



U.S. AIR FORCE

This Week in USAF and PACAF History 18 - 24 October 2010



18 October 1867 Brigadier General Lowell H. Rousseau, representing the United States, **took possession of Alaska from Russia** in a ceremony at Sitka. The purchase price was \$7.2 million. Alaska became our 49th state 91 years later, on 3 January 1959.

21 October 1936 **Trans-Pacific passenger service begins** (San Francisco to Manila). Pan American Airways inaugurated the first passenger flights across the Pacific by carrying nine travelers from San Francisco to Manila by way of Hawaii, Midway, Wake, and Guam. Each passenger paid more than \$1,400 for the round-trip flight aboard the China Clipper. Pan American was incorporated and founded in 1927 by **Major Henry H. "Hap" Arnold** and partners.



"Musick's Trippe to Paradise"
by John Doughty Jr.



**Hawaiian Air Force
Emblem**

19 October 1940 The Seventh Air Force was originally established as the **Hawaiian Air Force** on 19 October 1940, and activated on 1 November 1940 at Fort Shafter, Territory of Hawaii, assigned to Hawaiian Department, U.S. Army. The Hawaiian Air Force motto was the Hawaiian phrase Ku Kiai ("On Guard"). The Hawaiian AF moved to Hickam Field in July 1941, and was redesignated as the [Seventh Air Force](#) on 5 February 1942.

21 October 1942 "For outstanding performance of duty and meritorious acts of extraordinary fidelity and essential service" during the 7 December 1941 attack, **Lt. Anne G. Fox**, head nurse at Hickam Station Hospital, became **the first woman to be awarded a Purple Heart**. Later the War Dept changed the rules governing the awarding of the Purple Heart to require being wounded in action. As a result, Lt. Fox's Purple Heart was replaced with a Silver Star.



Hickam Hospital nurses who tended to the wounded during the 7 Dec 41 attack. 1Lt Anne Fox is the fifth from the left.

20-23 October 1950 In the **first airborne operation of the Korean War**, more than 100 C-119s and C-47s dropped some 4,000 troops of the Army's 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team and over 600 tons of materiel at Sukchon and Sunchon—an area located 30 miles north of Pyongyang.



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24 October 1953 **Convair's YF-102 Delta Dagger first flew** at Edwards AFB. Captured German documents showed delta-winged aircraft configurations produced less drag at high speeds. The Air Force contracted with Convair to develop a delta-wing interceptor to defend the U.S. against Soviet bombers. Initially, the YF-102 was a failure until Convair engineers used the area rule concept to reshape the airframe, reducing the wave drag that

occurred in transonic and supersonic flight. The new airframe shape, coupled with new more powerful engines, enabled the production F-102s to easily reach supersonic speeds. At the peak of its deployment in the late 1950s, over 1000 F-102s equipped more than 25 air defense squadrons.

20 October 1961 The 15th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron deployed four RF-101s to Tan Son Nhut AB in support of **PROJECT PIPE STEM**—the **first PACAF aircraft deployed to South Vietnam**. They flew 67 reconnaissance sorties over South Vietnam and Laos, developing their photographs using a photo-processing unit they brought with them. In November, under **ABLE MABLE**, another four RF-101s from the 45th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron deployed to Don Muang, Thailand, along with their photo processing unit. By the end of 1961, this unit had flown 130 missions.



An RF-101A over Vietnam in 1967

22 October 1962 DEFCON 3 was declared worldwide due to the **Cuban Missile Crisis**. On 24 October, PACAF deployed six F-100s to Osan AB to beef up forces in Korea.

26 October 1962 **SAC received its last B-52H Stratofortress** from the production lines.

24 October 1967 **For the first time, USAF and USN aircraft attacked Phuc Yen, the main fighter airfield in North Vietnam**. No attacks had occurred prior to this because North Vietnamese airbases had been “off-limits” as targets. Twelve MiGs were damaged or destroyed and one runway was rendered unserviceable. Also during this attack, the Air Force downed its 69th MiG



MiGs at Phuc Yen Airfield, North Vietnam



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19-27 October 1970 More than 1,000 people perished and 90,000 were left homeless after **Typhoons Joan and Kate** battered the Philippines. In response to President Ferdinand Marcos' request for aid to the U.S. embassy in Manila, the **Thirteenth Air Force**, headquartered at Clark AB in Luzon, channeled relief tasks to Air Force organizations in the Philippines. A dozen C-130s, a C-47, a C-54 and several C-118s were involved in humanitarian relief. Air Force units airlifted over 300 tons of food and medical supplies and evacuated over 400 people from southern Luzon and Mindanao. For these efforts, President Marcos authorized a Philippine presidential unit citation to all USAF units involved.

20 October 1971 The 15th Tactical Fighter Wing was redesignated as the **15th Air Base Wing**. A few days later, on 1 November 1971, the wing activated on Hickam AFB and assumed the mission and duties previously performed by the 6486th Air Base Wing—managing Hickam, Wheeler, Dillingham, and Johnston Island Air Force Bases, Bellows Air Force Station, and several smaller subsidiary bases.

20 October 1976 **General Dynamics conducted the F-16A roll-out** at Fort Worth, Texas. Eleven years later, on 21 October 1987, the Japanese Defense Agency selected the SX-3, a **Mitsubishi-built derivative of the F-16** as its new close support/sea patrol aircraft to replace its Mitsubishi F-1s and F-4EJs.

20 October 1980 The **last F-4D** assigned to the 18th Tactical Fighter Group (today's 18th Operations Group) **departed Kadena AB, Japan, for the continental U.S.** The F-4Ds had been replaced with F-15 C/Ds.



24 October – 3 November 1983 In **Operation URGENT FURY**, American military forces raided the Caribbean island of Grenada to evacuate U.S. citizens, restore democracy, and eliminate a hostile Cuban/Soviet base. MAC and Air Force Reserve C-5, C-141 and C-130 aircraft flew 496 missions to transport 11,389 passengers and 7,709 tons of cargo to Grenada. SAC tankers and TAC fighters, as well as ANG EC-130Es, supported the operation. During the operation, Lt. Col. James L. Hobson, Jr., USAF, led a flight of MC-130 Hercules aircraft that successfully completed an airborne assault on Point Salinas, dropping paratroopers at the exact planned time over target in a hail of anti-aircraft fire. For his actions in assuming the assault lead from a disabled aircraft, Lt. Col. Hobson earned the **Mackay Trophy**. Major General Hobson commanded Air Force Special Operations Command from 1994 to 1997.

23 October 2003 President George W. Bush landed at Hickam AFB, his first visit to the base as Commander-in-Chief. General William Begert, PACAF Commander, and Colonel Raymond Torres, 15th Airlift Wing Commander, greeted the President and First Lady Laura Bush.



OPR: PACAF/HO