

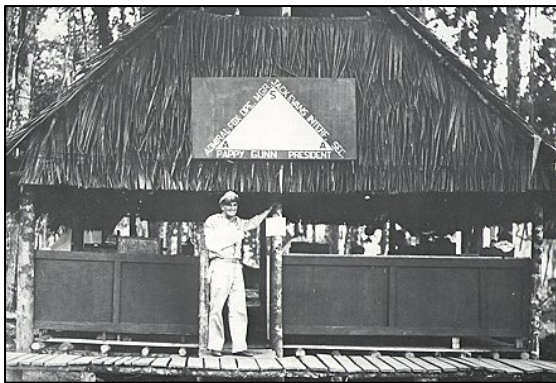


Remembering Our Heritage



25 Mar 1938: Alaska Territorial Delegate Anthony Dimond spoke before the House of Representatives. He noted that while the Wilcox Bill had been signed into law by the President, the Bureau of Budget had failed to provide funding. Delegate Dimond again asked for appropriations of \$2,000,000 to build an air base near Fairbanks. (Speeches, Delegate Dimond, in House of Representatives Mar 25 and 28, 1938.)

22 Mar 1942: Brigadier General William Butler and his Eleventh Air Force completed a plan for deploying additional forces to Alaska in the event of an emergency. They were aware that the Japanese might attack Alaska. The Commander, Fourth Air Force ordered the 55th Fighter Group at Paine Field, WA, and the 42nd Bombardment Group at McChord Field, WA, to commit units. General Butler and his staff realized that they would not be getting any more units. The plan required the deployment of the air echelon only with the forces already in Alaska providing maintenance and support. They agreed to accept aircraft that had not been winterized. Arrangements were made for the units involved to send personnel to Alaska to learn about the conditions there. General Butler received confirmation on 18 April that the two groups designated would deploy units to Alaska in an event of an emergency. The proposed deployed forces included a P-38 squadron, which met the needs for a long-range fighter in Alaska with a twin-engine capability. General Butler envisioned employing his forces in southeast Alaska as well as in the Kodiak and Aleutian areas. (Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, pp. 124-129.)



25 Mar 1942: Forty-two officers and 62 enlisted men, formally assigned to the 27th Bombardment Group and headed by Lt Col John Davies, joined the 3rd Bombardment Group, bringing enough worn Douglas A-24 single-engine Dauntless dive-bomber with them to outfit the 8th Bombardment Squadron. The 13th and 90th Bombardment Squadron remained without aircraft. Capt Paul "Pappy" Gunn, who achieved fame for his field ordnance innovations was among the group. Since he was 41 at the time, Captain Gunn earned the nickname "Pappy Gunn." Colonel Davies had him assigned to the

3rd Bombardment Group as the engineer officer. (*The Grim Reapers*, p. 11)

19 Mar 1943: The Eleventh Air Force activated the XI Bombardment Command at Adak. It had existed in a provisional organization since 1 July 1942, when it was formed at Cape Field, Umnak. There was no change in personnel manning. The activation instructions required no additional personnel from the Eleventh Air Force. Personnel from the 28th Composite Group filled staff positions. Colonel Earl DeFord had assumed command when the XI Bombardment Group had been a provisional organization. Promoted, Brig Gen Ear DeForc, six officers and four enlisted men left for Amchitka on 3 May. They were followed by the rest of the headquarters on 22 June 1943. With the end of the Aleutian Campaign, the headquarters returned to Adak in September 1943. General DeFord relinquished command to Col Robert H. Herman on 2 December 1943. The XI Bombardment Command moved to Shemya during February-March 1944, where it remained until inactivated. (Herold, Hist, XIBC, Mar 1943-Mar 1944, pp. 3-5.)



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21 Mar 1943: The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to postpone any major offensive in the Pacific, opening the way for an invasion of Attu. Intelligence that the Japanese were building an airfield there added incentive. The next day, General Marshall and Admiral King decided that the invasion should proceed "as soon as practicable." The decision did not affect the planning and training that had already begun. Admiral Rockwell's staff drew up another estimation of the forces and shipping that would be needed. (Conn, Fairchild and Engelman, *Guarding the United States and Its Outpost*, p. 280.)

22 Mar 1943: Intelligence now estimated that the Japanese had about 2,400 men on Attu assigned to one and a half infantry battalions, three 75mm dual purpose anti-aircraft artillery batteries, a 75mm mountain artillery battery plus other combat support and service support units consisting of engineer, medical and service units. The engineers were involved primarily in constructing a runway at Holtz Bay. The Japanese forces were concentrated in the Holtz Bay and Chichagof Harbor areas with the latter containing the headquarters of Col Yasuyo Yamazaki. It also contained the strongest prepared positions. One anti-aircraft battery with four guns was located on the West Arm of Holtz Bay and the other on the East Arm of the bay. The third battery defended the Chichagof Harbor area. The mountain artillery battery guarded the pass between Holtz Bay and Massacre Valley with a section providing enfilading Massacre Valley. The Japanese established machine gun and mortar positions along the ridges overlooking Massacre Bay and Sarana Bay. The planners in California noted where the major defenses were and what beaches were less defended. Reconnaissance planes brought back up to date intelligence of Japanese locations, although it was almost impossible to spot well-concealed positions along the ridgelines. The photographs revealed activity in the vicinity of Temnac Cove, Sarana Bay and at the head of Massacre Valley. As intelligence came in, the number of Japanese on Attu was progressively raised, and by the time General Brown and his staff had completed their operational planning, the figure was between 1,600 and 1,800 men. Photographs taken in early April detected unmanned positions covering the landing beaches in Massacre Bay. It was assumed they had been built before the Japanese abandoned the island in September 1942. (Conn, Fairchild and Engelman, *Guarding the United States and Its Outpost*, p. 282.)



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24 Mar 1943: The Joint Chiefs of Staff gave their final, formal approval for Operation Landcrab, the amphibious assault on Attu Island. Rear Admiral Francis W. Rockwell assumed responsibility for planning the joint operations from his headquarters at the San Diego Naval Base, California. (Craven and Cate, *The Pacific, Guadalcanal to Saipan*, pp. 378-379.)

21 Mar 1946: The Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower and Chief of Naval Operations ADM Chester W. Nimitz directed the formation of the Hoge Board to prepare a "completely integrated Army-Navy plan for the military development of Alaska." The Hoge Board, headed by Maj Gen William M. Hoge Jr., US Army Corps of Engineers, and Commanding General of the Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, VA, consisted of Army and Navy representatives. The board recommended 36 radar stations be built in Alaska, ten of which would be operated in peacetime, with the rest to go into operations during wartime. Locations for the peacetime radar sites from north to south were: Point Barrow, Nome, Nunivak Island, Cape Newenham, Cordova, Sitka and Sitkinak and Dutch Harbor, Adak and Shemya in the Aleutians. The recommendations did not include cost and personnel estimates. (Dr. Ira Chart, "Development of Aircraft Control and Warning in Alaska," Historical Div, Office of the Executive, AAC, Aug 1953, pp. 9-10.)



Remembering Our Heritage



23 Mar 1951: The 3rd Bombardment Wing along with other Fifth Air Force units supported the airdrop of 3,400 men and 220 tons of equipment from the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team and two Ranger companies near Munsan north of Seoul with 24 B-26s. They covered the area for 30 minutes, attacking targets with 500-pound bombs, fused rockets, and .50 caliber machine guns. (Hist, 3BG, Mar 51, Ch 4, p. 5; Furtrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea*, p. 252; Warnock, *The USAF in Korea, A Chronology*, p.38)

25-26 Mar 1952: Fifth Air Force planners selected a segment of railway between Chongju and Sinanju for a saturate mission because it included a long roadbed in a swampy area, two bridges across small streams and a minimum number of anti-aircraft positions. The target area was located in the northwestern corner of North Korea. Fighter-bombers struck the railway during daylight hours and the 3rd Bombardment Wing committed 8 B-26 sorties against it during the night. The crews dropped 42 500-pound bombs. More daylight and night missions followed. By 31 March, however, photoreconnaissance missions showed that the Communist had repaired all the damages. (Furtrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea*, p. 452)



23-24 Mar 1961: The Alaskan Air Command conducted air defense exercise Gold Rush, held in conjunction with SAC deployment exercise Big Blast, to test and evaluate the Fire Island (F-1) NORAD Control Center (626th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron) complex in controlling air defense operations. The other sector stations included Bethel (F-21) (713th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron) I, Middleton Island (F-22) (720th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron), Ohlson Mountain (F-25) (937th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron), and Sparrevohn (F-15) (719th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron) and Tatalina (F-10) (717th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron). The aircraft flew missions that attempted to penetrate the radar system while the 317th Fighter Interceptor Squadron flew intercept missions. Gold Rush also exercised the Army's 4th Missile Battalion, 43rd Artillery Regiment anti-aircraft Nike Hercules missile defense system in the Fort Richardson-Elmendorf AFB-Anchorage area. The Fire Island complex received a satisfactory rating. (Miller, Hist, AAC, 1961, pp. 376-388.)



20 Mar 1973: Colonel Billie M. Bobbitt, Director of Women in the Air Force (WAC) arrived at Elmendorf AFB to assess the assignment of women to remote stations. She visited Eielson AFB, King Salmon, Cold Bay and Indian Mountain (F-18). Colonel Hansen reported that Indian Mountain was not suitable, the others were. (Hales, Hist, AAC, Jul 1972-Jun 1974, pp. 43-44.)

25 Mar 1977: The *Anchorage Times*, began publishing a series of articles following the Joint Chiefs of Staff decision to cancelled Jack Frost 78, the annual Arctic winter exercise held in Alaska. The decision was based on economic reasons and the fact that other locations conducted joint field training every other year. It cost approximately \$4 million to conduct the Jack Frost series. The Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to conduct the Jack Frost series on the odd year and the winter training exercises in northwest and central U.S. in the even years. The *Anchorage Times* responded with "State Maybe Too Warm for Military," 25 March; "Cost is Key Issue in Frost Move," 26 March; Editorial, "Military Exercises," 26 March; and "Pentagon, Alaska Not Demoted," 28 March; and Editorial, "Economy That Hurts," 2 December. (Hales, Hist, AAC, 1977, pp. 306-307.)



Remembering Our Heritage



20 Mar 1981: General Scott briefed Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) on the proposed realignment of AAC under TAC as a numbered air force. Senator Stevens responded favorably, noting “the realignment is a positive thing for the country,” and “would result in more aerial hardware for Alaska.” (Study, Dr. Tim Keck, Office of History, PACAF, “Why Eleventh Air Force,” Jul 1990, p. 2.; Cloe, Hist. AAC, 1981, p. 12.)

20 Mar 1985: Colonel Pat Paxton, Commander, 21st Tactical Fighter Wing, was killed in a Class A Flight Mishap when his F-15A, 74-0120, crashed into the Yellow Sea during the deployment of the 43rd Tactical Fighter Squadron to Korea for exercise Team Spirit. Naval aircraft and members of Colonel Paxton's flight conducted an initial search followed by an HC-130 and naval vessels which arrived shortly afterwards. The search area covered 1,300 square miles. Navy vessels recovered aircraft debris and Colonel Paxton's body. A memorial service attended by more than 500 people was held in Chapel Three, Elmendorf AFB. An honor guard lined the sidewalk to the chapel and four F-15s flew a missing man formation flight. Colonel Paxton's funeral was held in Eaton, OH, with interment in Arlington National Cemetery on 26 March. The U.S. flag in front of the AAC headquarters building was flown at half mask until the interment. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1985, p. 271.)



25 Mar 1998: The C-130 aircraft arrived at Elmendorf AFB, as part of the C-130 plus up. This transfer made the 517th Airlift Squadron (517 AS) the largest C-130 squadron in the Air Force. (Hist, 3 WG, 1998, Chron)



24 Mar 1989: The *Exxon Valdez* ran aground on Bligh Reef, in Valdez Narrows, spilling approximately 11 million gallons of crude oil. The Military Airlift Command began transporting more than 1,000 tons of equipment and supplies to Alaska in support of the clean up effort of the *Exxon Valdez*. (Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight*, p. 135.)

19 Mar 1992: Captains Norman C. Lagasse and Albert A. Thrasher III, 54th Fighter Squadron, launched from King Salmon and intercepted a flight of two TU-95 Bear Gs over the Bering Sea. An account of the intercept appeared in the 6 April 1992 edition of the *Air Force Times*. The two pilots flew within 500 feet of the bomber, close enough to see the crew waving. The article also stated that it was the first intercept of a TU-95 since the breakup of the Soviet Union into the Commonwealth of Independent States. The article went on to describe the sizable decline of air intercepts in other NORAD regions. The Associated Press and the *Anchorage Times* also covered the intercept. (Hist, 3rd Wing, 1991-1992, pp. 82-85.)



21 Mar 1999: Approximately 200 volunteers from Elmendorf AFB participated in the search to find the bodies of three snowmobilers covered in an avalanche in Turnagain Pass south of Anchorage. TSgt Victor Jones, 3rd Civil Engineer Squadron, was among those lost in the avalanche. (Hist, 11AF, 1999, p 18)



Remembering Our Heritage



20 Mar 2005: Maj (Dr.) Thomas Knolmayer, 3 MDG Chief of Surgery, completed the 33rd Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Major Knolmayer covered the 1,161 mile trail in 13 days, 22 hours, 13 minutes, and 25 seconds. He finished 58 out of 63 finishers; 16 racers did not complete the race. Major Knolmayer finished the race with 9 of his 16 dogs; seven of the dogs did not complete the race because of illness or injuries. (Miller, *3 WG Hist 2005, 2006.*)



22 March 2005: Lt Gen Carrol H. Chandler, 11 AF Commander, announced to the media that Elmendorf AFB had been selected be one of two operational bases for the F/A-22 Raptor. The F/A-22 was designed to replace the F-15 and F-117 aircraft. He stated Elmendorf AFB would have two squadrons of F/A-22 aircraft, approximately 48 jets. The *Anchorage Daily News* printed an article about Elmendorf AFB receiving the F-22 aircraft and background on the Raptor, comparing it to the F-15E and F-15C aircraft. (Frank, Hist, 11 AF 2005)