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5-13 November 1912 The **Army used aircraft for artillery adjustment for the first time** at Fort Riley, Kansas. Capt. Frederick B. Hennessy, Lt. Henry H. Arnold, and Lt. Thomas DeWitt Milling signaled the ground, using radiotelegraphy, drop cards, and smoke signals.

7 November 1917 Eugene J. Bullard, **the world's first African-American pilot**, became the **first black fighter pilot to claim an aerial victory**.

Born in Columbus, Georgia in 1894, Bullard sailed to Europe as a stow-away and joined the French Foreign Legion at the outbreak of World War I. Earning the nickname "Black Swallow of Death," Bullard participated in some of the greatest battles of 1915-1916. He was severely wounded in one such battle and received the Croix de Guerre for his heroism. While convalescing, he volunteered for pilot duty in the French Air Service. Bullard completed flight training in May 1917 and eventually flew 20 missions.

5 November 1934 **Lt Col Horace Meek Hickam**, a distinguished aviation pioneer, died when his Curtiss A-12 struck an obstruction during night landing practice on the unlighted field at Fort Crockett in Galveston, Texas. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. Six months later, **Hickam Field** in Hawaii was dedicated and named in his honor.

As a young officer, Hickam volunteered to take flying lessons in his spare time. One year after earning the Silver Star in the Mexican Punitive Expedition, Hickam joined the Aviation Section of the U.S. Signal Corps, where he trained as a pursuit pilot. He was assigned as chief of the Air Service's Information Division and then assistant commandant of the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas. In November, 1925 he testified on behalf of airpower and a separate Air Force, stating "*I am confident that no general thinks he can command the navy, and no admiral thinks he can operate an army, but some of them think they can operate an air force*."

After attending the Air Corps Tactical School, Air War College and other military courses, Hickam was assigned to the War Plans Division of the General Staff. Hickam was promoted to lieutenant colonel on March 1, 1932, and given command of the 3rd Attack Group at Fort Crockett. During the 1934 Air Mail operation, he commanded mail delivery operations in the U.S. Central Zone. Hickam often battled with the old soldiers of that era who classified the airplane as merely an auxiliary to ground troops. "*During the World War*," he said in 1934, "*the airplane was considered as a weapon of the ground troops, but that day has passed just as has the concept of naval vessels as transports for soldiers. The Air Force has come into its own right, and like the Navy it has come to stay*."

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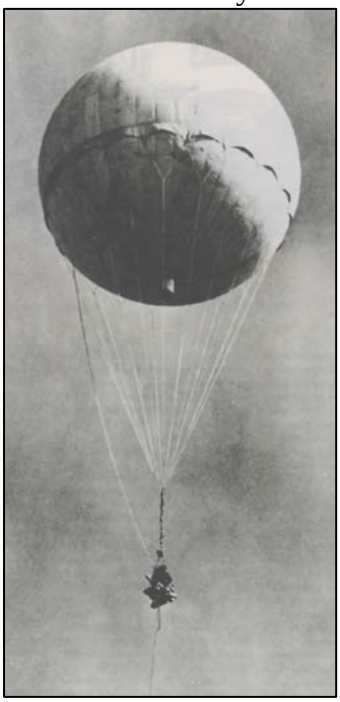
8 November 1942 **Operation TORCH**, the Anglo-American invasion of North Africa, began with amphibious landings in Morocco and Algeria. Twelfth Air Force supported the invasion with troop-carrying C–47s and Spitfire fighters.

3 November 1944 **Japanese balloons with bombs attached** were first launched, hoping the jet stream would carry them eastward across the Pacific **to the United States**. (Photo at left.)



The Japanese launched some 9,000 balloon bombs against the U.S. during the war. The bombs were meant to start forest fires, produce chaos and divert manpower from the war effort in the U.S. They were also a reprisal for the Doolittle raid on Tokyo. The hydrogen-filled balloons were 33 feet in diameter and carried ballast and hydrogen release mechanisms to maintain altitude across the North Pacific. They were armed with incendiary and anti-personnel bombs. Only about 300 were ever observed in North America (mapped here). The easternmost balloon reached the Detroit suburbs. Analysts estimate that as many as 1,000 may have actually made it to land. Fighters in the U.S. intercepted about 20 of the balloons. The only fatal attack occurred in Oregon when a pastor's wife and six children were killed as the children pulled on the balloon.

The U.S. strategy was to keep the Japanese from knowing of the balloon bombs' effectiveness. The press cooperated by not publishing any balloon bomb incidents. As a result, the Japanese only learned of one bomb reaching Wyoming and failing to explode, so they stopped the launches after less than six months. After the war, the press blackout was lifted and the public was warned about the potential danger of finding unexploded bombs. The last balloon with a still-lethal payload was discovered in 1955, and balloon remnants have been found as late as 1992.

On March 10, 1945, one of the last balloons descended near the Manhattan Project's Hanford Site in south-central Washington. The balloon caused a short circuit in the power lines to the nuclear reactor cooling pumps, but backup safety devices restored power almost immediately. The Hanford Site was the world's first plutonium production facility, and it provided materials for the Trinity test and the Nagasaki weapon.

8 November 1950 General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, Air Force Chief of Staff, agreed to send an **F-84E and F-86A wing to Far East Air Forces** (FEAF), and they arrived in the Far East during the week of 4 December. The F-84s were based in Japan, and the F-86s were divided between Japan and Korea. The first mission of the Korean-based F-86s took place on 15 December, the day United Nations ground forces withdrew below the 38th parallel.

8 November 1950 Seventy B–29 Superfortresses conducted the largest incendiary raid of the Korean War, dropping some 580 tons of firebombs on Sinuiju, North Korea.

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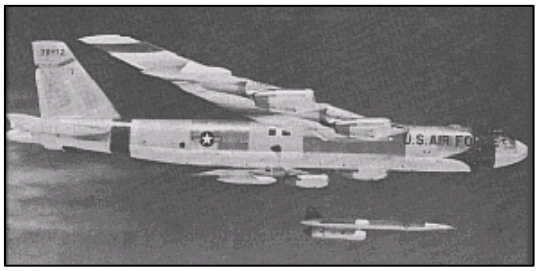
3 November 1965 A B-52 successfully fired an **AGM-28 Hound Dog missile** over Green River, Utah to White Sands Missile Range.

The mission of the Hound Dog was to attack segments of the Soviet Union's air-defense system so that the launching B-52 could penetrate to its primary target. It had a maximum speed over Mach 2, a 49,000 foot ceiling and a range of nearly 600 nautical miles. It could conduct high or low altitude attacks with either air or surface detonations. The Hound Dog was deployed for 15 years until the missile was replaced by newer weapons including the AGM-69 Short Range Attack Missile and the AGM-86 Air-Launched Cruise Missile.



Evidently, the name "Hound Dog" was taken from Elvis Presley's 1956 remake of the rock and roll song by his fans in the Air Force, while the nose of the Hound Dog's carrier aircraft inspired the name of the 1950's beehive hairdo and, indirectly, the "B-52s" rock band that resurrected the style.

9 Nov 1967 **MEDAL OF HONOR.** On his 60th mission as a HH-53 pilot with the 37th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, **Capt. Gerald Young** and his crew (Capt Ralph Bower, SSgt Eugene L Clay, and Sgt Larry W. Maysey) flew into an area southwest of Khe Sanh to rescue a U.S.-Vietnamese reconnaissance team. During the rescue attempt, his helicopter was hit at point-blank range and destroyed. Wounded with second and third degree burns over one-fourth of his body, Capt. Young aided one of the other crew members who escaped. Young then spent 17 hours luring the pursuing North Vietnamese troops away from the crash site and other survivors. After losing his pursuers, Capt. Young called for a rescue helicopter and was picked up six miles from the crash site. For his heroism, aggressiveness, and concern for his fellow man, Capt. Young received the Medal of Honor. Story @ http://www.afa.org/magazine/valor/0785valor.asp. (Portrait above right).

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9 Nov 1967 **MEDAL OF HONOR.** Ejecting from his F-4C Phantom over North Vietnam, **Capt. Lance P. Sijan** successfully evaded capture for more than six weeks. Enemy forces captured him, but the severely weakened and injured Sijan managed to escape. After his recapture and torture, he contracted pneumonia and died. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously. Story @ AF Magazine http://www.afa.org/magazine/valor/1286valor.asp. (Portrait at left).

5 November 1981 The **first operational EF–111A defense-suppression aircraft** was delivered to the 388th Electronic Combat Squadron at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. The EF–111A Raven (right) would eventually replace EB–66 and EB–57 aircraft. The EF-111A usually provided protection from a stand-off jamming orbit, but it could also escort attacking forces with its high-performance and night terrain-following capabilities built into the basic F-111 design.

EF-111s were involved in every U.S. conflict from Eldorado Canyon in Libya to Desert Storm, where an EF-111 was credited with one of the first kills of the conflict. A maneuvering Raven caused a pursuing Iraqi Mirage to crash.

6 November 1998 **Hurricane Mitch Humanitarian Relief**. The USAF began airlifting 7.4 million pounds of relief cargo to Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador after those countries were devastated by the Hurricane Mitch, which claimed more than 10,000 lives. By the time the airlift ended on March 19, 1999, the crews had flown more than 200 missions.

9-19 November 2005 For the first time, **USAF pilots flying F-16s faced the Indian Air Force's** most advanced fighter — the **Su-30 MKI** — during exercise **Cope India '06** at Kalaikunda Air Station, India. U.S. fighters also squared off against the MiG-21 Fishbed, MiG-27 Flogger, MiG-29 Fulcrum and Mirage 2000 during the exercise. (Photo of 13FS F-16 taxiing past IAF MiG-27s below left; Su-30 MKI taking-off, below right).

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9 November 2006 SECAF Michael W. Wynne announced that Boeing had been selected to provide 141 HH-47 helicopters as the new **Combat Search and Rescue Replacement Vehicle (CSAR-X)**. The Air Force planned to replace HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters with the HH-47s. (Pentagon Press Release, "Air Force Selects Developer for Combat Search and Rescue Replacement Vehicle," 9 Nov 2006)

9 November 2006 The Air Force activated the **first MQ-9 Reaper unit**, the 42d Attack Squadron, at Creech AFB. The single-engine, propeller-driven Reaper (formerly the Predator B) could carry 3,000 pounds of bombs and missiles, while remaining airborne for 24 hours. The smaller MQ-1 Predator carried 500 pounds of weaponry. (USAF Aimpoints, "First Reaper Squadron Stands Up," 9 Nov 2006)

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