



## Remembering Our Heritage



### 24-30 September

**26 Sep 1918:** Lt John Livingston and Lt Pressley B. Shuss, assigned to the 90th Aero Squadron, were met by six Fokker scouts while on an Infantry liaison mission over Sivry s/Meuse, at 150 meters altitude. The enemy did not succeed in getting into position to attack. Lt Shuss' fire appeared to be accurate but he did not succeed in bringing the enemy down. ("The 90th Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces, the Pair Of Dice Observation Squadron in World War I," Battery Press, 1990, pg 64.)



**25 Sep 1924:** General Billy Mitchell arrived in Washington DC to testify before the Morrow Board, appointed by President Coolidge to look into the state of affairs of aviation in the United States. His 30,000-word statement included a reference that Alaska was key to the defense of the Pacific and that Japan would use the territory as an invasion route to the rest of the United States. He also pointed out that Alaska was defenseless. General Mitchell noted: "If we are required to defend ourselves against an Asiatic power or combination of Asiatic powers led by Japan, their line of operations would certainly extend north along the Kurile Islands to Kamchatka and across the Bering Sea to Alaska by way of the Aleutians and Bering Straits." He believed that Alaska could be defended by airpower and that the military needed to learn how to operate in cold weather climates. Again, he pressed for the need to develop an air route to Alaska. (Isaac Don Levine, "Mitchell, Pioneer of Air Power," Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1943, p. 334.)

**27 Sep 1940:** *The Anchorage Daily Times* reported that seven units of five buildings were nearing completion on Elmendorf Field and a contract was being negotiated to build a 500,000 gallon steel water tank. The laundry building was under construction and excavation had started on the foundation for the nearby power plant. A fire station with the capacity of three trucks had been completed and planes were being finalized to move the Alaska Defense Force from the Marsh farmhouse to a temporary building and turn the farmhouse into a bakery. (*The Anchorage Daily Times*, 23 Sep 1940, p. 1.)

**24 Sep 1942:** The first group of Russian ferry pilots arrived at Ladd Field to pickup Lend Lease aircraft. The Americans had flown in the first aircraft to Ladd Field, A-20s, destined for Russia over the Alaskan Siberia Route (ALSIB) on 3 September. The Russians did not assign their pilots to extended ferry service but gave them a break from combat service by assigning them to temporary duty ferrying aircraft. The majority were older, tougher, and more serious than their American counterparts. They were excellent pilots whose methods were sometimes unorthodox. They had the fatalistic spirit of men who had already put their lives on the line and did not expect to live long. (Dean Brandon, "ALSIB: The Northwest Ferrying Command," *Journal of the American Aviation Historical Society*, Spring and Summer 1975.)



Source: Office of History, Elmendorf AFB



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**25 Sep 1943:** Lieutenant William S.M. Johnson, Historian, 11th Fighter Squadron, noted that on that day after the squadron had received a larger beer order, the operations officer had written the following in his operations journal: "On this day of pink elephants, the Lord favored us with unfavorable weather, while his medical disciple spread the gospel with bromo and aspirin." The operations journal also included such entries as the one on 11 September noting that one pilot could not find the relief tube in his fighter "with sad, sad results; and that on another occasion five pilots returned from "harrowing" rest and recreation leave in Anchorage and one pilot was observed playing ping pong with himself. (Lt William S.M. Johnson, Hist, 11<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, 15 Jan 1941-31 Dec 1943, p. 102.)



**28 Sep 1946:** The Alaska Air Command published a report "Radar Sites and Radar Coverage in the Alaskan Department," in which it recommended that 58 radar sites be built, covering the following regions: Attu-Amchitka, Umnak-Dutch Harbor-Cold Bay, Kodiak, Anchorage, Nome and Juneau. It called for using many existing World War II sites. (Chart, "Development of Aircraft Control and Warning in Alaska," p. 10.)

**25 Sep 1947:** President Truman named Gen Carl A. Spaatz as the first Chief of Staff, United States Air Force. General Spaatz had been serving as the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. (Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight*, p. 62.)

**26 Sep 1947:** Secretary of Defense James W. Forrestal ordered the Department of the Army to transfer air personnel and bases to the Department of the Air Force. Following the separation of Air Force from the Army, Alaskan Air Command and US Army Alaska held a number of meetings that resulted in the transfer in February 1948 of 5,335 manpower positions from USARAL to AAC to perform the base support functions that the Army formerly handled. (Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight*, p. 61.)

**30 Sep 1952:** The Commander, 5001st Composite Wing, Ladd AFB, expressed reservations to General Old about the ability of 807th Engineer Aviation Battalion to complete its work on Indian Mountain (F-16) before the onset of disabling cold. The remote aircraft control and warning station was assessable only by air. Airlift of materials into the mountain-side landing strip at nearby Utopia Creek during August alone had totaled 280 sorties. In spite of the desperate effort to complete construction, the engineer battalion fell behind due to cold weather. They had to use heaters to keep poured concrete from freezing. The commander suggested that the projects be prioritized and work stopped on the tramway. General Old refused to consider any postponement of construction. (Chart, Hist, AAC, Jul-Dec 1952, pp. 171-172.)



**29 Sep 1951:** The 3rd Bombardment Wing flew its 10,000th night mission. General Everest was present to commend the men when they landed. The crew that flew the mission was from the 13th Bombardment Squadron and consisted of: Captain Griffis E. Deneen, pilot; First Lieutenant Hollis R. Cox, navigator; First Lieutenant Nixon B. Shroder, bombardier; and Private First Class John J. Shields, gunner. (Hist, 3BG, Sep 51, Ops Section, p. 6)



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**27 Sep 1957:** The first of ten C-123B arrived at Elmendorf AFB as replacement for eight C-119s. By the end of the year there were five C-123B assigned to the 5040th Operations Squadron on Elmendorf AFB and three to the 5060th Operations Squadron at Ladd AFB. The arrival of the C-123B culminated years of effort on the part of AAC to acquire a transport that could carry heavy and bulky loads and operate from its marginal radar and communications station air strips. The C-119 had not lived up to expectations. The effort began in 1951 when Maj Gen William D. Old, Commander, AAC, recommended that the Fairchild C-123 Provider being developed at the time by Chase as a powered version of their glider be assigned to Alaska. The first production version, the C-123B, entered service in 1955. Since AAC had already established a requirement, the Air Materiel Command promised AAC ten. Due to production delays, the arrival date had to be postponed until 1958. (Miller, Hist, AAC, Jul-Dec 1957, p. 45.)



**30 Sep 1970:** Capt Jeffrey Schofield and 1Lt Alan Berry flew the last 90th Attack Squadron combat mission in Vietnam, striking a known enemy position 14 miles northwest of Bien Hoa AB. (3 TFW history, 1 Jul-31 Oct 1970, Vol III, atch 1, p. 2)



**26 Sep 1971:** President Richard Nixon and Emperor of Japan Hirohito met and conferred at Elmendorf AFB. It marked the first time that a reigning Japanese emperor had set foot on foreign soil. The Elmendorf AFB base reported that President Nixon had greeted Emperor of Japan Hirohito and his wife with: "Your Imperial Majesties, our honored guests. I am deeply honored. Your Imperial Majesties, on behalf of all the people of the United States, to welcome you to our country." The historic ceremony in front of and in Hangar Five lasted 20 minutes. Approximately 5,000 invited guests and news media attended. Weeks went into the preparation for the meeting. The Alaskan

Forces Radio Network (AFRN) provided live worldwide radio coverage through the Armed Forces News Bureau of the meeting. It also provided the audio portion in English for TV coverage in Japan. The broadcast was head live on Anchorage commercial radio stations KFQD, KYAK and KHAR. The AFRN also produced a 30-minute documentary on the historic visit which was sent to the American Forces Radio and Television Service in Washington DC two hours after the Emperor departed. (Mongin and Mesloh, Hist, AAC, Jul 1970-Jun 1972, p. xiv.)

**30 Sep 1974:** The Quartermaster MOGAS service station closed on Elmendorf AFB. The Department of Defense had ordered the closure of the stations in Alaska. They had been established in 1951 due a shortage of commercial gas stations. When opened gas cost 10 cents a gallon. It cost 45.9 cents a gallon when the stations closed on the military bases. The closure of the stations resulted in an average increase of 12 cents a gallon provided by the commercial service stations. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, Jul 1974-Jun 1975, pp. 281-282.)



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**29 Sep 1977:** The 43rd Tactical Fighter Squadron made the first jet fighter landing at Shemya AFB with two F-4Es. The three and one hour flight had required three aerial refuelings by Strategic Air Command KC-135s. The fighter crews remained for a short period before departing for Elmendorf AFB. It had been the first fighter deployment to Shemya since the end of World War II and tested AAC's abilities to deploy fighters there to support contingency operations. The 21st Civil Engineer Squadron Prime BEEF team had installed a BAK-13 aircraft arresting system earlier in the month. A similar test involving four F-4Es was conducted 10 November. (Hales, Hist, AAC, 1977, pp. 149 and 231-233.)



**27 Sep 1986:** Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) entered a markup in the FY 1987 Department of Defense Appropriations Bill which specified no funds be spent to change the command structure in Alaska. Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr. Chairman, Joints Chiefs of Staff, had offered to meet with him and discuss the issue. Senator Stevens, however, remained unavailable. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, signed into law 1 October 1986, was designed to overcome weak inter-service corporation and streamline the joint decision making process contained provisions for changing the geographical area of responsibility of the Pacific Command to include Alaska. Senator Stevens attempted unsuccessfully to delete that section. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1986, pp. 15-16.)



**26 Sep 1994:** The 517th Airlift Squadron deployed Rabaul, New Britain to support relief and evacuation efforts in the wake of three separate volcanic eruptions. The squadron operated six miles from the crash site of the 3rd Wing's first Medal of Honor winner, Maj. Raymond Wilkins, who was shot down over Simpson Harbor on 2 November 1943. (Boyd, Hist, 3 WG, 1994, Chron)

**25 Sept 1980:** The Alaskan Air Command Public Affairs Office announced that AAC would be gaining the A-10 and F-15 as replacements for the F-4E. The Air Force decided earlier in the year to replace the aging F-4E aircraft. The news release stated that the change had resulted from an Air Force decision to restructure its fighter assignments. It noted that the assignment of



the F-15A along with the rotational deployment of the E-3 would "enhance NORAD's air defense posture;" and the basing of the A-10A at Eielson AFB would "permit realistic joint service training with the Army units in Alaska, and provide "a more rapid response to any Far East crisis." The *Anchorage Times* announced the information the same day in a front page article "Elmendorf to Get F-15 Fighters." The announcements were the results of efforts begun by General Scott and his staff in late 1979. At the same time, Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) had been stressing the need for more modern fighters in Alaska. He was apparently unaware of the actions being taken by the Air Force. (Cloe, Hist, AAC, 1980, pp. 229-230.)

**27 Sep 1991:** President Bush ordered the termination of the Strategic Air Command's alert commitment that had begun in 1957 when the nuclear forces went on a 24-hour, seven days a week alert. The action signaled the end of the Cold War between the U.S. and Russia. (Haulman, *One Hundred Years of Flight*, p. 140.)



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**30 Sep 1994:** Headquarters, PACAF, inactivated the 643rd Support Squadron at King Salmon, and a contractor, Chugach Development Corporation, assumed operations and maintenance responsibility for the Air Force installation. The Alaska Native owned company had been awarded fixed price contract with some cost reimbursement on 9 August 1994 to maintain King Salmon on a standby bases for exercises and contingencies with approximately 42 persons. The first full year of the contract cost \$3,612,718.00 with an option to extend up to four years. As in the case of Space Mark, which held the contract for Galena, Chugach, as an Alaska Native owned company qualified as a Small Disadvantage Business, and did not have to go through the bidding process. The last alert aircraft departed on 29 April 1994. Colonel Harry J. Kieling, Jr., Vice Commander, Eleventh Air Force, officiated over an inactivation ceremony held at King Salmon on 26 August. The last personnel departed on 30 September. King Salmon, then known as Naknek, had become a forward operating base in 1948 (HQ PACAF SO GA-49, 23 Sep 1994; Cloe, Hist, 11 AF, 1994, pp. 6-9.)



**24 Sep 1999:** The Army and Air Force Exchange Service and the Defense Commissary Agency officially opened the new \$32 million, 330,000 square foot Joint Military Mall on Elmendorf AFB. (Frank, Hist, ALCOM, 1999, p. 46.)



**27 Sep 1999:** Approximately 250 people and 12 F-15C aircraft from the 19th Fighter Squadron deployed to Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia in support Operation Southern Watch. Additionally, the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron deployed 20 people for

the first time to participate in Operation Southern Watch. They flew an E-3 already at the base. In addition in deploying for the first time, the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron also controlled F-15 crews from Elmendorf AFB for the first time in a foreign country. (Hist, 3 WG, 1999, p. 109.)

**26 Sep 2001:** Brigadier General Douglas Fraser, officiated at ribbon cutting ceremony at the three-bedroom home of TSgt. Brian Hartlye, his wife and two sons. They were the first family to move into the new private sector finance family houses. The 372 two and three bedroom unit housing development was built near the Boniface Gate and Joint Military Mall. (Hist, 3 WG, 2001, p. 92; SSgt Sandra Harden and Doris Thomas, "Home, Sweet Home," *Sourdough Sentinel*, 28 Sep 2001)

**30 Sep 2002:** Headquarters, PACAF, in response to a 22 April 2002 Air Force wide directive from the Chief of Staff, USAF, to return wings to a pre-1992 structure, implemented the following organizational changes in the 3rd Wing: HQs, 3rd Logistics Group redesignated HQs. 3rd Maintenance Group; HQs, 3rd Support Group redesignated 3rd Mission Support Group; 3rd Contracting Squadron relieved from assignment to HQ, 3rd Logistics Group and assigned to HQ, 3rd Mission Support Group; 3rd Logistics Support Squadron redesignated as 3rd Maintenance Operations Squadron and assigned to 3rd Maintenance Group; 3rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron activated and assigned to 3rd Maintenance Group; 3rd Mission Support Squadron, 3rd Civil Engineer Squadron, 3rd Communications Squadron, 3rd Security Forces Squadron and



Source: Office of History, Elmendorf AFB



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3rd Services Squadron relieved from assignment to HQs, 3rd Support Squadron and assigned to HQs, 3rd Mission Squadron Group; 3rd Equipment Maintenance Squadron relieved from assignment to HQ, Logistics Group and assigned to 3rd Maintenance Group; 3rd Component Repair Squadron redesignated 3rd Component Maintenance Squadron and assigned to HQ, Maintenance Group; and 3rd Transportation Squadron redesignated 3rd Logistics Readiness Squadron and assigned to HQs, 3rd Mission Support Group. (HQ PACAF SO GS-138, 24 Sep 2002; HQ PACAF SO GS-139, 24 Sep 2002; HQ PACAF SO GS-140, 24 Sep 2002; HQ PACAF SO GS-141; HQ PACAF SO GS-142; HQ PACAF SO GS-143; HQ PACAF SO GS-144; HQ PACAF SO GS-145; HQ PACAF SO GS-146.)

**24 Sep 2003:** The 3rd Wing officially opened the Air Force's first multi-platform Mission Training Center (MTC) that uses advanced technology to maximize operational effectiveness and combat capability. The facility provides operational aircrews with a venue for high-fidelity, simulator-based training without the material and personnel costs associated with training deployments. The mission training center includes a four cockpit, F-15C simulator owned and operated by the Boeing Company; an F-15E Weapons System Trainer, owned by the Air Force, but operated and maintained by Boeing; and an AWACS Mission Crew Simulator; and an AWACS Mission Crew Simulator, owned and operated by PLEXSYS. (1/Lt Eric Badger, "Elmendorf opens Multi-Platform Center," *Sourdough Sentinel* and *Air Force Print News Today*, 26 Sep 2003.)

