



May 21, 2015

“Never throughout history
has a man who lived a life of ease
left a name worth remembering.”

Theodore Roosevelt
26th President of the United States
(1858-1919)

The American Battle Monuments
Commission
is honoring America’s war dead at
ABMC sites throughout the world
during [Memorial Day weekend 2015](#).

Asian, Pacific Islanders Are the Personification of Equality and Inclusion

May is an important month for the 19.4 million Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the United States who stage a monthlong celebration of their collective history and individual successes. This year’s theme, “Many Cultures, One Voice: Promote Equality and Inclusion,” spotlights both their individualism and their connection to others.

Much of May’s significance in Asian American history is based upon two important events that influenced the course of American life — the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants in May 1843 and the May 1869 completion of the transcontinental railroad, which couldn’t have been accomplished without the efforts of Chinese immigrants.

For the Air Force, Asian and Pacific Islander contributions began during the early days of World War II, when Chinese-American women, as members of the Women in the Air Force Service Pilots, or WASPs, ferried planes from factories to air bases, tested new planes from the factory and towed targets used for aerial gunnery practice. Yet, in spite of this selfless display of patriotic duty, many Asian Americans were discouraged from entering the military simply because they were Asian. This practice was based upon their race, and they were listed by the government as “enemy aliens.” Still, there were those who would not be deterred – like Ben Kuroki who, after initially being turned down to serve in World War II, reapplied and was finally accepted.

Assigned to the 93rd Bombardment Wing, Ben was told that Japanese Americans could not serve overseas. He persisted and convinced his commanding officer to assign him to England as an admin clerk. Once there, he volunteered for gunnery school and became a top turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator. He also participated in Operation Tidal Wave, an effort to destroy the major oil refinery located in Ploesti, Romania. It would become the Air Force’s costliest mission, with 53 aircraft and 660 crewmen lost.

Ben would volunteer for 30 combat missions, five more than were required of Airmen. His resolve to continue to serve clashed heavily with an official denial of the opportunity to serve in the Pacific theater. Ben took his case to Secretary of War Henry Stinson and was granted permission. He joined the crew of a B-29 Superfortress with the 505th Bombardment Group and was involved in another 28 bombing missions over mainland Japan. He is believed to be the only American of Japanese descent to have participated in combat missions in the Pacific during World War II, receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross three times and replacing his “enemy alien” status with “war hero.” His heroism paved the way for others of Asian and Pacific Island descent to participate fully in service before self – Kaplan Chawla, astronaut aboard the ill-fated Space Shuttle *Columbia*; Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI) the highest-ranking Asian American politician, who served from 1963 until 2012; Maya Lin, designer/architect of the Vietnam War Memorial and so many others – while challenging and transforming the stereotyping mindset forever.

Martha J. Lockwood
AFPRO Information Products Chief

► TRENDING...

“While we are working to increase our overall number of Airmen, we are particularly focused on adding mid-level experienced Airmen in some of our currently undermanned specialties to help meet mission requirements immediately,” said [Brig. Gen. Brian Kelly](#), the director of military force management policy, speaking about [several manpower initiatives](#).

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

May 21, 1927 – Charles A. Lindbergh, a captain in the Missouri National Guard's 110th Observation Squadron, landed his Ryan Monoplane, the "Spirit of St. Louis," in Paris after the first nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic. He set a 3,609-mile FAI record for straight-line distance in his 33-hour, 39-minute flight. For this feat, President Calvin Coolidge presented Capt. Lindbergh with a Medal of Honor.

May 22, 1941 - The Curtiss Hawk 87A Warhawk first flew.

May 23 1988 - The Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey, the first production tilt-rotor aircraft, was unveiled at the Bell Helicopter Textron plant at Arlington, Texas.

May 24, 1994 - The C-17 Globemaster flew across the Atlantic for the first time.

May 25, 1910 - Orville and Wilbur Wright flew together for the first time at Dayton.

May 26, 1983 - General Dynamics delivered the 500th F-16A aircraft to Hill AFB.

May 27, 1951 – In the Korean War, Unit 4/SAM C-47s flew leaflet drop/voice broadcast sorties encouraging the enemy to surrender to elements of the U.S. Army's IX Corps. Some 4,000 enemy soldiers surrendered, with many carrying leaflets. The captives reported morale problems among the enemy because of UN aerial attacks.

“As adversaries exploit the Cyberspace domain for their military, economic and political advantage, operations in cyberspace are evolving from an afterthought to a fundamental element for achieving all missions. The Department must similarly evolve the workforce to address the needs of the domain.”

*Department of Defense Cyberspace Workforce Strategy
December 4, 2013*

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Summer safety begins with risk management](#)

Using the same risk management in off-duty leisure activities as one does on the job – identify, assess and mitigate – will increase the opportunity for a safe summer.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[AF implements automated evaluation, decoration processing via myPers](#)

As of May 15, myPers now provides supervisors of active-duty Airmen the ability to initiate, process, track and sign officer and enlisted evaluations. Beginning in June, the program will be expanded to include the initiation and tracking of decorations, as well.

[AFROTC instructor duty applications due May 30](#)

AFROTC applications are due May 30 for the 195 instructor positions available between now and summer 2016 for eligible lieutenants, captains and majors.

[Enlisted members interested in attaché duty must apply by June 15](#)

The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs is accepting applications through June 15 for enlisted Defense Attaché Specialists at 23 locations from interested active-duty staff through senior master sergeants.

► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE, TECHNOLOGY

[Dispelling remotely piloted aircraft myths](#)

Myths about the new technology have arisen as remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) become more popular for both military and non-military use around the world.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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