



Remembering Our Heritage



25 Jan 1923: The 3rd Group (Attack) was redesignated the 3rd Attack Group at Kelly Field, TX. (Lineage and Honors History, 3rd Operations Group, Air Force Historical Research Agency, 7 Jul 1995.)

22 Jan 1925 (Thu): President Calvin Coolidge signed Executive Order 4131, transferring the following Alaskan military property from the control of the War Department to the Department of Interior: Fort Egbert, Fort Gibbon, Fort St. Michael, Fort Liscum and the portion of Chilkoot Barracks known as the Clay Reserve. Exceptions to the turnover included the post cemeteries and areas used by the U.S. Signal Corps and the Alaska Road Commission. The Army's presence in the territory by then had been reduced to personnel operating and maintaining WAMCATS and Companies E and F, 7th Infantry Regiment at Chilkoot Barracks, and Company G, 7th Infantry Regiment in Anchorage. Chilkoot Barracks remained the only active Army installation in Alaska. (Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest*, Vol II, pp. 45-46.)



25 Jan 1930 (Sat): Joe Crosson sighted the wreckage of Carl Ben Eielson's Hamilton ten miles inland from the coast and 90 miles southeast of the *Nanuk*. Joe Crosson, accompanied by Harold Gillam, landed at the site located approximately six miles from the cabin used by the trapper Brokhanov. The trapper had reported hearing the plane overhead on 9 November 1929, which had led Crosson and Gillam to search the area. They had flown to the *Nanuk* in late

December and began searching the area while rest of the search operations was getting organized. The Canadians did not arrive in their two Fairchild 71s until 28 January. Two Russian Junkers F-13s arrived on 29 January, one of which was damaged on landing. Crosson and Gilliam found the altimeter of the Hamilton was frozen at 1,000 feet and the throttle bent over to the wide-open position. The point of impact was about 50 feet above sea level. The plane had apparently hit a small knoll at high speed leading Crosson to believe that the altimeter had been off and Eielson had not seen the knoll until the last minute due to poor visibility, applied full power and crashed into it. The Canadian and Russian search parties arrived at the *Nanuk* shortly afterwards. The Russians after much digging through the deep, harden snow located Earl Borland's body on 13 February and Carl Ben Eielson's body five days later. Both had been thrown some distance from the impact of the crash. The bodies were flown back to Fairbanks. Carl Ben Eielson was buried in Hatton, North Dakota on 27 March. The Air Force renamed and dedicated its base near Fairbanks Eielson AFB on 20 July 1956. The Russians returned the remains of the Hamilton to Fairbanks on 5 March 1991, where it went on display at the Pioneer Aviation Museum. (Stevens, *Alaskan Aviation History*, pp. 942-992; Page, *Polar Pilot*, pp. 355, 368-369, 399.)

26 Jan 1939 (Thu): Delegate Anthony Dimond testified in support of an airbase in Alaska during hearings on the Department of Interior appropriations bill, stating "It seems to be that it is part of wisdom to have a strong defensive naval station in Alaska and to install immediately without delay the Army air station that has already be located in interior Alaska. The time to install defense works in Alaska is now and not tomorrow or next year." Representative Ross A. Collins, Democrat, Mississippi, spoke up in his favor, noting that Alaska was one of the most strategic places in the defense of America. (Grueing, "The State of Alaska," p.. 312-233.)



Remembering Our Heritage



29 Jan 1940 (Mon): *The Anchorage Times* reported that the *News Week* magazine had carried a map in 22 January 1940 issue showing defense installations in the Pacific with a star near Anchorage indicating the military was planning a base there. Other stars were located at Kodiak and Sitka. The *Times* also reported *Unites States News* had mentioned Anchorage as the site of a large construction project. ("Air Base Assured Says Reliable Source, Anchorage Termed Main Site for Base," *The Anchorage Times*, 29 Jan 1940.)



23 Jan 1941 (Thu): General Simon Buckner ordered Brig. Gen. Charles H. Corlett, Army garrison commander at Kodiak, to improve the defenses of the Navy base there. He noted that Kodiak could not expect to receive any fighters for air defense until end of February or early March 1942. (Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, pp. 105-106.)

23 Jan 1942: The 3rd Bombardment Group arrived at Fort Mason, CA and was housed in a farm machinery warehouse while awaiting transport to Australia. (Hist, Third Bombardment Group (Light), 1 January 1942 to 31 March 1944, pp. 94-95)

25 Jan 1942 (Sun): General DeWitt continued requesting additional air units for Alaska despite higher priorities elsewhere and limited transportation. Other than sending the P-38 equipped 54th Fighter Squadron to Alaska in June so that the 11th Fighter Squadron could be deployed to Otter Point, Umnak Island, he was not successful in gaining additional fighter squadrons. (Ferguson, AAF Study No. 4, p. 35.)

23 Jan 1943: The Papuan Campaign ended. The Japanese failed to take Port Moresby partly due to the low-level attacks employed by the 3rd Bombardment Group. The Japanese responded by attempting to reinforce their garrisons at Lae. This set the stage for the Battle of the Bismarck Sea. (Papuan Campaign: The Buna-Sanananda Operation (16 November 1942-23 January 1943), p. 2, *History of the 3rd Wing*, p.13, *Grim Reapers*, p. 41)

25 Jan 1943: Per Movement Order No. 7, File 370.5, HQ, Base Section No.2, USA Service of Supply, SWPA, the 8th, 13th, and 90th Squadrons embarked on the S.S. George Matthews at Townsville. They arrived at Moresby on 28 Jan, joining the 89th Squadron and uniting all units of the 3rd Bombardment Group. (Hist, Third Bombardment Group (Light), 1 January 1942 to 31 March 1944, pp. 119-120)

25 Jan 1943 (Mon): Two more Japanese float reconnaissance aircraft arrived over Amchitka and dropped several small bombs on shipping in Constantine Harbor without doing any damage. They were gone before the P-38s from the 54th Fighter Squadron with their B-24 escort could arrive. The Eleventh Air Force had attempted to maintain a combat air patrol over the islands, weather permitting. The Japanese soon learned to avoid the times that the American fighters were over the islands. (Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, p. 249; Craven and Cate, *The Pacific, Guadalcanal to Saipan*, p. 376; Handleman, *Bridge to Victory*, pp. 23-24.)





Remembering Our Heritage



23 Jan 1945 (Tue) KIA: A B-24 crew from the 404th Bombardment Squadron flew a photo-reconnaissance mission along the coast of Onnekotan and Kakumabetsu Islands while three other crews led by 1/Lt. Corbin Terry dropped 2,000 pounds of bombs on the cannery at Kakumabetsu, Paramushiru Island and took photographs. The flight encountered determined Japanese fighter opposition, predominately Zeros with some "Oscars" and "Tojos." The B-24 gunners claimed three fighters shot down, one probably destroyed and one damaged. A Japanese pilot in a silver colored fighter downed the B-24D, 42-41152, flown by 2/Lt. Charles N. Talbot Jr. Crew members from the other B-24 observed Lieutenant Talbot's right engine catch fire and flames coming out of the bomb bay and waist window as the stricken bomber left the formation in an apparent attempt to reach Cape Lopatka. It went into a spin and an explosion tore off the left wing and parts of the doomed bomber spun down into the waters separating Shimushu Island from the Kamchatka Peninsula. Three parachutes were observed with Japanese fighters circling them as they floated down into the icy waters of the straits below. The other bomber crews could not determine if the Japanese were strafing the helpless men. (Mission Report, 28th Bombardment Group, subj: Operational Summary for 23 January 1945, 24 Jan 1945.)



28 Jan 1950 (Sat): Lieutenant Colonel Lester F. Mathison, 625th Air Control and Warning Squadron Commander, Elmendorf AFB, reported seeing an Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) while walking from the operations building to the squadron orderly room. He described it as three reddish-orange objects about the size and shape of a pencil eraser above a small cirrus clouds approximately 25,000 to 35,000 feet above the ground. They appeared to be moving in trail, in a slightly curved line, heading north before they disappeared. Colonel Mathison called a nearby sergeant to witness the sighting. The objectives disappeared before he arrived. The AAC intelligence staff ruled out the possibility that the objectives sighted were jet aircraft. Colonel Mathison's sighting was a series of UFOs observed during the January-June 1950 period. Sergeant Willima Y. Harrell, a control tower operator on Elmendorf AFB, spotted two green lights at 0122 19 April at an altitude of 200-300 feet over one of the hangars. He and an assistant observed the move in a trail formation to positions within 1,000 feet and about 25 feet above the tower. For a brief moment, one of the lights emitted a very greenish trail. Both lights increased in brightness as they came closer to the tower and appeared to be 24-36 inches in diameter, compact and circular in shape. They appeared to glow, with deep green centers fading to yellowish green on the outer edges. The lights veered away from the control tower and passed on the opposite side of the base water tower, heading southwest towards Merrill Field. They disappeared from view one mile south of Elmendorf AFB. Other personnel on the ground also observed the lights. They appeared to be traveling at 300 miles an hour as they traversed Merrill Field. Intelligence personnel ruled out other aircraft or weather phenomena. (Thomblison, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1950, pp. 14-15.)

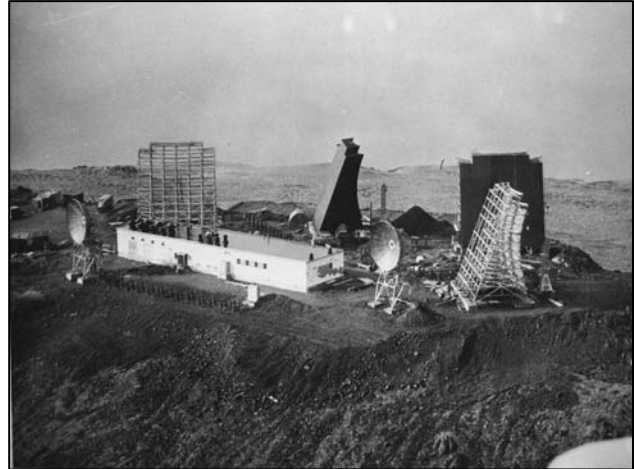
23 Jan 1952 (Wed): Eielson AFB published its first newspaper, a four page publication without a name. One of the stories, "Base Newspaper Name Contest Underway," offered a \$15.00 prize, which Lt. Hal Pressman won with the name "Mile 26 Post," Jessen's Publishing Company won a publishing contract shortly afterwards and began printing the paper as *Jessen's Weekly*. From then on, the pages varied between six and sixteen. The paper was renamed again when AIC Kenneth E. Mason, 5010th Headquarters Squadron, won \$25.00 in the *Eielson Friendly Times*, on 29 October 1954. It was shortened to the *Eielson Times* in 1959. (SSgt. Jim Beschta, "Old Papers," *Eielson Times*, 15 Jun 1972.)



Remembering Our Heritage



23 Jan 1959 (Fri): The Air Force accepted Driftwood Bay DEW Line station (COB-2) on the Aleutian DEW Line Segment (Project Stretch Out). Construction started 26 April 1957. The station was located on a 1,300 foot plateau on north shore of Unalaska Island near the town of Unalaska and six miles north-north east of Makushin Volcano. The contractor, Patti-MacDonald Construction and Morrison-Knudson Company, a joint venture, completed work on the site in August 1958. The Western Electric Company operated and maintained the station from 21 July 1958 until 31 March 1959, providing on-the-job training to military personnel. The Air Force took over operations and maintenance on 1 April 1959 with Detachment 2, 704th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron. A 17-mile road linked the station with Broad Bay, which was used for off-loading ship cargo. Two large parabolic tropospheric scatter antennas faced southwest towards Nikolski and two smaller dish antennas mounted on the side of the building faced northeast towards the Cape Sarichef DEW Line station on western side of Unimak Island. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jul-Dec 1960, pp. 251-252.)



27 Jan 1960 (Wed): Airman First Class Donald W. Ishmael received credit for saving a \$556,342 C-123B from destruction at Cape Newenham (F-5). The aircraft was parked when a high gust of wind blew it off its chocks and sent it backwards towards the 300 foot drop off at the end of the runway. Airman Ishmael, who was in the cargo bay at the time, started the engines and taxied back

to the parking area where he held it in place for 15 minutes until it could be anchored to site vehicles. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1960, pp. 266-267.)

24 Jan 1962 (Wed): The Alaskan Command reorganized the Alaskan NORAD Region. Personnel assigned to Headquarters, ALCOM working directly in ANR were reassigned to ANR. Records maintained by ALCOM were also transferred to the region. The following staff structure was established: Office of the Commander, Office of the Vice Commander, Office of the Deputy Commander, Office of Information of Director of Administration and Office of the Deputy of Operations with the following assigned: Director of Operation, Director of Intelligence, Director of Exercises and Evaluation, and ANR Combat Center with the heads of AAC staff also serving as heads of ANR staff. The Alaskan Air Command continued to provide the bulk of personnel to ANR in a dual role capacity. The Alaskan Command, Alaskan Air Command and Alaskan NORAD staff shared the same building and facilities. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1962, pp. 66-67.)

25 Jan 1967 (Wed): The Alaskan Air Command asked the Chief of Staff, USAF, that its CH-21Bs be replaced UH-1Ds. At the same time it began preparing a required operational capability document stating the need for CH-3Es. The CH-21s were nearing the end of their life cycle and were costing \$140 an hour to operate versus the \$48 an hour for the UH-1Ds, which also were equipped for instrument flight and could be loaded aboard a C-130. The HC-3Es had better capabilities with twin-engines, greater range, larger payload and higher altitude capabilities. It was also more suited for search and rescue work. United States



Remembering Our Heritage



Army, Alaska, declared their CH-21s excess in April 1967, which lent additional justification to AAC's requests for more modern helicopters. (Weidman, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1967, pp. 24-25.)

23 Jan 1970 (Sat): The Lockheed C-5A Galaxy arrived at Eielson AFB to for two months of testing under cold weather conditions. It joined the A-7D Corsair II jet fighter, which was also undergoing operational cold weather testing. The public was invited to view both aircraft. During its stay at Eielson AFB, the C-5A crew flew over and orbited the North Pole and visited Elmendorf AFB where it was put on public display. At the time, it was one of the 18 built. ("C-5 Galaxy Arrives for Arctic Test," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 6 Feb 1970; "Thousands View Galaxy," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 6 Mar 1970.)

22 Jan 1971 (Fri): The Elmendorf AFB paper, *Sourdough Sentinel*, reported that AAC had achieved an aircraft accident free year in 1970. It was the first time since 1965 that the Command had gone without having an aircraft accident. Only two other commands, Air University and Air Force Communications Service, achieved the same status during the year. Major General Joseph A. Cunningham, Commander, AAC, noted: "Aircrews should receive a good measure of praise, but bust as much praise should be given to the support people who assist in providing operationally ready aircraft." The record was significant in the fact that AAC had converted to two aircraft systems, the F-4E and the HH-3E, during 1970. ("Alaskan Air Command: Perfect Flying Safety Record," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 22 Jan 1971.)



26 Jan 1978 (Tue): The Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a \$158,759 contract to Troup, Keho, Whiteaker and Kent of Kansas City to determined the fair marked value of the portions of the White Alice Communications System that RCA Alascom wanted to purchase. The firm was interested in purchasing the tropo sites Neklason Lake Piller Mountain and the TD-2 microwave sites shown in the table below. The accounting firm determined the fair market value at \$7,638,485. Following negotiations, the Air Force and RCA Alascom reached an agreement to purchase the TD-2 system for \$7 million. The signing of the sales agreement was set for January 1979. (Cloe, Hist, 1978, pp. 308-312.)

23 Jan 1984 (Mon): A *Newsweek* article, "The Frozen War," by the magazine's national security correspondent, Nick Harrocks, discussed the Soviet threat to Alaska. Mr. Harrocks along with photographer Larry Downing had visited Alaska in late November 1983 to gather information. They had been given briefings and a tour of facilities on Elmendorf AFB, a ride in a T-33 and had visited King Salmon. The article described the Arctic as the "iciest theater of the Cold War" where "Russian and Americans peer into dimly lit radar screen trying to keep track of each other's movements." It quoted Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) as calling the region a "sort of tinderbox of the world." It described the major buildup of Soviet forces in the Far East, stating that SS-20s were station there which could hit Alaskan targets. General Brown was mentioned about being concerned about the lack of low level radar coverage. The *Anchorage Times* took the opportunity to describe "a massive Soviet military force buildup is being assembled across the Bering Sea in Alaska's backyard." It contended that Alaska was faced with a sizable Soviet threat. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1984, pp.209-211)

24 Jan-3 Feb 1985 (Thu-Sun): Brim Frost 85, a Joint Chiefs of Staff field training exercise was conducted. The emphasis was changed from the tradition force-on-force winter exercise in interior of Alaska to one that conformed to defense of Alaska plans for countering small unit attacks against key facilities. General Brown



Remembering Our Heritage



activated his command post and employed his components in Alaska for the first time in a war time role. Approximately 18,000 people participated in widely scatter locations in the exercise that cost approximately \$18 million. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1985, pp. 236-241.)

22 Jan 1998: The 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron (962 AACCS) deployed one E-3 and 36 personnel to Kadena AB, Japan. While deployed, the 962 AACCS flew six sorties for 40.9 flying hours. The focus of the deployment placed the 962 AACCS as participants in a multi-national exercise that tested the air defense capabilities of the Japanese Islands. They returned on 1 February 1998. (Hist, 3 WG, 1998, p. 50)

23 Jan 2001 (Tue): Lieutenant General Norton Schwartz, Commander, Eleventh Air Force, recommended to the Commander, Pacific Air Forces, that the 611th Air Support Group be given the authority to create a six person staff with additional manpower to manage the construction of a X-Band missile defense radar on Eareckson Air Station. He asked that the group, consisting of specialist in support agreements, acquisition management, civil engineer programming, environmental planning and compliance and real estate management, be headed by a USAF colonel. (Msg, Comdr, 11AF to Vice Comdr, PACAF, personal for Gen Trapp, 231518Z Feb 2001.)

26 Jan 2004: The 3rd Wing earned an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) for its service from 1 January 2002 to 30 September 2003. The subordinate organizations for the 3 WG also earned the AFOUA. (PACAF, G-Series Order GB-010, 26 Jan 04)

22 Jan 2006: (U) Elmendorf AFB personnel lost two members assigned to the 3rd Security Forces Squadron, TSgt Jason L. Norton, 32, of Miami, OK, and SSgt Brian McElroy, 28, of San Antonio, TX, when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device while conducting convoy escort duties in the vicinity of Taji, Iraq, approximately 18 miles north of Baghdad. There was a memorial ceremony at Chapel 1 on 27 January 2006 to honor Sergeant Norton and Sergeant McElroy. (E-Mail (U), 3 WG/CV, "Loss of Arctic Warriors," 23 Jan 2006.)

