



U.S. AIR FORCE

## This Week in USAF and PACAF History 8 – 14 February 2010



10 Feb 1908 The Wright Brothers and Capt. Charles S. Wallace of the Signal Corps signed the **first government contract for a flying machine**. The price was \$25,000—more than half a million in today's dollars.

13 Feb 1917 Captain John F. Curry of the Army Air Service arrived in Honolulu to command the **first aviation unit established in Hawaii**—the 6th Aero Squadron — organized for the aerial coast defense of Oahu. The squadron was first stationed at Fort Kamehameha, and then moved to Ford Island.

8 Feb 1938 **The first bombardment unit based at Hickam**, the 31st Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) arrived from Hamilton Field and was assigned to the 5th Composite Group. The 31st emblem (at right) was the distinctive skull and cross-bones proper on a black triangle. Four members of the 31BS were killed in action on 7 December 1941, nine members were



wounded, and all of the squadron's B-18 Bolo bombers were either damaged or destroyed. Reequipped with B-17s, the squadron was assigned various maritime bombing and surveillance missions in the South Pacific. (See B-18 photo at left).

10 Feb 1939 The **prototype for the B-25 Mitchell** bomber first flew. The B-25 (left), the only U.S. military aircraft named after a person, was the type used by Gen. James Doolittle for the Tokyo Raid on April 18, 1942. Designed for level bombing from medium altitudes, it was used extensively in the Pacific area by General George Kenny's 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Field-modified with extensive forward firepower by Major Paul I. "Pappy" Gunn, the B-25s were used for treetop-level attacks on Japanese airfields with parachute-retarded bombs and for strafing and skip-bombing against enemy shipping.



13-16 Feb 1951 The 315th Air Division (Combat Cargo) used more than 100 airlifters to drop supplies around-the-clock to the 23d Regimental Combat Team and a French battalion at **Chipyong-ni in central Korea** (photo at right). Flying through heavy ground fire, C-119 Flying Boxcars delivered 400 tons of ammunition. H-5 pilots from the 3 ARS flew through a blinding snowstorm and 40-knot winds to deliver blood plasma and medical supplies. They also evacuated 52 wounded men.



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The fighting around the village of Chipyeong-ni followed the United Nations withdrawal from Northern Korea after the Chinese Communist intervention at the end of 1950. Chipyeong-ni was seen as the key to stabilizing the Eighth Army's front against the Communist Chinese offensive. The siege of Chipyeong-ni was one of the most bitterly contested engagements of the Korean War. The Army's 23rd Regimental Combat Team inflicted tremendous casualties on elements of five Chinese infantry divisions. Chipyeong-ni was the Chinese Communist Forces' first operational defeat of the war.

10 Feb 1952 **Medal of Honor.** Leading a flight of three F-86 Sabre jets on a combat air patrol mission near the Manchurian border, Maj. George A. Davis, Jr., engaged 12 enemy MiG-15 jet fighters in aerial combat. After shooting down two enemy aircraft and completely disrupting the enemy formation, Major Davis himself was shot down and killed. For engaging superior forces and shooting down enemy aircraft, he earned the Medal of Honor.

8 Feb 1953 The American Medical Association recognized **Aviation Medicine as a medical specialty**, the first specialty to evolve from military practice and research.

10 Feb 1954 **The Hawaii Air National Guard's first group of F-86 Sabre Jets arrived** to replace their WWII-era P-47s. A large enthusiastic group of HIANG members were on hand to "de-cocoon" them of their waterproof protective coverings. One of the "new" F-86s was recognized by TSgt Simanu Afoa



Jr., a Korean veteran, as F-86E No. 740, the jet flown by Major James Jabara, the world's first jet ace. Four years later, the Hawaii Air National Guard traded its F-86E fighters for more modern radar-equipped F-86L all-weather interceptors. The initial shipment of F-86Ls arrived at Pearl Harbor on 5 February 1958. The new Sabres assumed air defense alert duty on 1 May.



8 Feb 1965 F-100 Super Sabres performed the **first retaliatory air strike in North Vietnam**. They flew cover for attacking South Vietnamese fighters, suppressing ground fire in the target area. (Photo at left.)

12 Feb 1973 **Operation HOMECOMING.** MAC flew the first of 590 released American POWs from Hanoi, North Vietnam, to Clark Air Base in the Philippines, and then on to various military hospitals in the United States. Altogether, MAC used 118 C-9A and C-141 missions to support the operation and earned the **Mackay Trophy**.





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10 Feb 1992 **Operation PROVIDE HOPE** began the delivery of food and medical supplies to the former Soviet Union. In the first two phases of the operation, more than 27,000 tons of food and medical supplies were distributed to cities throughout the former Soviet Union. Phases III and IV saw distribution increasingly handed over to private organizations until the operation's successful conclusion in September 1994.

12 Feb 1993 The **203rd Air Refueling Squadron (HIANG)** activated at Hickam AFB, with Lt Col Walter K. Kaneakua in command. See photo and emblem below.



10 Feb 1994 Lt Jean Marie (Jeannie) Flynn completed F-15 Eagle training to become the **first female fighter pilot in the Air Force**. Lt Flynn's call sign was "Tally," as in "Tally-ho." (See photo at left).

*[Flynn is not to be confused with Lt Kelly Flinn, discharged from the Air Force in 1997 while stationed at Minot AFB, N.D.]*

8 Feb 2006 **The first of eight C-17 Globemaster IIIs arrived at Hickam**, greeted by a host of distinguished visitors and a cheering crowd in front of Base Operations. Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle christened the new C-17 the "Spirit of Hawaii - Ke Aloha." The aircraft are assigned to the 15<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing. The maintainers are a composite of active duty and Hawaii Air National Guard.

