



U.S. AIR FORCE

This Week in USAF and PACAF History 18 – 24 Jul 2011



18 July 1914 Congress created an **Aviation Section of the Army Signal Corps**, replacing the Aeronautical Division. The Aviation Section consisted of only 19 officers and 101 enlisted men.

24 July 1917 **Army Aviation Section expanded.** Congress appropriated \$640 million for Army aviation and authorized the Aviation Section to grow to 9,989 officers and 87,083 enlisted men. No earlier appropriation had come close to this amount.



19 July – 20 August 1934 **Lt Col Henry H. Arnold led ten Martin B-10 bombers from Bolling Field to Fairbanks and back.** They covered 7,360 miles in 25 hours 30 minutes going north and 26 hours going south. For this flight, Arnold received the Mackay Trophy and the Distinguished Flying Cross. (B-10 bomber at left.)

18 July 1934 A War Department board headed by former secretary Newton D. Baker **recommended formation of a centrally controlled aerial strike force.** The Drum Board had come to the same conclusion in 1933 when it recommended a General Headquarters Air Force.

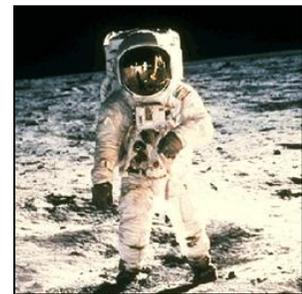
19 July 1941 **Tuskegee Army Air Field officially opened.** Capt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., a West Point graduate and son of the first black General Officer in the U.S. Army, was one of 12 aviation cadets to begin flight training as the **first class of black pilot candidates in the U.S. military.** Davis commanded an all-black pursuit squadron and fighter group in combat during World War II as well as the 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing in the Korean War. He was Vice Commander of 13th Air Force and Commander, Air Task Force 13 (Provisional) at Taipei, Formosa. Lt. Gen. Benjamin Davis retired in 1970 and was advanced to General on the retired list in 1998.



19 July 1962 A Nike-Zeus anti-missile missile fired from Kwajalein Island in the Pacific Ocean made the **first known intercept of an intercontinental ballistic missile** when it brought down the nose cone of an Atlas missile launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.



20 July 1969 Four days after launching from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the Apollo 11 lunar module landed on the Moon. A few hours later, Neil Armstrong, a civilian, and Col. Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr., USAF, became the **first men to walk on the Moon.** At the same time, Lt. Col. Michael Collins, USAF, orbited the Moon in the mission's command module.





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23 July 1971 Hughes Aircraft Company was awarded a \$70 million contract to build 2,000 **AGM-65A Maverick** air-to-surface missiles for use on F-4E and A-7D aircraft.

The Maverick was developed because of the shortcomings of earlier missiles such as the AGM-12 Bullpup. These weapons had simple, radio-controlled guidance systems that required the launching aircraft to remain in direct line with the target – and exposed to enemy fire. The Maverick was the first general purpose fire-and-forget tactical air-to-ground missile in service with the U.S. Air Force. This “launch-and-leave” capability allowed a pilot to fire the Maverick and immediately take evasive action or attack another target as the missile guided itself by optical, infrared or laser homing. Below, an F-15E launches a Maverick.



21 July - 15 August 1972 **Operation SAKLOLO**. PACAF airlifted more than 2,000 tons of relief supplies for the relief of flood victims in the Philippines. C-130s as well as H-3 and H-43 helicopters transported more than 1,500 passengers, including relief teams and evacuees.

19 July 1984 TAC received its **first E-3B Sentry** at Tinker AFB. Compared to the A-model, the E-3B had five more Situation Display Consoles (SDC), a new computer, radio teletype, and maritime surveillance capability. Other enhancements included one additional HF radio and five additional UHF radios with “Have Quick” anti-jamming circuitry.



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24 July 1990 **EC-135 Looking Glass flights ended** after nearly 30 years of continuous operation with over 250 million miles of accident-free flying. During the Cold War, the EC-135 Airborne Command Post (below) provided airborne nuclear command and control capability.



24 July 1994 **Operation SUPPORT HOPE.** USAF airlift aircraft started flying relief supplies to Rwandan refugees in Zaire in the wake of the Rwandan civil war. Through 11 September, AMC flew 700 airlift missions to transport over 11,000 passengers and 23,000 short tons. Nearly 400 KC-135 missions refueled the C-5s and C-141s, while KC-10s flew several dozen missions to ferry fuel from Harare, Zimbabwe, to Entebbe.

22 July 2002 Destined to become the **world's first directed-energy combat aircraft**, the YAL-1A made its first flight at McConnell AFB, Kansas. A modified Boeing 747, this aircraft carries an **airborne laser** to destroy enemy missiles in their boost phase.

