



Remembering Our Heritage



4-10 June

7 Jun 1899: War Department General Orders 104, announced that a new Army post, named Fort Egbert after Col Harry C. Egbert, killed in the Philippines 26 March 1899, would be established at Eagle City on the Yukon River six miles from the Canadian border. Personnel arrived shortly afterwards and began building the fort on lands set aside by War Department General Order 119. Fort Egbert became the headquarters for the District of North Alaska, established by War Department General Orders 93, 10 May 1899. (Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest*, Vol. I, p. 184.)



4 Jun 1920: Congress passed the Army Reorganization Act that created the Air Service as a combatant arm of the Army on the same level as the Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery. Maj Gen Charles T. Menoher became the Chief of Air Service with Brig Gen William Mitchell as Assistant Chief, Army Air Service. Congress also created the rating of "airplane pilot" and authorized flight pay at 50 percent above base pay. The Army Air Service was authorized 1,516 officers, 16,000 enlisted men and 2,500 cadets. Unlike the other Army's combat branches, the Army Air Service control research and development, procurement and supply and personnel and training. (Ravenstein, *The Organization and Lineage of the United States Air Force*, p. 4; Goldberg, *A History of the United States Air Force*, p. 29.)

8 Jun 1940: The construction of Elmendorf Field on Fort Richardson began when 25 local men hired by Maj Edward M. George, U.S. Army Quarter Master Corps, began unloading equipment and supplies from four Alaska Railroad cars near the Whitney Station House, once located on the east side of Elmendorf AFB at the intersection of the Davis Highway and Talley Avenue. The train brought down four men, a RD-8 Caterpillar tractor and carry-all, a concrete mixer and four dump trucks from Ladd Field. The construction effort created 1,000 jobs virtually overnight and the population of Anchorage swelled by a factor of four, creating a boomtown atmosphere and straining resources. Joseph Driscoll, in his 1943 book, *War Discovers Alaska*, described Anchorage as "drenched in dirt and distilled by spirit," a modern version of the old Wild West gold mining communities with plentiful bars and prostitutes and their clients engaged in a thriving financial exchange. (2/Lt. Richard W. Fagen, *Hist. Ft. Richardson*, 1 May 1944, pp. 14-15; Capt. Henry E. Fleisher, AAF, *Hist., Elmendorf Field, 1940-1944*, p. 15; Nielson, *Armed Forces on a Northern Frontier*, p 100.



5 Jun 1941: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a \$3,110,364 cost-plus-fixed fee contract to West Cost Construction Company of Boston, MA, to drill a tunnel that connected Portage on the west side of the Chugach Mountains with the Passage Canal of the east side. The amount was later increased by \$7,724,236 to accommodate additional construction requirements for facilities at what would become known as the Port of Whittier. They included a railroad terminal and depot, tracks, railroad repair facilities, coal storage bins, oil and sand storage buildings, a sorting yard, coach and engine

house, a dock, warehouses and cold storage, a power and heating plant, gravity water system with dam and reservoir, two deep water wells, section housing and mess halls for railroad employees, barracks and

Source: Office of History, Elmendorf AFB



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mess halls to support 50 officers and 1,100 enlisted men, and a 50-bed hospital. The project was divided into three phases, the first involved the railroad and tunnel construction and the third phase the construction of port facilities. The first two phases were begun in January 1942 and the third phase in June 1942. The garrison area was built on lands that had been set aside for a town site. Construction of a town was deferred until after the war. In addition to West Coast, the 42nd Engineer Regiment (General Service) was employed in the construction of the port facilities. Resident engineers were Mr. F.A. Hansen, Maj. Caleb B. Burgoyne, CE and Lt. Col. J. Bureson, CE. (Bush, *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction*, pp. 122-124.)

4 Jun 1942: The Japanese launched a second attack against Dutch Harbor during the late afternoon, committing eleven Zeros, nine Kates and eleven Vals. The dive-bomber crews destroyed four fuel oil tanks and their 22,000 gallons of fuel and a nearby diesel tank and its contents of 15,102 gallons. Another bomb struck the barracks ship *Northwestern*, setting it on fire. The Bureau of Indian Affairs hospital was hit. Fortunately no one was injured. The bombs from the Kate horizontal bombers destroyed two anti-aircraft positions and killed five crewmembers. The Japanese selected only their most skilled pilots to make the attack because of the weather.



They launched only one wave while the American attacks were in progress. (Report, Commander, Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base to Commander, Alaska Sector, "Bombing of Dutch Harbor-Report On," 6 Jul 1942, contained in War Diary, Naval Operating Base, Dutch Harbor; Transcript, Oral Hist Intvw, John H. Cloe w/ADM James S. Russell, USN Ret and Lt Gen Masatake Okumiya, Japanese Self Defense Force Ret, 18 Jan 1980; Mitsuro Fuchida and Masatake Okumiya, "Midway, the Battle that Doomed Japan," Naval Institute Press, Annapolis MD, 1955, pp. 137-139.)



8 Jun 1942: The crew of an LB-30 piloted by Capt Robert E. Speers and copilot Lt. Frederick Ramputi from the 36th Bomber Squadron spotted Japanese ships in Kiska Harbor. On their way back to the Otter Point runway on Umnak Island, they passed the PBY flown by Lt. Milton R. Dahl from VP-41, heading for Kiska. Shortly afterwards he heard Lieutenant Dahl report that there were Japanese ships in Kiska Harbor. Lieutenant Dahl then continued on to Attu Island where he observed the Japanese. The frontal weather had delayed patrols from being flown. The Eleventh Air Force and Patrol Air

Wing Four had been attempting to find out what happen to the Kiska weather detachment since its last radio transmission. Captain Speers had taken off from Otter Point, Umnak Island, at 0900 on a patrol down the Aleutians. On arrival over Kiska, they circled at 200 feet, spotted a cruiser and mistook it for an American, flashed a recognition signal and received an incorrect response. They then spotted other vessels and began receiving fire from them. They then turned at 1300 and headed back to Umnak. While en-route, they passed a PBY heading the opposite direction. Thirty minutes later, they heard the PBY crew report that they were being shot at as they were attempting to land in Kiska Harbor. When the LB-30 crew arrived back at Umnak, they learned for certain that the Japanese had occupied Kiska. Captain Speers had not been certain of the Japanese landing until he heard the PBY radio transmission. (Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, pp. 156-157.)

6 Jun 1943: The first ship to dock at the Port of Whittier, the SS *Liloa*, arrived. During the next 12 months, 103 cargo and passenger ships docked at the port. The Port of Whittier earned a reputation of being one of the most efficient cargo handling ports operated by the Army Transportation Corps. (Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest*, pp. 143-144.)



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6 Jun 1944: Four women from the USO show, "Dough Girls" served chow in the mess hall of the 404th Bombardment Squadron. The troop was visiting Shemya and put on a number of shows. (1/Lt H.D. Leland, Hist, 404th Bombardment Squadron, Jun 1944, p. 15.)

9 Jun 1945: Task Force 90, in support of Task Force 92, bombardment of the Japanese airfield on Tagan Point on Matsuwa Island in the central Kuriles, launched a coordinated air attacks against targets in the northern Kuriles. Six B-24 crews from the 404th Bombardment Squadron and eight B-25 crews from the 77th Bombardment Squadron and four PV-2s from VPB-131 flew extensive armed weather reconnaissance and anti-shipping sweeps over Kurabu Cape, Paramushiru Island; Otomari Cape, Onnekotan Island; and attacks against the Japanese cannery in Ichinowatari Harbor on the east coast of Araitto Island in the northern Kuriles; the cannery in Asahi Harbor and the cannery in Masu Harbor on the east coast of Paramushiru Island. (Mission Report, 28th Bombardment Group, "Operational Summary for 9 Jun 1945," 10 Jun 1945.)



8 Jun 1949: General Twining requested the Alaskan Sea Frontier assume logistic support of bases in the Aleutian Islands. The Army and Air Force was in the process of withdrawing from the Aleutians at the time. The bulk of their activities were located on Adak Island where the Army maintained the Aleutian Division, Alaska General Depot and the Port of Adak. The Alaskan Air Command maintained facilities at Cold Bay (Thornbrough AFB) on the Alaska Peninsula, Otter Point (Cape AFB) on Umnak Island, Ataka, Adak and Shemya AFB that supported the Great Circle Route. The Command planned to eliminate or reduce them to a minimum. The request included the Navy assuming full responsibility for Adak, where it maintained a naval operating base. Rear Admiral Frank D. Wagner, Commander, Alaskan Sea Frontier, expressed support for the plan, but noted it required the final approval of the Chief of Naval Operations. General Twining also submitted a similar proposal to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 23 November 1949. (Hist, ALCOM, Jan 1947-31 Dec 1951, pp. 106-108.)



7-8 Jun 1951: The 3rd Bombardment Wing supported the limited offensive by the Eighth Army to secure the "Iron Triangle" bordered by the towns of Pyongyang, Chorwon and Kumhwa in central Korea. The wing, along with B-29s, committed 23 B-26s to dropping 500-pound air-bursting bombs on enemy troops. The wing flew another 17 night sorties under Tactical Air Control Post direction during the night. (Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea*, p 370)

8 Jun 1951: Detachment 1, 3rd Bombardment Wing, stationed at K-2 (Taegu), inactivated and all personnel and resources were sent back to Iwakuni AB, Japan or K-8 (Kunsan), the future home of the wing. A primary reason for discontinuing operations from K-2 came from a critical shortage of tires for the B-26. It was noted that the poor conditions of the K-2 runway, notably the steel planking, caused considerably higher tire failure rates. In one 10-day period at K-2, 56 tires required replacement. (Hist, 3BG, Jun 51, Ops Section, p. 2)



7 Jun 1956: The *Anchorage Daily Times* reported, citing reliable sources, that the US Corps of Engineers was withholding contracts to construct three Nike Hercules sites in the Anchorage area and four in the Fairbanks area. The Corps of Engineers did not comment on the article and the Pentagon remained silent,



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probably because of the on-going debate on whether the Army or Air Force should control surface-to-air missile defense. (Chart, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1956, pp. 36-37.)

10 Jun 1958: The Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR) was established as a region of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) with the designation of the Commander-in-Chief, ALCOM as Commander, ANR. He in turn delegated the responsibility to Commander, AAC. (HQ NORAD GO 11, 1 Sep 1958; Hist, ALCOM, Jul-Dec 1958, p. 25)



8 Jun 1960: Elmendorf AFB celebrated its 20th Anniversary with a formal dedication ceremony in honor of its name sake, Capt Hugh M. Elmendorf. No former dedication ceremony had been held prior. Captain Elmendorf's daughter, Mrs. Virginia Elmendorf Johnson of Alexander, VA and her husband were the guests of honor. Mrs. Johnson unveiled the memorial as 12 F-102s from the 317th Fighter Interceptor Squadron flew overhead. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1960, p. 124.)

4 Jun 1963: At the request of Senator Earnest Gruening (AK-D), the Air Force directed AAC to stop selling standards Quonset Huts at public sales. Senator Gruening had received complaints from Anchorage and Fairbanks that they were becoming an eyesore in the communities. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1963, p. 181.)

8 Jun 1964: The 90th Bomb Squadron was redesignated the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron and transferred to the 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing. (Hist, 3BW (Tactical), 1 Jul 63-8 Jan 64, p. 52)

5 Jun 1969: An RC-135, Rivet Amber, assigned to the 6th Strategic Wing (SAC), Eielson AFB, AK, disappeared with 19 crew members aboard on a 1,700 mile routine flight from Shemya AFB to Eielson AFB in a Class A Flight Mishap. The Air Force launched an extensive search involving two Coast Guard cutters and approximately 15 aircraft when the crew failed to arrive at Eielson AFB. The Air Force called off the search on 16 June after more than 1,015 flight hours had been expended on the effort. The missing and presumed dead crew members were: Maj Richard N. Martel, Maj Horace G. Beasley, Maj Steven P. Carpenter, Maj Charles B. Michaud, Maj Rudolph John Meissner Jr., Capt Meward M. Mills, Capt James F. Ray, MSgt Cecil H. Gregory, TSgt Leroy E. Benevides, TSgt Frederick C. Dreher, TSgt Hebert, Hervey TSgt Jacob L. Schantz, TSgt Frederick D. Wonders, SSgt Roy L. Lidsey, SSgt James R. Steen Jr., Sgt Douglas Arcano, Sgt Edward S. Consolver Jr., Sgt Wayne R. Fox, Sgt Lucian A. Rominiecki. Eielson AFB erected a stone monument with a bronze plaque with the names inscribed in Amber Hall in early 1973. (Paper, SrA Melissa M. Owens, "The Rivet Amber," 11 Mar 1995; Casualty Reports on file in 3rd Wing History Office.)

4 Jun 1971: The 5040th Helicopter Squadron with the aid of a 71st Rescue and Recovery Squadron HC-130 evacuated 165 villagers from Alakanuk and Emmonak, located approximately 120 miles south of Nome near the mouth of the Yukon River. Rising waters had flooded the village. The Alaska Disaster Office had alerted the Rescue Coordination Center on 3 June that the two villages were under three to five feet of water. The center dispatched an HH-3 from Galena on 4 June and a HC-130 to provide refueling support. Major Lucius F. Hallett III, pilot, and Maj. George C. Hitt, copilot, arrived to find 850 stranded personnel, not the 350 reported. Three additional HH-3s were dispatched. The evacuees were flown by helicopter to St. Mary's approximately 65 miles to the southeast. The evacuations were called off in the afternoon when the waters began receding. The squadron evacuated an additional 137 villagers from Sheldon' and Lamont, several miles east of Lmmonak the next day when the flood waters threaten the villages. (SSgt. David Roth, "Floods Plaque Villages," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 11 Jun 1971.)



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8 Jun 1975: The Civil Service Commission announced that the tax free cost of living allowance (COLA) for Federal employees in the Anchorage area would be reduced from 25 to 22.5 percent. The rest of the state was not effective. The amount was based on a survey of goods and services in the Washington DC area compared to overseas high cost of living areas such as Alaska. The American Federation of Government Employees lodged an unsuccessful protest based on the fact that costs were going up in Anchorage because of the construction of the Trans Alaskan Pipeline. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, Jul 1974-Jun 1975, p. 79.)

6 Jun 1979: The United States Readiness Command approved a Joint Task Force-Alaska request to cancel its Safe Haven plan for evacuating non-combatant civilians. Experience during Brim Frost 79 and previous experiences had proven to plan unworkable due to the limited road and rail network in Alaska and the logistics requirements that had to be overcome. In addition, the state of Alaska had grown more capable in providing emergency response. Colonel Edward S.E. Newbury, USAF Ret, Director of the Alaska Division of Emergency Services stated that his organization could handle the emergency evacuation of civilians, relieving the active forces of that requirement. The Alaskan Air Command cancelled the Safe Haven Plans on 19 June. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1979, pp. 1178-1179.)



6 Jun 1980: Lt Gen K.L. Tallman, Superintendent of the Air Force Academy requested General Scott's assistance in capturing a white Gyrfalcon needed by the cadet wing as a mascot. The wing's falcon, Baffin, had died and attempts to obtain another through a donation had proven fruitless. The Academy then received permission from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to capture one on Alaska's Seward Peninsula. General Scott made arrangements with the Alaska Army National Guard for helicopter support and lodging at the Kotzebue Armory. Captain Gerry Henningsen, Academy Veterinarian and Dr. James Enderson, a falcon expert, assisted by Mr. Alan Springer of Fairbanks and Dr. Enderson's son succeeded in capturing a white gyrfalcon on 16 July. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1980, pp. 441-442.)

7 Jun 1982: The 43rd Tactical Fighter Squadron made last F-4E intercept of a Soviet flight, two TU-16 Badgers over the Chukchi Sea. The Phantoms were deployed on alert to Galena. The crew making the intercept were: Capt. Paul E. Trapp, pilot; Capt. Timothy N. Thorpe, weapons system officer; Capt. Russell H. Sahr, pilot; and Maj. Bruce W. Moore, weapons systems officer. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1982, pp. 233-234.)

5 Jun 1983: The *Anchorage Daily News* also published an editorial entitled "A Unified Command Makes Good Sense," which suggested that consideration should be given to the JCS plan. The editorial quoted General Chain as saying that the existing command structure "scares the hell out of the joint chiefs." The editorial went on to say that "failing to change the command is reckless and imprudent in the extreme." The editorial ended with the following words of advice:

It seems clear that everybody agrees a unified command structure here is the prudent organization –and it ought to be accomplished, quickly. The question of whether that command reports to Hawaii or directly to the JSC apparently will be settled on political, or military grounds. Alaska- in the person of Sen. Ted Stevens, Chairman of the Military Appropriations Subcommittee, is well established to wage that battle in Washington. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1993, p. 38.)



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9 Jun 1984: The first of three C-12Fs, 84-0147, to be assigned to Elmendorf AFB arrived. The second C-12F, 84-0148, arrived the next day. All three arrived from the Beechcraft factory. The Air Force had decided to lease the Beechcraft King Air as part of a program to replace the Rockwell International CT-39 Saberliner. The Alaskan Air Command was allocated three. Detachment 1, 616th Military Airlift Group was activated 1 May to provide air crews. Beechcraft was responsible for their maintenance. A formal dedication ceremony was held in Hangar 15 on 1 August. Mrs. Claudyne Brown (wife of General Brown) christened 84-0148 "Elmendorf," Mrs. Bonnie Callahan (wife of Col. James E. Callahan, Commander, 616MAG), christened 84-0149 "Shemya," and Mrs Carla Hult (wife of Maj. LeRoy J. Hult, Commander, Detachment 1) christen 84-0147, "Eielson." (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1984, pp. 340-341.)



4 Jun 1986 (Wed): The Air Force approved the following mission statement for Alaskan Air Command:

The Alaskan Air Command (AAC) organizes, trains, and equips combat ready, tactical air forces for employment by combined, unified, sub-unified, joint task force, or specified commanders to preserve the national sovereignty of the United States (US) and defend US interest overseas. The Commander, AAC, is also the Commander, Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR)/Alaskan ADCOM Region (AAR) and the Commander, Joint Task Force-Alaska (JTF-AK) designee. The Commander, ANR/ARR, provides tactical warning and attack assessment against aerospace and attack, preserves the air sovereignty of the US and Canada, limits damage to North America during hostility, and provides wartime defense of North America against aerospace attack. The Commander, AAC, provides support to the Commander in Chief, U.S. Readiness Command (USCINCRCD) in planning for the unified defense of mainland Alaska. On JTF-AK activation, USCINCRCD becomes the supporting commander. The Commander, AAC, as the senior military officer in Alaska, is the coordinating authority for all joint military administration and logistics matters in Alaska, and is the military point of contact to the State of Alaska. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1986.)



8 Jun-2 Jul 1991: The USAF conducted Fiery Vigil, the evacuation of Clark AB in the Philippines as the result of the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. Volcanic ash buried Clark AB and other military installations forcing the evacuation of 15,000 people to Guam and the U.S. It was the largest evacuation since the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Clark AB, the oldest and largest air base in the Philippines closed permanently. (Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight*, p. 140.)

7 Jun 2003: The Air Force Sergeants Association, First-Term Airmen Center, and the Air Force Association teamed up to cleanup and refurbish the Eleventh Air Force Memorial on Merrill Field. (SSgt Connie L. Bias, "Elmendorf, Anchorage Take 11th Air Memorial Under Wing," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 13 Jun 2003.)



6-10 Jun 2005: Elmendorf underwent an F-22 Site Survey, during which three options for bringing as many as 48 F-22s to the 3 WG. The first planes could have arrived as early as the fourth quarter of FY08. (Miller, *3 WG Hist 2005, 2006.*)