

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

The 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron was detached from the Wing at McGuire AFB and placed under operational control of the Far East Air Force. On November 15, 1950, at Johnson AB, Japan the 91st SRS absorbed the personnel and resources of the 31st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron. The squadron moved to Yokota AB, Japan, December 19, 1950.

Using the RB-29 and RB-50 Superfortress aircraft, it performed target and bomb-damage assessment photography and visual reconnaissance for FEAF Bomber Command, flew other special photographic missions, and conducted electronic "ferret" reconnaissance to determine frequency, location, and other characteristics of enemy ground radar. They were assisted for a time by other squadrons of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing flying the RB-45 Tornado the reconnaissance version of the first all jet bomber.

The squadron also performed shipping surveillance over the Sea of Japan near the Siberian coast and leaflet drops over North Korea. Beginning in late 1952, rotating aircrews of the Philippine-based 581st Air Resupply and Communications Wing augmented the 91st SRS in flying leaflet missions.

SIGNIFICANT LOSSES

Flying along side the 91st, the 31st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron was scheduled to be officially absorbed by the 91st SRS November 15, 1950, the following occurred six days prior to the official date. On this flight Cpl Harry J. Lavene was credited with downing the first bomber to jet MiG. Cpl Lavene survived the crash.

31st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

November 9, 1950

RB-29A "Over Exposed" Aircraft Number: 44-61813

A Superfortress reconnaissance aircraft with the 31st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, U. S. Air Force, on November 9, 1950, while returning from a combat mission, the aircraft was damaged by a MiG-15. It crash landed short of the runway at Johnson Air Base, Japan. Killed were:

CAPT Robert E Laden – San Jose, CA
Captain Laden was the pilot, TDY from the 28th RS.

1LT Robert A Mitchell – Brooklyn, NY
First Lieutenant Mitchell was a veteran of World War II. In Korea, he was the co-pilot.

1Lt James M. Schooley - Robertson, MO
A member of the 20th Weather Squadron; a Weather Officer and Navigator for the 2015th Weather Detachment based at Tachikawa, Japan,

MSGT Avery J Green – Columbus, IN
Master Sergeant Green was the flight engineer.

SSGT Orvis J Gunhus – Kenyon, MN
Staff Sergeant Gunhus was a veteran of World War II. In Korea, he was a crewman.

Remaining crew members survived the crash.

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June 13, 1952

RB-29A "Southern Comfort" Aircraft Number 44-61810

RB-29A Superfortress with the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, U.S. Air Force. On June 13, 1952, the aircraft departed Yokota Air Base, Honshu, Japan on an electronic surveillance mission. It was shot down by 2 Russian MiG-15's over the Sea of Japan south of Mys Ostrovnoy, north of Hokkaido and 120 miles from the Russian coast.

Crew of 12 - No survivors or remains recovered.

All were listed as Missing in Action and were presumed dead on November 15, 1955.

SSGT Roscoe George Becker - Tillamook, OR

Staff Sergeant Becker was a crew member.

SSGT William A Blizzard - Arlington, CA

Staff Sergeant Blizzard was a crew member.

SSGT Leon F Bonura - Beaumont, TX

Staff Sergeant Bonura was a crew member.

MAJ Samuel Nathan Busch - Philadelphia, PA

Major Busch was a decorated veteran of World War II. In Korea, he was a senior pilot.

MSGT William Robert Homer - Jeanette, PA

Master Sergeant Homer was a crew member.

SSGT Miguel W Monserrat - Philadelphia, PA

Staff Sergeant Monserrat was a crew member.

CAPT Samuel D Service - Berkeley, CA

Captain Service was a crew member.

1LT James A. Scully - Philadelphia, PA

Captain Sculley was a crew member.

1LT Robert J. McDonnell - Oceanside, NY

First Lieutenant McDonnell was a crew member.

MSGT David L. Moore - Ashland, KY

Master Sergeant Moore was a crew member.

SSGT Eddie R. Berg - Blackduck, MN

Staff Sergeant Berg was a crew member.

A1C Danny A. Pillsbury - Orange, TX

Airman First Class Pillsbury was a crew member

An officer, believed by the United States Government to have been a member of this crew, was observed in October 1953, in a Soviet hospital north of Magadan near the crossing of the Kolyma River between Elgen and Debin at a place called Narionburg. This officer stated that he had been wrongfully convicted under Item 6 of Article 58 of the Soviet Penal Code.

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July 4, 1952

RB-29A Aircraft Number: 44-61727

RB-29A Superfortress with the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, U.S. Air Force. On July 4, 1952, while on a photo reconnaissance mission over Sinanju, North Korea and possibly China, the aircraft was shot down by a MiG.

Crew of 13 – 11 survived; 2 MIA:

SSGT Richard Louis Albright - Clovis, NM

Staff Sergeant Albright was a crew member. He was listed as Missing in Action and was presumed dead on February 28, 1954.

SSGT Clifford Henry Mast - Spokane, WA

Staff Sergeant Mast was a crew member. He was listed as Missing in Action and was presumed dead on February 28, 1954.

October 7, 1952

RB-29 "Sunbonnet King" Aircraft Number: 44-61815

RB-29 "Sunbonnet King" of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron was on a photo mission over Northern Hokkaido and was shot down by two Soviet LA-11 fighters near Yuri Island on October 7, 1952.

Crew of 8 - All eight members were lost; no remains were recovered at the time:

CAPT Eugene M English - Lafayette, CA

Pilot

1LT Paul E Brock - Oklahoma City, OK

Co-pilot

CAPT John R "Chute" Dunham- Easton, MD

Navigator (His remains were returned in 1993.)

SSGT Samuel A Colgan- Cherry Tree, PA

Staff Sergeant Colgan was a crew member.

A2C Frank E Neail III - Hanover, PA

Airman Second Class Neail was a crew member.

SGT John Arthur Hirsch- Burbank, CA

A2C Fred G Kendrick - Pell City, AL

A3C Thomas G Shipp - Carlsbad, NM

Three regular crew members did not fly that day:

Clyde King, the regular pilot, had a leg injury. (Now deceased)

Mel Renshaw, gunner, Severna Park, MD (Now deceased)

(Still looking for name of last crew member.)

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January 13, 1953
RB-29A Aircraft Number: 44-62217

RB-29A Superfortress from the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron. On January 13, 1953, while on a mission of dropping leaflets over enemy territory, the aircraft was attacked by 12 MiGs.

Crew of 14 - Three crew members were killed and eleven were taken prisoner. Shot down on night mission 11 of crew POW (Col Arnold's plane); released in 1955. MIA/KIA were:

A2C Alvin Dale Hart JR - Saginaw, MI

Airman Hart was a member of the 581st Air Resupply Squadron, USAF. He was a crew member.

CAPT Paul Edward Van Voorhis - Glen Cove, NY

(POW) (Known to have been held in China.)

Captain Van Voorhis was a member of the 581st Air Resupply Squadron, U.S. Air Force. He was a crew member. He was listed as Missing in Action and was presumed dead on August 14, 1954.

1LT Henry Douglas Weese - Susanville, CA

(POW) (Known to have been held in China.)

First Lieutenant Weese was a member of the 581st Air Resupply Squadron, U.S. Air Force. He was a crew member.

July 29, 1953

RB-50 Aircraft Number: (Not recorded)

On July 29, 1953, the plane was shot down by two Russian MiG-15's over the Sea of Japan off the coast of Russia.

Crew of 17 - 1 survivor, 1LT John Roche; 2 remains recovered; 13 unaccounted for; 1 definite KIA, body not recovered:

CAPT Stanley Keith O'Kelly - Dunsmuir, CA

Captain O'Kelley was a veteran of World War II; he was the aircraft commander.

MAJOR Francisco J. Tejeda - Los Angeles, CA

CAPT James G. Keith - Hobart, OK

CAPT Robert E. Stalnaker - Huntington, WV

CAPT John C. Ward - Pasadena, CA

CAPT Lloyd C. Wiggins - Marksville, KY

CAPT Frank E. Beyer - Webber Falls, OK

CAPT Warren J. Sanderson - Parks Rapids, MN

CAPT Edmund J Czyz - Chicago, IL

SSGT Donald W Gabree - San Leandro, CA

A/2C Earl W Radlein - Chattanooga, TN

SSGT Donald G. Hill - Pateros, WA

A1C Roland E. Goulet - Mount Holly, NJ

A2C Charles J Russell, Jr. - Philadelphia, PA

A2C James E. Woods - Buckingham, WV

MSGT Francis L. Brown - Modesto, CA

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Here are just a couple of the 91st SRS guys lost.

**October 7, 1952
RB-29 "Sunbonnet King" Aircraft Number: 44-61815**



CAPT John R "Chute" Dunham- Easton, MD



A2C Fred Grady Kendrick - Pell City, AL

**July 29, 1953
RB-50 Aircraft Number: (Not recorded)**



CAPT Stanley Keith O'Kelly - Dunsmuir, CA



A1C Roland E. Goulet - Mount Holly, NJ

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November 7, 1954

RB-29A (Name not recorded) Aircraft Number: 44-64000

2LT Sigfredo Angulo – Navigator - Los Angeles, CA

Following the Korean cease fire, the 91st SRS continued surveillance in the vicinity. During one such flight on November 7, 1954 their aircraft took fire from MiGs and returned to Japan not sure of reaching land. The aircraft had been shot up by MIGs over the Sea of Japan, 7 miles from the coast of Japanese territory; 15 miles from Soviet controlled Kurile Islands.. When the Pilot thought that they may not make it, he gave the order to bail out. It was reported that the first crew member that departed the aircraft hit a coastal cliff and died in the ocean. Remainder of crew survived; all landed on Hokkaido soil after bailing out. The burning aircraft crashed on Hokkaido soil.



USAF Photo

BERRY (L to R), WHALEN, LENTZ, DALTON AND TAYLOR
Survivors of RB-29 Plane Crash (See Other Picture, Page 7)

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Shield of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron

91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing

322nd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron
323rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron
324th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron



During the Korean War, the 91st SRS was augmented from time to time by other squadrons of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing flying RB45Cs – the reconnaissance version of the first all jet bomber.



4 December 1950 - While on temporary duty to Japan one of our 323rd SRS RB45Cs (48-015) was lost to MiGs. The crew was from the 19th BW, Langley AFB, TDY to the 91st SRW. Little was said about it at the time, due to the secrecy surrounding the use of the jet reconnaissance aircraft.

Soviet MiG-15 Fagots shot down an RB-45C Tornado of the US Air Force 323rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, 45 miles east of Andung People's Republic of China (just across the Yalu River from Sinuiju North Korea). Soviet pilot Aleksandr F. Andrianov received credit for shooting down the aircraft. Co-pilot Jules E. Young and navigator James L. Picucci were killed in the crash. Pilot Charles E. McDonough and passenger John R. Lovell bailed out and landed south of the Yalu River. McDonough was badly burned when he landed on the Tornado's wreckage. Both were captured the next day by the North Koreans. McDonough was murdered during an interrogation by North Korean and Soviet officers two weeks later. Lovell survived brutal

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interrogation sessions, but was finally taken into a North Korean village, where the residents were encouraged to lynch him.

Crew members of the first RB-45C lost in combat were:

Capt. Charles E. McDonough (Pilot) (Died while POW)

Capt. Jules E. Young (Co-Pilot) (MIA)

1st Lt. James J. Picussi (Navigator) (MIA)

Col. John R. Lovell (Pentagon Intelligence Officer) (Killed while POW)

4 July 1951 - A US Air Force RB-45C Tornado of the 323rd Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, based in Yokota Japan, conducted a night overflight 500 miles into Manchuria. The crew of Stacy D. Naftel, Edward Kendrex and Bob Dusenberry reported that they were attacked by MiG-15 Fagots while approaching their target in Harbin People's Republic of China. They managed to escape damage by outrunning the intercepting fighters.

6 June 1952 - On a RB45C mission, number 3 engine blew up on take off, number 4 engine flamed out; on fire, the plane crashed near Yokota AB; the crew successfully bailed out.

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**U.S. - Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs
Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSD)**

Cold War Working Group

The Cold War Working Group (CWWG) was established within the structure of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs in 1993, and is chaired by A. Denis Clift and Colonel Vladimir Konstantinovich Vinogradov.

The Cold War Working Group's research focuses on ten specific cases involving U.S. military reconnaissance aircraft lost over or near Soviet territory. As a result of those losses, 89 aircrew members remain unaccounted for. The working group's efforts have led to the recovery of the remains of 18 aircrew members from two separate losses on the territory of the former Soviet Union. These remains were repatriated and buried at Arlington Cemetery with full military honors.

The CWWG continues to investigate aircraft losses in the former Soviet Union. Because most of the Cold War losses took place over water, much of the research has been concentrated in the Central Archives of the Naval Forces of the Russian Federation at Gatchina, near St. Petersburg. In addition to its program of archival research, U.S. and Russian representatives of the Joint Commission also conduct a vigorous interview program with witnesses throughout the former Soviet Union.

The CWWG has also assisted the Russian side in clarifying its Cold War aircraft losses and a submarine loss. In addition, information from U.S. government sources helped to shed light on the fates of dozens of Soviet POW/MIAs from the Afghanistan War.

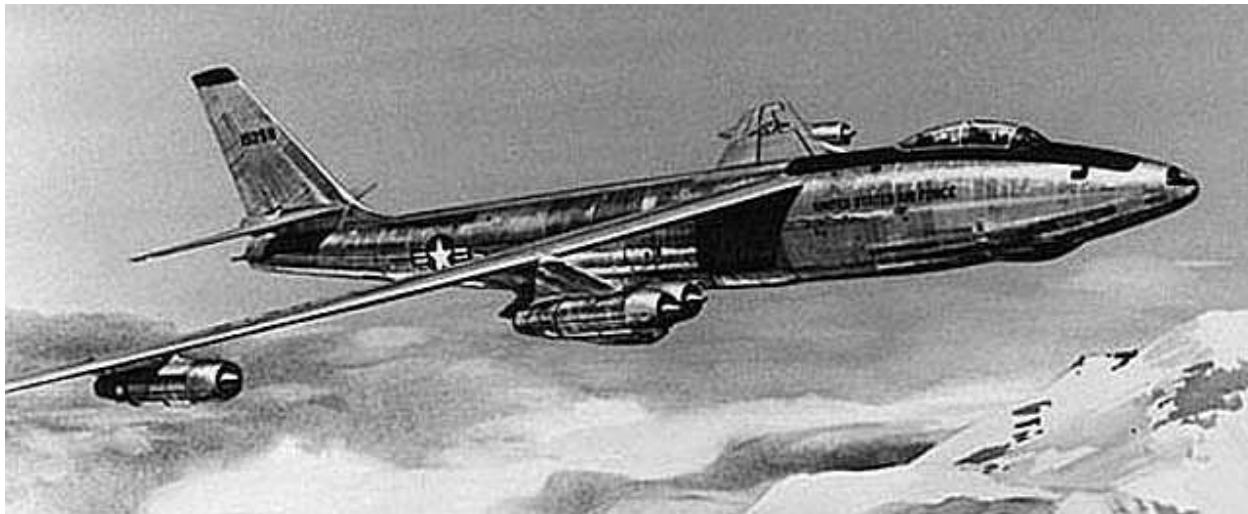
See:

<http://www.aiipowmia.com/reports/rnd2.html>

<http://www.aiipowmia.com/koreacw/mockbacole05.html>

<http://www.aiipowmia.com/koreacw/cwwg96b.html>

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Two examples of cold war losses:

April 18, 1956: US Air Force aircraft lost over Kamchatka Peninsula

Aircraft: US Air Force RB-47E

Crew of 3 - All lost and unaccounted for; no remains recovered.

**NEIGHBORS, Lacie C. – Missing
BROOKS, Robert N. – Missing
WATKINS, Richard E. – Missing**

July 1, 1960: US Air Force aircraft lost over Barents Sea

Aircraft: US Air Force RB-47 (With Electronic Bay)

Crew of 6 – Initially, all missing and presumed dead; no remains recovered.

This aircraft was apparently shot down by Soviet fighters about 130 miles off the coast of the Kola Peninsula, USSR, and northern Norway. No remains were recovered; however, on July 4, 1960, US aircraft sighted a "raft-like" object near the missing plane's last known position.

**GOFORTH, Oscar L. – Missing
OLMSTEAD, Freeman B. - Returnee/Rescued
PHILLIPS, Dean B. – Missing
MCKONE, John R. - Returnee/Rescued
PALM, Willard G. - Negotiated Remains
POSA, Eugene E. – Missing**