



This Month in 35th Fighter Wing and Misawa Air Base History June 2014



June 3, 1943: The 14th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron (now the 14th Fighter Squadron) received five Spitfires, its first combat aircraft after arriving in Great Britain for World War II. The pilots and maintainers of the 14th had trained at Colorado Springs Army Air Field (later Peterson Air Force Base) on the P-38 Lightning. The British built Spitfires were a marvel to the pilots and a mystery to the mechanics. The 14th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron Historian reported:

[The Spitfires] were the center of attraction; mechanics crawled all over them, marveling at the strange gadgets and comparing them to the aircraft used by the [Army Air Force]. At first, there seemed to be nothing about the Spit that was in keeping with the type of aircraft we had learned to respect. The names they had for the various parts were completely baffling. Instead of calling an electric storage battery by that name, the R.A.F. gave it the title of "accumulator," and it took us two weeks to find out that a "split pin" was the British name for "cotter pin."



14th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron Engineering Section (2) (L to R) Kneeling: Sgt. Edgar Knight; T/Sgt. Lester J. Miller; S/Sgt Willie M. Naylor. Standing: Pvt. Benito M Lizardi; M/Sgt. Russell E. Mayden; Lt. R T Wilcox; Lt. O.N. Nix; CWO B.E. Porter; S/Sgt. John O. Huber; Cpl. Richard A Nelson.

June 30, 1944: The 14th Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for its support of the D-Day invasion. Squadron pilots flew 426 reconnaissance sorties against high priority targets leading up to, during and after the invasion. These hazardous missions cost the unit several pilots and aircraft but were vital to the invasion's success.

Of June 1944, the 14th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron Historian wrote:

[It] was our saddest month. After D-Day, the 6th, Capt. Bob Nelson and Lt. (Deed) Dideriksen became missing in action. It will be a happy day when we are notified that they have landed safely in Europe and are now prisoners of war. On the 28th, Major Haugen was killed in action. We all hope we never have another June. Battle casualty reports [are] certainly one form of paper work that none of us in the orderly room care to do.



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June 1945: **The first and only Kamikaze unit from Misawa** -- which consisted of 50 pilots -- deployed to Hakata, Kyushu. Before the end of the war, almost half of the pilots had died while flying torpedo bombers on Kamikaze missions.

June 12, 1948: Unnamed editors published the **first edition of the *Misawa Piloteer***, Misawa Air Base's first English language newspaper. It was initially an unofficial publication. However, the 49th Fighter Bomber Wing assumed production and published the first official edition on 19 August 1949. The editors published the last edition of the *Misawa Piloteer* on 4 February 1950; it was succeeded in late 1951 by the *Misawa Wingspread*. See the first edition, [Misawa Piloteer, June 12, 1948](#).

June 23, 1948: **The first Misawa Air Base Library opened** in the day room of Bachelor Officers' Quarters number 11 for use of all personnel attached or assigned to Misawa Air Force Base. The next day, Private First Class Morris Forbes was the 100th enlisted Airman to visit the library. In honor of this milestone, the Librarian, Miss Marie Delmas, awarded Forbes a carton of cigarettes.

June 6, 1949: **U.S. Forces in Japan assumed control of Draughon Range**, known at the time as Amagamori Range; however, the Government of Japan did not approve the range for use under the Status of Forces Agreement until 1952.

June 13, 1949: **A midair collision over Misawa Air Base runway resulted in two deaths, damage to 16 aircraft, and the destruction of seven aircraft.** The 49th Fighter Wing Historian recorded:

On 13 June 1949, twelve F-51 American aircraft from Johnson Air Force Base, [modern day Iruma Air Base], simulated an attack on Misawa Air Force Base. The attacking formation came in from the East at approximately 1,500 feet. Two F-51 American aircraft from the 8th Fighter Squadron, 49th Fighter Group,



The Misawa Air Base flight line on June 13, 1949 after an in-air mishap resulted in the destruction of several aircraft on the ground.



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[Misawa Air Base], intercepted the attacking aircraft between the east end of the runway and the tower. The wing-man of the intercepting aircraft collided with the No. 2 man and No. 1 man of the attacking lead flight formation, tearing his ships left wing off. The plane crashed on the parking area in front of the 8th Fighter Squadron Hangar, killing the pilot. As a result of the crash the following aircraft were damaged or destroyed:

Two	F-51	Aircraft	Destroyed
Three	F-51	Aircraft	Damaged
Five	F-80	Aircraft	Destroyed
Thirteen	F-80	Aircraft	Damaged

The No . 2 ship of the attacking formation crash-landed wheels up on the runway. The No.1 ship headed South West trailing smoke, then disappeared behind the hills. The No. 1 ship crashed approximately three and one half miles South-west of the field, killing the pilot.

June 27, 1950: Major James W. Little scored the third aerial victory of the Korean War while assigned to the 339th Fighter Squadron, 35th Fighter Wing, and he is one of the few Air Force pilots with aerial victories in two wars. Little realized this accomplishment when shot down a Russian-made Lavochkin La-7 with his F-82 Twin Mustang. Because of its long-range capabilities, Japan-based F-82s, like Little's, were among the first USAF aircraft to operate over Korea.

June 28, 1950: During the Korean War, pilots of the 35th Fighter Wing participated in a special project intended to train South Korean pilots to fight and fly in U.S. provided F-51 Mustangs.

The Air Force named the project Bout One, and it was led by Major Dean Hess. On 28 June 1950, **Bout One flew its first training missions.** Designated the 51st Provisional Fighter Squadron of the Republic of Korea Air Force, the unit flew under US command until August 1951. For more, see Air Force Fact Sheet: "Bout One" [here](#).



Bout One F-51D aircraft in flight, 1950.



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June 3, 1967: **Major Ralph L. Kuster, Jr., 13th Tactical Fighter Squadron, shot down a MiG-17** with his F-105D's 20-millimeter cannon recording the squadron's first ever aerial victory. For more, see Air Force Fact Sheet: "Maj Ralph Kuster, Jr." [here](#).

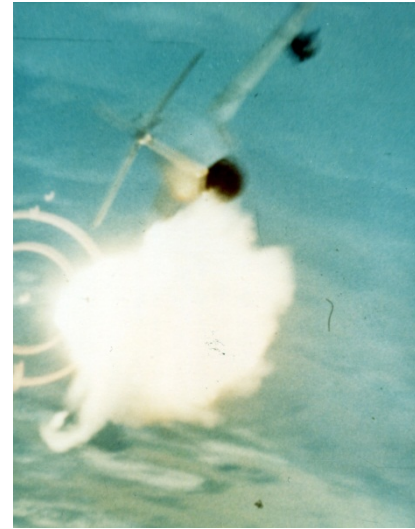
June 1, 1985: **The Air Force activated the 13th Tactical Fighter Squadron** at Misawa Air Base, assigned to the 432d Tactical Fighter Wing.

June 17, 1985: Misawa's **new commissary** opened its doors to the base community.

June 18, 1996: **The 35th Fighter Wing tail flash changed from MJ to WW** to reflect the unit's mission and history. The 35th Fighter Wing had a long association with the Wild Weasel mission established during its tenure as the Wild Weasel training center at George Air Force Base, and during this time, the unit had operated with the WW tail flash. In addition, in early 1990s, the Air Force replaced the 35th Operations Group's F-16s with F-16 CJ/DJ aircraft and established Misawa Air Base as PACAF's primary Wild Weasel installation. The Air Force intended the F-16CJ/DJ to replace the aging Wild Weasel V, the F-4G, as the Air Force's primary platform for the Wild Weasel mission, also known as, the suppression and destruction of enemy air defenses. See [Northern Light, 21 June 1996](#).

June 30, 1998: **A flight of four F-16CJs led by Lieutenant Colonel Sam Angelella, Commander of the 13th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, flew a suppression of enemy air defense mission against an Iraqi surface-to-air missile site during Operation Southern Watch.** The purpose of the sortie was to protect several coalition aircraft operating in the area. British pilots operating near the town of Basra received indications that an Iraqi surface-to-air missile site was tracking them. Threat indicators suddenly warned the British aircrews that the Iraqi radar had locked onto them and that the battery was preparing to fire. Angelella responded to the emergency by **launching an AGM-88 HARM at the Iraqi radar.** The AGM-88 forced the Iraqi missile battery to turn off its targeting radar and neutralized the missile site's ability to strike the British aircraft. Without a radar signal to strike, the AGM-88 landed harmlessly in a nearby reservoir.

June 16, 2000: The 750th Military Intelligence Detachment, the U.S. Army's Misawa Security Operations Center contingent, was inactivated. **The 403d Military Intelligence Detachment activated** the same day and absorbed a portion of the 750th's personnel.



Gun camera image of the MiG-17 victory by F-105 pilot Maj. Ralph Kuster Jr. on June 5, 1967.