

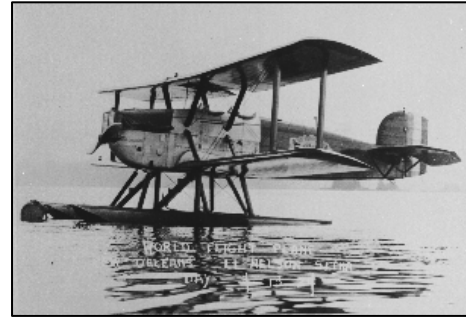


Remembering Our Heritage



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15 May 1924: The Douglas World Cruisers departed Attu Island for the Paramushiru in the Kurile Islands, ending their transit through Alaska. From Paramushiru the flight proceeded by way of Tokyo, Japan; Shanghai, China; Haiphong and Saigon, Vietnam; Bangkok, Thailand; Rangoon, Burma; Calcutta, India; Karachi, Pakistan; Baghdad, Iraq; Istanbul, Turkey; Bucharest, Rumania; Vienna, Austria; Paris, France; London, England; Kirkwall, Scotland; Reykjavik, Iceland; Frederiksdal, Greenland; Icy Tickle Bay, Labrador; Pictou, Nova Scotia; and Boston, Massachusetts. (Official Report of the United States Army Air Service Around the World Flight.)



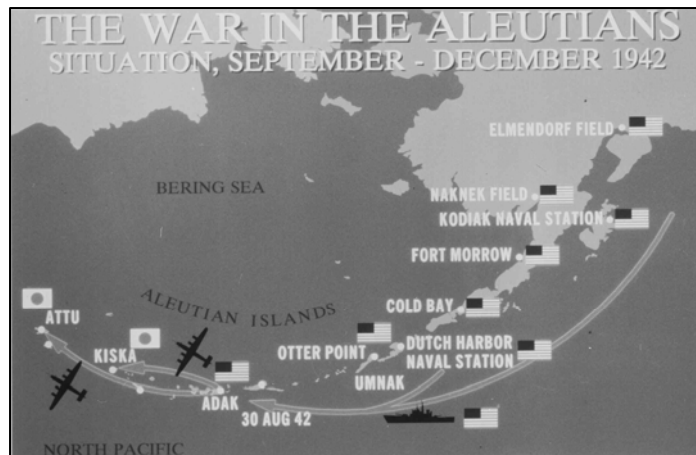
17-23 May 1930: Twenty-eight attack planes, assigned to the 3rd Attack Group, flew to Havana, Cuba and returned to Kelly Field, TX, demonstrating the feasibility of short notice, long distance flights. (Hist, Third Bombardment Group (Light), Activation to 31 December 1941, p. 17)

15 May 1936: The US Congress changed the name Washington-Alaska Military Cable and Telegraph System

(WAMCATS) to the Alaska Communications System (ACS) to reflect a more modern image, and to reflect the fact that civilian traffic dominated the system and cable and telegraph had been replaced by a wireless system. (J. Meeham (believed to be author), first draft, Alaska Communications System History, p. 106. It references War Department Circular 31, 27 May 1936 and an Act of Congress, 15 May 1936.)

17 May 1940: *The Anchorage Daily Times* carried Gen George C. Marshall's comments on the need for two air bases in Alaska, one for operations and the other for cold weather testing. Anchorage's location provided a better operations and maintenance environment and the weather was not as harsh as in the Fairbanks area, which was more suited for cold weather testing. The paper reported that the original estimate of \$12,734,060 for the base near Anchorage had been reduced to \$8,700,000. The items in the appropriations included \$85,000 for land acquisition; \$1,800,000 for construction of three large hangars; \$1,250,000 for barracks to accommodate 1,000 men; \$1,735,000 for a water sewer system, electricity, roads, laundry facilities; \$430,000 for fuel storage, \$200,000 for bomb storage; and \$327,000 to move the U.S. Army Signal Corps radio transmitter facility from Whitney to Campbell Point. (*Anchorage Daily News*, 17 May 1940.)

19 May 1941: Lt Frank O'Brien, who had been sent to the Aleutians by General Buckner to conduct an aerial survey of potential airfield sites, submitted his report. He had sailed aboard the Navy gunboat *Charleston* (PG 51), which had a Curtis SOC-1 Seagull aerial spotter aboard. The Navy aviators aboard the *Charleston*, Lt Comdr William Miller and Lt Kenneth Musick, checked out Lieutenant O'Brien on the floatplane. Together they investigated from the air potential airfield sites on Unalaska, Umnak, Adak, Tanaga, Amchitka and Kiska Islands. On his return to Elmendorf Field, Lieutenant O'Brien recommended Otter Point as being the best





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location on Umnak Island. Although it lacked a nearby location for a harbor, it provided a flat area for an airfield. Lieutenant O'Brien and his companions were unable to find a similar flat area on Unalaska Island. An airfield was needed to defend Dutch Harbor. Lieutenant O'Brien also reported potential airfield sites at on Cape Sasmik, Tanaga Island, Kuluk Bay and Andrew Lagoon, Adak Island and Constantine Harbor, Amchitka Island. They also looked at possible airfield sites at Cold Bay, Sand Point and Port Heiden on the Alaska Peninsula. Based on Lieutenant O'Brien's findings, Generals Buckner and DeWitt decided to build an airfield on Otter Point. They were opposed, however, by the Navy and War Departments, who felt the airfield would be difficult to logistically support due to its lack of a natural harbor and defend due its exposed position. The Navy felt that air surveillance of the Aleutians was its responsibility and could be conducted by tender based PBYS. The nearest air base to Dutch Harbor at the time was the 2,500 by 400-foot gravel strip at Kodiak. (Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, p. 37; Oral History Interview, John H. Cloe w/Frank O'Brien, 8 Aug 1980; Ltr., Gen John DeWitt, Commander, Western Defense Command to Gen George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 24 Jul 1941.)

15 May 1942: Nine B-25s of the 13th Squadron, assigned to the 3rd Bombardment Group, left Charters Towers for Port Moresby in preparation for a strike on Lae. (Hist, Third Bombardment Group (Light), 1 January 1942 to 31 March 1944, p. 16)



16 May 1942: Poor visibility, caused by rainy weather, prevented three of the 3rd Bombardment Group's B-25s from sighting their targets at Lae. The remaining six set several fires with their bombs and shot down a Japanese Zero. Eight B-25s carrying out the second mission against Lae dropped incendiary bombs near the hangar area. 1 zero was downed after attacking the formation head on. All planes returned except for the one piloted by Lt Feltham. He was last seen near Salamaua after the first attack. (Hist, Third Bombardment Group (Light), 1 January 1942 to 31 March 1944, p. 16)

19 May 1944: Captain Lorenzo E Dixon and his B-24 crew from the 404th Bomb Squadron flew the deepest penetration mission of the Kurile Island to date, an armed night photoreconnaissance mission over the tiny island of Ketoi and Buroton Bay on the northern shore of Shimushiru Island in the central Kurile Islands. He reached a point barely 900 miles from Tokyo. He and his crew were in the air for 12 hours. (Field HQs, 11AF A-2 Intelligence Summary No. 44-39 for 19 May 1944; Ransohoff, Hist, 11AF, p. 347.)



15 May 1945: The first flight of six B-24s from the 28th Bomb Group dropped 35 500-pound general-purpose bombs on Japanese shipping in Kashiwabara Harbor from 17,000 feet without observing results due to a smoke screen and cloud cover. Four Japanese fighter pilots intercepted the bombers. The B-24 gunners damaged two Zeros. Two B-24s received slight damage from anti-aircraft fire. (Mission Report, 28th Bombardment Group, "Operational Summary for 15 May 1945, 16 May 1945)



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17 May 1947: The first echelon of the 66th Fighter Squadron arrived on Elmendorf from Shemya with the remainder of the squadron to complete the move in early June. The 65th Fighter Squadron had completed the move earlier. That squadron flew an ice-bombing mission to break an ice jam in the Kuskowim River during the month. It also flew similar missions to the Yukon River near Galena Air Field. (1/Lt Myron A. Borland, Hist, 57FG, May 1947.)



16 May 1949: Headquarters, Alaskan Air Command recommended that the following Elmendorf AFB auxiliary fields be declared surplus: Goose Bay, Campbell, Birchwood and Willow. The fields, established during World War II, were transferred to the Department of Interior shortly afterwards. The Alaskan Air Command declared Moonlight Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field 2.5 miles from Marks AFB, Nome, surplus and the facilities were partially disposed of. (Thomblison, Hist, AAC, 1949, p. 85.)

19 May 1949: The first tomatoes to be shipped by air to a military installation in Alaska arrived at Ladd AFB in a commercial plane. There was no spoilage. Plans were made to ship more fresh vegetables by air since the costs were outweighed by the spoilage rate encountered by shipping them surface. (Thomblison, Hist, AAC, 1949, p. 72)



17-18 May 1953: Capt Raymond W. Quesnell, pilot, and Capt John E. Walseth, navigator, 13th Bomb Squadron, bailed out of their B-26 while on a mission over North Korea. They landed 20 miles inside of enemy territory on the west coast and succeeded in evading capture. An H-19 helicopter was dispatched and flew to a small island off the Haeju Peninsula in North Korea where it waited for fighters to clear the area of enemy forces. The helicopter then proceeded to the pickup point under fighter control where it spotted the mirror signals of the two downed airmen. After

Marine Corsair fighters had cleared the area, the helicopter crew landed and picked them up after spending about 30 seconds on the ground. The rescue was completed 13 hours after Captains Quesnell and Walseth had exited their B-26. The other members of the light bomber, First Lieutenant Clifford G. Selman and Airman First Class Jerome Karpowicz, were reported missing in action. They were declared dead in 1954. The 3rd Bombardment Wing history for the period reported the rescue as the first time wing personnel had been rescued from behind enemy lines. (Hist, 3BW, Jan-Jun 53, pp. 14 and 16; Warnock, *The USAF in Korea, A Chronology*, p. 91; List, "Personnel Missing-Korea;" John Walseth, "Bailout and Rescue, the Flight of Dodo 13," 13th Bombardment Squadron web site, www.13thbombsquadron.org/bailout.html)

20 May 1953: The 3rd Bombardment Wing reached another milestone in the Korean War when it flew the 30,000th sortie. (Hist, 3BW, Jan-Dec 53. P. 14)

20 May 1953: Lieutenant General Joseph H. Atkinson, Commander-in-Chief, Alaskan Command, submitted a requirement to Headquarters, USAF for a F-84F fighter-bomber wing and two flights of KB-29 tankers for Alaska. He stated they were needed to support ground forces, defend the coastal radar stations, escort bombers and conduct attack and reconnaissance operations against Soviet targets on the Chukotsky Peninsula. He pointed out that Eielson AFB had the capability to accommodate the bulk of the forces. The Air Force had contented that Alaska lacked the infrastructure to accommodate fighter-bombers. In a subsequent correspondence, he requested that the ten F-82s be replaced with 15 jet fighter-bombers. The F-89s programmed for Alaska were not suitable for ground support. (Chart, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1953, pp. 201-204.)



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16 May 1954: The Soviet news publication *Pravda* published an article by V. Burkhanov, chief administrator of the northern sea route on the Soviet use of ice islands. The Russians had maintained a camp on an ice island near the North Pole during the winter of 1950-1951, at least 18 months prior to the American occupation of T-3. Unlike the U.S., the Soviets claimed ownership of the Arctic areas extending from their land mass to the North Pole. Both powers realized that Arctic region provided the shortest route for their bombers to their targets. (Chart, Hist, AAC, Jul-Dec 1954, pp. 226-228.)

17 May 1956: The Air Materiel Command negotiated a Letter Contract with the Federal Electric Corporation (International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation) to operate and maintain the White Alice Communications System. Ten companies had received invitation to bid for the contract and five (Federal Electric, Philco, RCA, Collins Radio and Gustav Hiresch) had expressed interest. The Air Force set aside \$7,900,000 for the contract and Federal Electric representatives began arriving in Alaska to establish a headquarters in the already crowded Anchorage. (Chart, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1956, pp. 197.)

18 May 1959: Headquarters, USAF, informed Lt Gen Frank A. Armstrong, Jr., 11 AF Commander, that the SM-75 Thor would not be deployed to Alaska, and instead would go the Turkey and Greece. The Air Force, likewise, cancelled plans to deploy the IM-99 BOMARC interceptor missile to Alaska. Budgetary restrictions and NATO requirements limited the Thor procurement to eight squadrons, later reduced to seven. The Alaskan Air Command had already spent more than a million dollars on developing five missile sites. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jul-Dec 1959, p. 43.)



17 May 1960: Senators Bartlett and Gruening made a joint presentation in which they criticized at length the Eisenhower's Administration's changing attitude towards Alaska's strategic importance. Their more than 8,000 words in testimony were entered into the Congressional Record. They noted that Lt Gen Joseph H. Atkinson, CINCAL 3 May 1953-16 September 1956, had described Alaska as "an outpost of our continental defense," and that Assistant Secretary of the Army Franklin Orth had spoken of Alaska in 1958 as "the keystone in the arch of our defensive system and the strongest defense link in the outpost of freedom." They reminded the Senate that General Armstrong had recommended the basing of intermediate range ballistic missiles in Alaska to offset the 26 bases in the Soviet Far East. The expressed their concern over the Air Force first promising to replace the F-89Js with F-101Bs, then on 10 May announcing the plans had been cancelled and instead the 449th Fighter Interceptor Squadron would be inactivated. (Woodman, *Duty Station Northwest*, Vol. III, p. 79.)

18 May 1962: The 5040th Air Base Wing, Elmendorf AFB, employed HC-21 and L-20 Beavers to drop bombs on the river near McGrath to break ice jams and alleviate flooding conditions at Galena. Later, 186 inhabitants of Galena Village were evacuated to nearby Campion (F-8). A Navy P2V dropped more bombs in the Yukon River south of Galena on 23 May to breakup an ice jam. The jam broke the following day, ending the flooding alert at Galena. A high water mark of 125 feet was reached. The 135 foot earthen dyke protected the airfield. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1962, p. 297.)

15 May 1965: Elmendorf AFB observed Armed Forces Day with an open house that featured static displays of F-4C, F-102, F-106, T-33, B-47, B-52, B-57, F-58, C-123J, C-123, C-130, KC-135, C-141, H-21, P3V, DC-3, U-6A and a Navion. The theme "Power for Peace," was expanded to "Today's Youth—Tomorrow's Power for Peace." Nearly 20,000 visitors turned out for the open house. (Weidman, Hist, AAC, Jan-Jun 1965, p. 21.)



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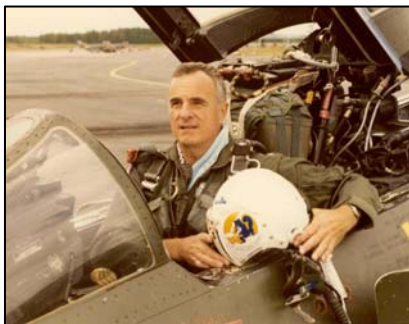
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16 May 1968: Two F-100s, 90th TFS, scrambled to strike an enemy base camp 25 miles northwest of Bien Hoa while flying in support of Operation Toan Thang. The forward air controller observed the enemy seeking shelter in numerous bunkers. The FAC directed the F-100s to them. They were credited with destroying two military fortifications, and destroying 24 bunkers. (Hist, 3 TFW, Apr-Jun 68, p. 37)



20 May 1971: Mr. Ken Jennings representative in Galena with the Alaska Disaster Office and airport manager requested the village of Galena be evacuated when ice jams downriver caused the Yukon River reached the 121-foot level and began flooding the village. An Army demolition team from Fort Wainwright attempted to blow up the dam near Bishop Rock 30 miles west of Galena without success. The Alaskan Air Command implemented Operations Plan 12-71, *Cool Waters* and the Air Force at Galena began moving the villagers by truck to nearby Campion (F-8) radar station. A command center was set up on Elmendorf AFB. When the rising waters covered the road, the 5040th Helicopter Squadron committed four HH-3Es to the effort. The Army also dispatched a CH-47 from Fort Richardson. The evacuation of 231 villagers to Campion was completed the next day. The main warehouse at Campion (F-8) was emptied and six tents were set up to shelter the evacuees. The evacuees were fed at the stations and food, clothing and tents and other items provided by the Red Cross were brought in by C-130 to Galena. Dining Hall personnel prepared 1,320 meals to feed the evacuees. (Mongin and Mesloh, Hist, AAC, Jul 1970-Jun 1972, p. 110.)

20 May 1974: The 819th Civil Engineering Squadron (Red Horse) completed construction of the Blair Lakes Bombing and Gunnery Range. It had taken the squadron two years and six months to build the range. Delays had resulted from inexperienced personnel, breakdown of equipment, changes in design, weather and the need to address environmental concerns. The engineers constructed a simulated nuclear target, two conventional bomb targets, two strafing targets with acoustical scoring capabilities, a personnel 1,728 square foot support building, a 3,600 square-foot heavy equipment and utilities support building, two 60-foot towers for triangulation scoring, 320-square foot weather station and a microwave and communications facility. Some 1100 acres had been cleared and firebreaks built. (Hailes, Hist, AAC, Jul 1972-Jun 1974, p. 171.)



16 May 1980: The Alaskan Air Command NCOs induced Lt Gen Winfield W. Scott, Jr. into the Order of the Sword during ceremonies held in the NCO Club on Elmendorf AFB, and attended by approximately 350 enlisted personnel. He was the first USAF general officer in Alaska to be honored in the sparsely given recognition. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1980, pp. 64-67.)

19 May 1984: The Yukon River overflowed the dike surrounding the airfield at Galena, resulting in a partial evacuation of 180 personnel to Elmendorf AFB and another 16 to Campion. It then began to recede when an ice jam down stream brook. The remainder of the evacuation was called off. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1984, p.472.)

16 May 1991: Two F-15Es on loan for maintenance training arrived at Elmendorf AFB from the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, NC. They departed on 15 November 1991 for the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing, Hill AFB, UT. (Cloe, Hist, 11AF, 1991, p. 161.)

19 May 1993: General Joseph Ralston, members of the Eareckson family and other notables presided over formal ceremonies renaming Shemya AFB as Eareckson AFS.



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16 May 1997: The Air Force announced that the 517th Airlift Squadron would gain an additional six C-130Hs and 200 personnel. (Hist, 3 WG, 1997, Chron)

16 May 2003: Colonel Robertus "Dutch" Remkes, 3rd Wing Commander, and TSgt Debra Downey, 3rd Wing Safety Office, cut the ribbon to the new Airmen Against Drunk Driving facility while other Airmen Against Drunk Driving volunteers looked on. The volunteers had previously operated out of the "Underground" in Denali Hall, but had to relocate to the Klondike Center due to Denali Hall being turned over to the 3rd Services Squadron. ("New Home," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 23 May 2003.)



17-20 May 2004: In a historic first, senior Air Force leaders met in the Reeves Conference Center on Elmendorf AFB for Corona Top 2004. Attendees included the Honorable James G. Roche, Secretary of the Air Force; General Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General John P. Jumper, Chief of Staff USAF; and CMSAF Gerald R. Murray. Additional, major command commanders and other four star generals attended. In all, there were 67 top Air Force officials that attended CORONA Top 2004 at Elmendorf AFB. (Frank, Hist, 11AF, 2004, p. 82.)



14 May 2005: An article in the *Anchorage Daily News* reported that Alaska was number four among those states that lost the most in the proposed base cuts. With the possible realignment of Eielson AFB, Fairbanks was likely to suffer more than Anchorage. The closure of Kulis could have resulted in a gain for the city as it occupied prime real property near the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport. Another article in the paper discussed the ability of Senator Stevens to influence the Pentagon's proposed changes. According to one Washington military policy analyst, the chances were not "terribly good" that

Stevens would succeed. The *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* reported that the DoD recommended all 2,800 personnel be removed from Eielson over the next five years, along with the A-10 and F-16 fighter jets. The DoD also recommended removing aircraft from Elmendorf, moving Kulis Air Guard Station to Elmendorf and consolidating Elmendorf and Fort Richardson. Senator Stevens said that the economic impact for Anchorage should be marginal because the military intended to bring in new personnel that would offset the losses. According to the article, the military planned on adding new F-22A fighters in 2007 and new C-17 transport planes in 2008 to Elmendorf AFB. Additionally, an airborne brigade was planned for Fort Richardson. (Miller, *3 WG Hist 2005*, 2006.)

19 May 2005: General Snodgrass officiated a ground-breaking ceremony at the location of the new C-17 Simulator building. This was part of the preparations for the C-17 bed down. (Miller, *3 WG Hist 2005*, 2006.)

15 May 2006: PACAF redesignated the 611th Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Flight (611 ANF) to the 611th Air Plans Squadrons (611 APS) with special order GS-06-033. The 611 APS remained assigned to the 611 AOG. (G-Series Order (U), PACAF, "GS-06-033," 9 May 2006.)

