



This Week in USAF and PACAF History
29 November – 5 December 2010



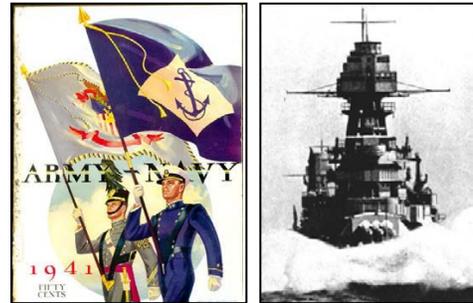
U.S. AIR FORCE

4-22 December 1918 Maj Albert D. Smith led four Curtiss JN-4s on the Army's first transcontinental trip from San Diego to Jacksonville. Smith's plane was the only one to complete the trip.

1 December 1921 The USN dirigible C-7 made its first flight. Flown by Lt Cmdr R. F. Wood from Hampton Roads to Washington DC and back, this was the **first airship to use helium rather than hydrogen**.

5 December 1929 Cmdr Richard E. Byrd made a 400-mile aerial mapping flight along the coast of Antarctica.

29 November 1941 The program for the 1941 **Army-Navy football game** included the picture at right with the caption: "A bow-on view of the U. S. S. Arizona as she plows into a huge swell. It is significant that despite the claims of air enthusiasts no battleship has yet been sunk by bombs." Eight days later, Japanese aircraft bombed and sank four U.S. battleships, including the *Arizona*, and heavily damaged four more.



3 December 1945 The 412th Fighter Group became the **U.S. Army Air Force's first jet fighter unit** when it received the first operational P-80 at March Field. This aircraft, however, was the group's second jet as the Lockheed delivered the *XP-80* on 14 November 1944.

5 December 1949 The USAF diverted \$50 million from other projects to build a **radar screen in Alaska and certain U.S. areas** after detecting a Soviet atomic explosion in August 1949. The successful Soviet test came several years earlier than expected and alarmed U.S. defense experts.



**North American B-45
Tornado**

4 December 1950 Some MiG-15s shot down one of the three USAF B-45 Tornado reconnaissance aircraft in the Korean Theater, marking the **first successful jet bomber interception** in airpower history. Two days later, the 27th Fighter Escort Wing began flying combat operations from Taegu, Korea, bringing F-84 Thunderjets to the war.

5 December 1950 UN forces abandoned Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, which they had held since October 19. Greek C-47s joined the FEAF Combat Cargo Command airlift to supply UN troops surrounded in northeastern Korea. The command evacuated 3,925 patients from Korea to Japan in **the biggest day of the war for aeromedical airlift**. Transports flew most of these from a frozen airstrip at Hagaru-ri. The U.S. Air Force suspended attacks on the Yalu River bridges, because enemy forces were crossing the frozen river on the ice.



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30 November 1951 In **one of the largest aerial battles of the Korean War**, F-86 pilots of the 4th Fighter Interceptor Group engaged over the island of Taehwa-do forty-four enemy aircraft flying south to bomb a UN target. The Sabre pilots destroyed twelve and damaged three others. Maj. George A. Davis Jr., USAF, 334th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, achieved Korean War ace status by downing a TU-2 and a MiG-15. Already a World War II ace, he was the first person to become an ace in two wars. During this battle, Maj. Winton W. "Bones" Marshall, USAF, 335th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, also became an ace, destroying an LA-9 and a TU-2. Fifth Air Force aircraft dislodged the enemy, enabling friendly forces to retake the island. (Lt Gen (ret.) "Bones" Marshall lives today in retirement on Oahu with his wife, former WASP-pilot Millie Marshall).



1 December 1959 The **first USAF Airmen assumed the top enlisted rank of Chief Master Sergeant**.

5 December 1960 A ship carrying F-102 Delta Daggers for the Hawaii Air National Guard (HIANG) arrived in Pearl Harbor. The delivery was part of an USAF conversion program from F-86 aircraft.

2 December 1966 "**Black Friday of the Vietnam War**. The Air Force lost five aircraft and the Navy lost three aircraft to surface to air missiles or anti-aircraft fire. Air Force losses included three F-4Cs, one RF-4C, and an F-105. The Navy lost one F-4B and two Douglas A-4C Skyhawks.



30 November 1971 **PACAF's last four C-124 Globemaster II** aircraft assigned to the 20th Operations Squadron at Clark AB, departed for CONUS during November. MAC had already retired its last C-124s in December 1970.

3-18 December 1974 During the summer of 1974, torrential rains flooded Bangladesh, leaving more than half the country (30,000 sq. mi.) inundated. From 3-18 December, the 374th Tactical Airlift Wing, Clark AB, flew 110 C-130 sorties between Chittagong and old World War II airfields in northern Bangladesh, to deliver 1,000 tons of food.

5 December 1975 To more fully integrate women into the Air Force, Air Training Command assigned eight female military training instructors to two male Basic Military Training Squadrons.

4 December 1979 Lockheed-Georgia delivered the **first stretched C-141B** from Marietta to MAC's 443rd Military Airlift Wing at Altus AFB. This program lengthened all 270 C-141As by 23.3 feet and modified them for air refueling.



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4 December 1986 The Air Force Council approved TAC's suggestion to expand the A-10 Thunderbolt II's role from close air support missions to forward air control functions.

5 December 1987 Following Typhoon Nina, six C-130 Hercules aircraft belonging to the 374th Tactical Airlift Wing flew 34 tons of relief supplies to the island of Luzon, Philippines.

2 December 1991 The **Thirteenth Air Force established headquarters at Andersen AFB, Guam** after officially departing Clark AB, Philippines in November.

4 December 1992 The Hawaii Air National Guard's (HIANG) recently-created 203rd Air Refueling Squadron received its first tanker, KC-135 #64-14832. The 203 ARS christened the aircraft "HOKU PA'A," the Hawaiian name for the North Star.

2-13 December 1993 Air Force Col. Richard O. Covey, pilot and mission commander, piloted the fifth flight of the shuttle Endeavor, which set a record for the **greatest number of spacewalks**—five. And on the same flight, Air Force Lt. Col. Tom Akers became the **U.S. record holder for spacewalks** with 29 hours and 40 minutes.



5 December 1994 The **START I Treaty went into force** to bring about reductions in nuclear capable bombers and missiles. The breakup of the Soviet Union had delayed START's entry into force for nearly three-and-a-half years until Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, which had inherited strategic nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union, ratified START and joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear states.

29 November 2000 Under 15th Air Base Wing management, Johnston Atoll's U. S. Army Chemical Demilitarization program reached an important historic milestone as the last of the chemical munitions on Johnston Atoll were destroyed.

5 December 2001 the United States and Russian Federation successfully reached the START I levels of 6,000 deployed warheads. 365 B-52G aircraft were flown to Davis-Monthan AFB, stripped of all usable parts, then chopped into five pieces by a 13,000-pound steel blade dropped from a crane. The ruined B-52s remained in place for three months so that Russian satellites could confirm that the bombers had been destroyed, after which the aircraft were sold for scrap.



3 December 2001 Lockheed Martin delivered the USAF's **first C-130J-30** to the 143rd Airlift Wing (ANG) at Quonset State Airport, R. I. The C-130s with the "J-30" suffix have a longer fuselage than the standard "J" model. It can carry 128 combat troops or 8 pallets rather than 92 troops or 6 pallets.