



AFLCMC *Heritage Hangar*

AFLCMC History Office

Kevin Rusnak, Chief Historian
Jason Engle, Historian

8-14 November 2021

8 Nov 1968 (ISR & SOF Dir.)

Tactical Air Command received its first Fairchild AC-119K “Stinger” gunship. It was the product of Project Gunship III, the third iteration propeller-driven cargo aircraft equipped with cannons and machine guns as a ground support/attack platform. The program started under AFLCMC’s predecessor the Aeronautical Systems Division at WPAFB with Gunship I, the famous AC-47 “Spooky,” followed by Gunship II, the AC-130 that was the predecessor for the modern fleet of gunships. In 1968, Gunship III first replaced the AC-47s with the AC-119G, then the AC-119K upgraded with add-on jet engines and additional cannon for use against trucks on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. (Photo: NMUSAF)

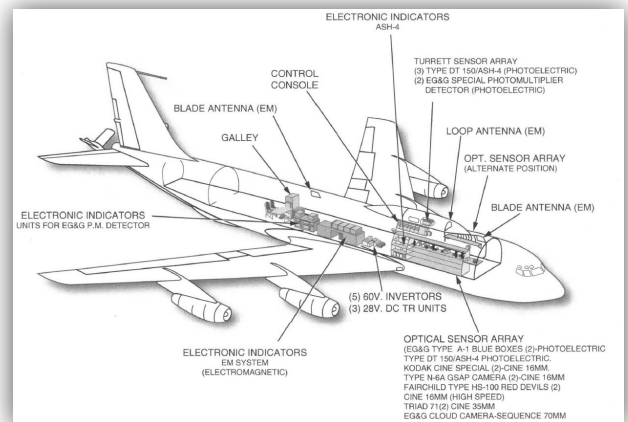


9 Nov 1959 (AFLCMC)

The Air Force chose a team of Boeing and Vought as the prime contractor for Weapon Systems 464L, aka Dyna-Soar (Dynamic Soaring). This was to be a piloted, winged glider boosted to space on top of a Titan rocket. In its various permutations, it could serve as a boost-glide vehicle in a suborbital trajectory, a space access vehicle like a miniature space shuttle, a military orbital bomber, a satellite inspection platform, or a hypersonic R&D vehicle. Its high cost (\$850M+), lack of a clear and distinct military mission, and an apathetic (at best) presidential administration led to its cancellation 4 years later without a single vehicle completed. The program was managed by a Program Office at Wright-Patt (Photo: AFLCMC/HO)

10 Nov 1961 (Big Safari)

President John F. Kennedy wrote a memo to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara extending his appreciation for “the expeditious preparation of the complex technical equipment and the bold execution” of Big Safari’s Operation Speed Light. This is believed to be the first and only such written presidential acknowledgement of a Big Safari program/mission. His thanks referred to the Speed Light-Bravo flight of the JKC-135A equipped to monitor the Soviet detonation of the largest nuclear weapon ever, the 100 megaton “Tsar Bomba” on 30 October 1961. In less than 3 months, Big Safari and Convair converted a C-135 for the mission (Photo: Big Safari History)



11 Nov 1918 (AFLCMC)

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, the First World War came to an end with Germany's surrender. While the US had entered the war in April 1917, two and a half years after it started in Europe, the conflict had many impacts on the American military. Foremost was in the use of aviation, which had grown from little more than a novelty into a viable military force. The US Army Air Service went from fewer than 200 total aircraft to over 8,000. Along with those, it developed the supporting processes, organizations, and facilities that were the predecessors for the modern USAF acquisition community. (Photo: *Dayton Herald*, 11 Nov 1918, p.1)



12 Nov 1992 (AF Security Assist. & Coop Dir.)

The governments of Taiwan and the US signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance to purchase 120 Block 20 F-16A and 30 F-16B aircraft. This Foreign Military Sales program was dubbed PEACE FENGHUANG (Phoenix). It was part of Taiwan's effort to upgrade its aging self-defense aircraft and bolstered the post-Cold War US defense industry. Twenty of the aircraft were based at Luke AFB, where the US 21st Fighter Squadron (pic) trained their Taiwanese counterparts. (Photo: USAF)

13 Nov 1963 (Fighters & Adv Aircraft Dir.)

The Secretary of the Navy selected Ling-Temco-Vought (LTV) as the prime contractor for the production of the A-7 Corsair II, a new carrier-based light attack aircraft slated to replace the A-4. This subsonic jet aircraft proved to be inexpensive and effective (following engine upgrades). When the Army pushed the Air Force to procure dedicated close air support aircraft during the Vietnam War, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara (who was infamous for his adherence to joint aircraft policies) directed the adoption of the Navy A-7. The Air Force's A-7D model had significantly improved engine and avionics and was used from 1970-1993. (Photo: USAF)



14 Nov 1974 (Fighters & Adv Aircraft Dir.)

McDonnell Douglas delivered the first operational F-15 Eagle to the Air Force. This two-seat F-15B trainer was sent to the 58th Tactical Training Wing at Luke AFB, AZ, where President Gerald Ford presided over the ceremony (pic). The F-15 was the USAF's response to the debut of next-generation of Soviet fighter aircraft in the mid-1960s. It was the Air Force's first dedicated air superiority fighter since the legendary F-86 Sabre of the Korean War era. (Photo: USAF)

AFLCMC Installation Spotlight: Eglin AFB



Eglin Air Force Base's founding is owed to the stereotypical Florida combination of attractive vacation spots, large expanses of undeveloped land, and ready access to the Gulf of Mexico. In the 1930s, members of the US Army Air Corps Tactical School (ACTS) at Maxwell Field, Montgomery, Alabama, cemented strategic bombing as the central tenet of the USAAC, shaping the composition and use of aircraft during and after WWII. When they weren't plotting the future of air power, these officers vacationed in the area of Valparaiso, Florida, at the same time they were searching for a bombing range and proving ground capable of accommodating the types of large aircraft and bombs they envisioned for strategic bombing. In 1931, they established a recreational camp in the area, which was followed in 1934 by the development of a commercial air field that was initially leased, then transferred (in 1937) to the government as the Valparaiso Bombing & Gunnery Range (*photo*), under Maxwell Field.

That August, the ACTS convinced the Air Corps to name the new base after one of their own, Lt Col Frederick I. "Fritz" Eglin. He had been orphaned in New York at a young age, then gifted entry into Wabash College, Indiana, where he excelled as an athlete, student, and leader. Eglin joined the Air Service as a pilot in World War I, serving as an instructor pilot, a squadron commander, and an ACTS student. On New Years Day 1937, he and his backseater perished when their

Northrop A-17 *Nomad* was lost in bad weather and crashed into Cheaha Mountain, Alabama.

In 1939 the Armament Lab and developmental Units at Wright Field joined with Maxwell to establish Eglin as the Air Corps' formal Proving Ground for bomb and aerial armament testing. In June 1940, Eglin expanded by almost 400,000 acres, transferred from the adjacent Choctawhatchee National Forest. The facilities expanded significantly during WWII, including 10 auxiliary air fields (such as Hurlburt Field). Primary infrastructure included an armament laboratory, hangars, ground gunnery range, torpedo shop, a high-altitude test building, and the climatic test hangar. Base personnel numbered 6400 in 1942, over half of whom were African American. Eglin was also the site of training and preparation by Jimmy Doolittle and his Raiders for their carrier-borne bombing of Tokyo.

After the War, Eglin's expanse hosted many missions, such as development and testing of: guided missiles, air-launched missiles, ground radars, and aircraft shelters. Its primary mission remained aircraft armament development, test, and acquisition, which had transferred administratively from Wright-Patterson in the 1950s as the Air Force Armament Center. Today, Eglin is home to AFLCMC's Armament Directorate, AFRL's Munitions Directorate, the 96th Test Wing, and more.

(Photos: Eglin AFB)

For more LCMC History & Heritage, follow us on Twitter: @AFLCMCHO and @McCookField for "100 Years Ago Today" Air Force acquisition activities