jacqueline Cochran was established under Flying Training Command.



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5 September 1944 Capt William H. Allen of the 55th Fighter Group, Eighth Air Force, became **an ace in one P-51 mission** by scoring five aerial victories in just a few minutes. Flying with another ace, Capt William H. Lewis, Allen's flight encountered and shot down 16 German fighters. Between 3 and 11 September, the 55th shot down 106 enemy fighters to earn a Distinguished Unit Citation. (Photo of a flight of P-51s at left.)

2 September 1945 The Japanese officially surrendered to the Allied powers on board the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay in a formal signing ceremony (V-J day). At the same time (1 September in Hawaii), the Territory of Hawaii began a three-day holiday celebrating Japan's surrender and ending with a gigantic parade.

1 September 1953 The Air Force announced the first in-flight refueling of jet-powered aircraft by jet-powered aircraft after a KB-47 refueled a standard B-47 Stratojet.

1 September 1966 TAC activated the **Tactical Fighter Weapons Center**, the **forerunner of today's USAF Warfare Center**, at Nellis AFB. The Center was activated during the Vietnam War to improve USAF tactical air operations in conventional war and contingencies. At the time, the Center conducted special fighter training in F-100s, F-105s, and F-4s.



1 September 1968 **MEDAL OF HONOR.** During a rescue attempt of a downed American pilot, Lt Col William A. Jones III served as the on-scene commander. He repeatedly flew his A-1H Skyraider over enemy guns and sustained heavy damage and severe burns. Discovering his radios to be broken, Jones refused to leave his crippled aircraft and flew back to base in extreme pain, where he reported the downed pilot's location while on the operating table.

On 15 November 1969, Colonel Jones died in a private plane crash near Woodbridge, Va. Jones' widow received his Medal of Honor at White House ceremonies on August 6, 1970.



Douglas A-1H Skyraider

1 September 1975 Gen. Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr., USAF, became **the first black four-star general.**

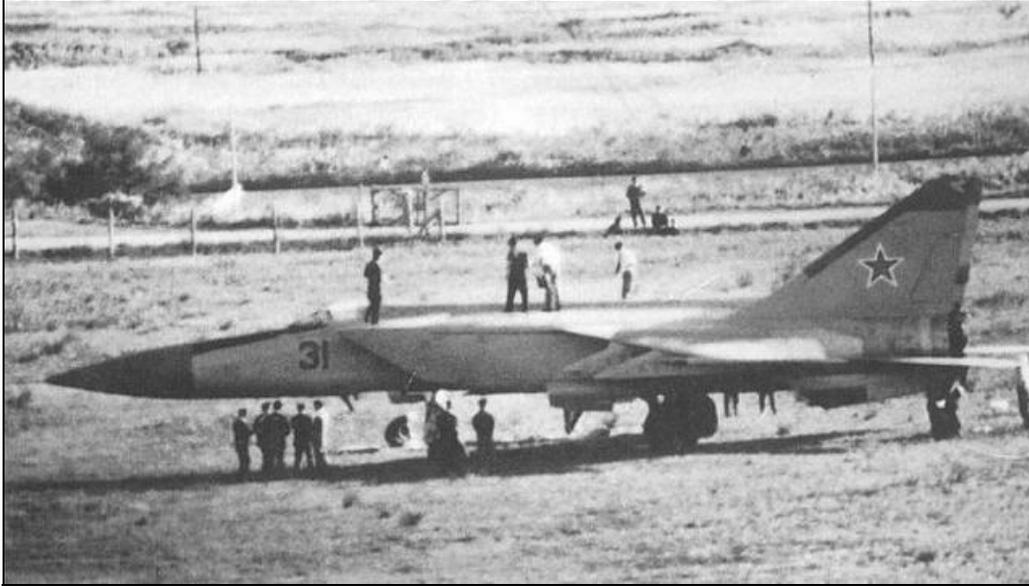


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6 September 1976 A Soviet pilot named Viktor Belenko landed his **MiG-25 Foxbat** jet fighter in Hokkaido, Japan, and asked for asylum in the United States. Japanese and U.S. officials closely examined the aircraft for two months and then returned it, dismantled, to the USSR.



1 September 1982 The Air Force activated **Space Command**. This organization was redesignated Air Force Space Command on November 15, 1985 following the activation of United States Space Command at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.

5 September 1983 **Mackay Trophy**. Capt Robert J. Goodman and his KC-135 crew (Capt Michael R. Clover, 1Lt Karol R. Wojcikowski and SSgt Douglas D. Simmons) refueled a group of F-4Es crossing the North Atlantic. One of the F-4s lost power in an engine and had to divert to Gander, Newfoundland. Goodman's crew took up escort duty. Later, the F-4 pilot had to shut down the engine, reduce power in the other engine and jettison his centerline tank. Despite these measures, the F-4 continued to lose altitude and airspeed. Through four interrupted refuelings and extreme peril as the fighter dropped to 2,000 feet, the KC-135 escorted the fighter to Gander, at times towing the fighter on the refueling boom. For this meritorious flight, Goodman and his crew received the Mackay Trophy.



1 September 1992 **Typhoon Omar**. The storm hit Guam on 28 August with 150-MPH winds and 16 inches of rain. On 1 September, a C-5 carried 62 tons of cargo from Yokota AB for the first relief mission to Guam. Through 25 September, airlift aircraft flew in 750 relief workers and 2,000 tons of supplies to the island in 59 missions.



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1 September 1995 **The SR-71 returned to active service.** It was retired in 1990 when strategists prematurely suggested that satellites were able to assume its mission.

2 September 1995 On the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, PACAF and the 15th Air Base Wing dedicated the **Missing Man Formation Channel Display** located in the Aloha 'Aina Park behind Hickam's Officers' Club. Distinguished visitors included the Honorable William J. Perry, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Sheila E. Widnall, Chief of Staff of the USAF General Ronald R. Fogleman, and COMPACAF General John G. Lorber. As the memorial plaque states: *"The Missing Man formation is a precious symbol in the United States Air Force tradition. In the soaring of the aircraft skyward, we honor our fallen comrades who have been lost in battle. We remember them as true patriots who gave their last full measure of devotion to their country. We keep faith with their memory by standing ever ready in defense of the nation."*

3 September 1996 The 11th Reconnaissance Squadron began operating the RQ-1B Predator, an unmanned aerial vehicle designed for aerial surveillance and reconnaissance, over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

7 September 1977 At Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, test pilot Paul Metz piloted the extremely maneuverable **F-22 Raptor in its first flight.** A new stealth fighter with the ability to cruise supersonically, the F-22 would replace the venerable F-15 for air-superiority missions.

