



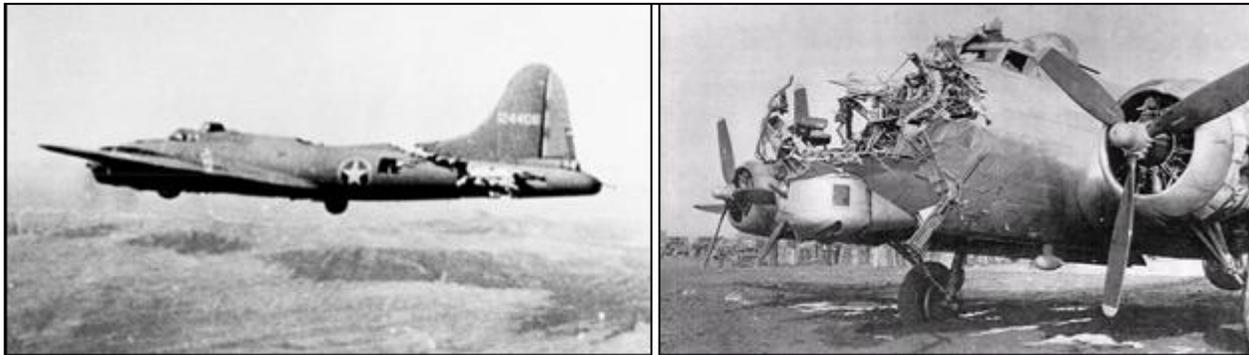
This Week in USAF and PACAF History
26 November – 2 December 2012



U.S. AIR FORCE

30 November 1925 **No independent Air Force yet.** A board appointed by President Calvin Coolidge and headed by Dwight W. Morrow released a report recommending conservative reorganization of the Air Service and its redesignation as the Air Corps, rather than establishment of an independent air force coequal with the Army and Navy. The Morrow Board Report also recommended a five-year expansion plan for Army aviation.

2 Dec 1936 **The Boeing YB-17 made its maiden flight.** Even after awarding a contract to the far less expensive B-18 Bolo, the Air Corps was so impressed with Boeing's bomber design that they used a legal loophole to order 13 YB-17s as test aircraft. The B-17 "Flying Fortress" went on to enter full-scale production as the first truly mass-produced large aircraft. It was used primarily in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany and it also conducted raids on Japanese shipping in the Pacific. The B-17's legendary ability to survive extensive battle damage, belly landings and ditchings made it the favorite bomber among World War II aircrews. The B-17 dropped more bombs than any other U.S. aircraft in the war.



1 Dec 1940 The **15th Pursuit Group** (Fighter), forerunner to the 15th Airlift Wing, was activated at Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii.

1 Dec 1941 By executive order, **President Roosevelt established the Civil Air Patrol** to



facilitate civil defense during war. Members included 17-year-old men not yet of draft age. The Civil Air Patrol flew small aircraft on disaster-relief missions or on coastal patrols to detect enemy submarine activity.



In the fall of 1943, the Civil Air Patrol became an auxiliary of the Army Air Forces.

29 Nov 1945 **The Army Air Forces School** moved from Orlando, Florida, to Maxwell Field, Alabama, and was assigned directly to the Army Air Forces. It later became **Air University**.



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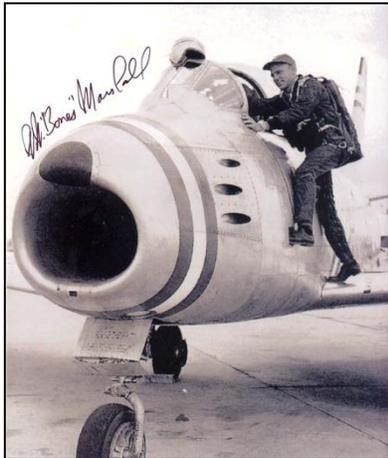


U.S. AIR FORCE

28 Nov – 10 Dec 1950 **Combat airlift to the Chosin Reservoir.** When China intervened in the Korean War, about 120,000 enemy troops cut off 15,000 U.N. soldiers at the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir in North Korea. Airlift was practically the only way to resupply these troops. C-119s and C-47s of the Far East Air Forces' Combat Cargo Command air-dropped and landed some 1,580 tons of equipment and supplies, including eight bridge spans to allow a withdrawal to the sea. The C-47s also evacuated almost 5,000 sick and wounded marines from Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri.



30 Nov 1951 In a **major Korean War air battle** over the island of Taehwa-do, F-86 pilots engaged a squadron of enemy bombers escorted by about 30 fighters. Only three damaged enemy bombers made it back to North Korea. Major George Davis achieved Korean War ace status by downing a TU-2 bomber and a MiG-15. He was the first pilot to be an ace in two wars, since he already had seven kills in World War II. Major Winton "Bones" Marshall (left) also became an ace, destroying a TU-2 and an LA-9 fighter. USAF aircraft helped dislodge the enemy, enabling friendly forces to retake the island.



Marshall later rose to the rank of Lieutenant General and served as PACAF Vice Commander in 1974 (bio [here](#)). In December, 2011, the F-86 display on O'Malley Boulevard, Hickam AFB was [rededicated](#) to retired Lt. Gen. Marshall.

26 Nov 1956 The **Air Force was given responsibility for developing ICBMs.** The SECDEF issued a "Roles and Mission" assigning missile responsibilities. The USAF controlled surface-to-surface missiles with ranges over 200 miles and surface-to-air missiles with ranges over 100 miles, while the Army controlled missiles with ranges less than 200 and 100 miles, respectively.

2 December 1966 **"Black Friday" of the Vietnam War.** Enemy SAMs and anti-aircraft fire downed five Air Force and three Navy aircraft: three F-4Cs, one RF-4C, an F-105, a Navy F-4B and two A-4C Skyhawks. Losses such as these led DoD officials to accelerate acquisition programs and tactics developments aimed at suppressing enemy air defense systems.



26 November 1968 **MEDAL OF HONOR.** During the Vietnam War, First Lieutenant James Fleming (left) flew his UH-1F helicopter into intense hostile fire twice while rescuing a team of U.S. Army Green Berets who were in danger of being overrun by a large enemy force. Despite the loss of another helicopter and a dangerously low fuel level, Fleming descended and balanced his helicopter on a river bank with the tail boom hanging over open water.



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However, the Green Berets were pinned down by heavy fire. Fleming had to withdraw and then return to repeat his landing maneuver after the Green Berets laid the last of their Claymore mines in a trip-wire line to cover their evacuation. As bullets ripped through his windscreen, Fleming remained in his exposed position and held his aircraft steady while the RT scrambled aboard in what the Air Force citation later called "a feat of unbelievable flying skill." Fleming took off through a hail of gunfire and recovered safely at a forward base, with the fuel gauge reading zero. (At right, UH-1s in Vietnam.)



29 November 1975 The **first annual RED FLAG exercise** occurred at Nellis AFB to provide realistic training for combat aircrews. Red Flag was organized to improve the performance of USAF pilots in air-to-air combat after the Vietnam War. Analysis revealed that Air Force tactics relied too much on beyond visual range capabilities and USAF pilots were unpracticed in maneuvering against dissimilar aircraft. The records showed that a pilot's chances of survival in combat dramatically increased after completing ten combat missions, and Red Flag was created to offer U.S. pilots those ten missions in a realistic but safe training environment. T-38s and F-5 Tiger IIs flew as aggressor opponents using the tactical doctrines of the Soviet Union and other potential enemies. Later aggressors included F-16s and F-15s (below, left). Today's Red Flag exercises simulate entire air campaigns, and participants include other U.S. services as well as forces from allied countries. Red Flag Alaska is PACAF's equivalent of this exercise. Aggressor aircraft (below, right) are stationed at Eielson AFB.



29 November 1980 **The American flag** which flew over Hickam during the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack **was returned to Hickam** from the Air Force Academy. In a special ceremony, Lt Gen James D. Hughes (CINCPACAF) received the flag from Lt Gen Kenneth Tallman (Superintendent of the Air Force Academy).



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U.S. AIR FORCE

26 Nov 1991 **Clark Air Base Transfer.** After disagreement on payments to the Philippine government and a series of Mount Pinatubo volcanic eruptions, the Air Force transferred Clark AB to the Philippines. The withdrawal ended a U.S. military presence that dated back to 1903. A flying school had been established on the site in 1912, known at the time as Fort Stotsenburg.

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

2-13 December 1993 In **one of the most challenging space missions ever**, astronauts on space shuttle mission STS-61 repaired the Hubble Space Telescope (below, left). Air Force Colonel Richard O. Covey (center), pilot and mission commander, piloted the fifth flight of the shuttle *Endeavor*, which set a record of five spacewalks. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Tom Akers (below, right) became the U.S. record holder for spacewalks with 29 hours and 40 minutes.



28 November 2001 **Operation SWIFT FREEDOM.** C-17s landed in Afghanistan on an airstrip about 80 miles south of Kandahar to deliver Navy Seabees. The operation introduced U.S. ground forces into Afghanistan.