

QUIET BIRDMEN



PINEHURST NC HANGAR

QB MEMBER PROFILES

PROFILE NUMBER 7

Dolph D. Overton

QB #19393

Hangar: Goldsboro (GWW)



QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton

The Unsung Ace of the Korean War



QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton

Mr. Overton was born in Greenville, N. C. on October 12, 1900 a son of Dolphin D. Overton, Sr. and Mrs. Elizabeth White Overton. He was reared in that area and was graduated in Engineering from N. C. State College in Raleigh. In 1924, he came to make his home in Andrews and owned and operated The Overton Manufacturing Company, Producers of Tobacco Containers, until his retirement in 1968. He was one of the early pilots of this area and maintained a plane for business and personal affairs. Mr. Overton was a member of Trinity Methodist Church.



- Born **Dolphin Dunnaha “Dolph” Overton III** April 2nd, 1927 in Andrews, South Carolina.
- His **father** was **Dr. Dolphin Dunnaha Overton Jr.** of Greenville, NC. He was an NC State College engineering graduate and manufacturer of tobacco containers, wooden “hogsheads”. He was one of the early pilots in his area who used an aircraft in his business.
- His **mother** was the former **Jennie Mae Haselden** of Andrews, SC. Dolph was the oldest of three children born to Jennie.
- He married **Susan Hagood** of Andrews, SC in 1959. They were married 54 years until his death in 2013. They had 5 children, one of whom, DD IV, flies for Fedex.

Tobacco Hogshead Barrels



Overton Field, Andrews, SC

From an article from *South Carolina Magazine*, April 1949

- One of the most interesting phases of the **Overton enterprise** is the beautiful modern airport, **Overton Field**, maintained about two miles from Andrews on Highway 511. The field, southwest of Andrews, is fully approved by the Civil Aeronautics Administration for G. I. flight training. At the present eight students are taking lessons under an authorized instructor. Four planes are in operation at the airport, one Aeronca, one Cessna, and two Piper Cubs, and gasoline and oil are available at the field for these planes as well as visiting aircraft.
- The field consists of **three runways**, each 150 feet wide. Two of the runways are **3,200 feet in length, the other is 1,400 feet long**. All three runways are well-drained, grass tufted, smooth and hard, and many visiting fliers have complimented the management on the excellence of the field as compared with those maintained at much larger cities.
- The taxi strip is convenient to the main runway in front of the hangars, and a **windsock** on a corner of the hangar indicates the prevailing wind. Individual hangars are available for visiting planes.
- The **Civil Air Patrol** is now putting in equipment for use by the local unit, recently organized, and **the Patrol at Andrews is alert and growing rapidly**.

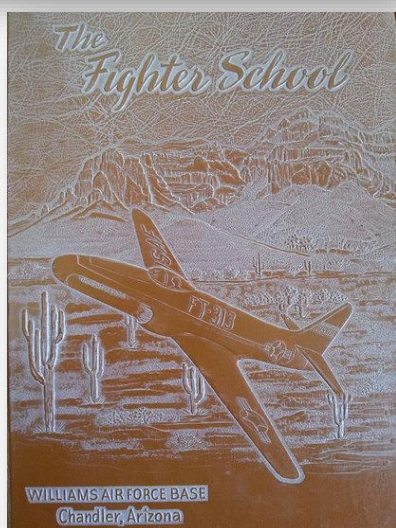
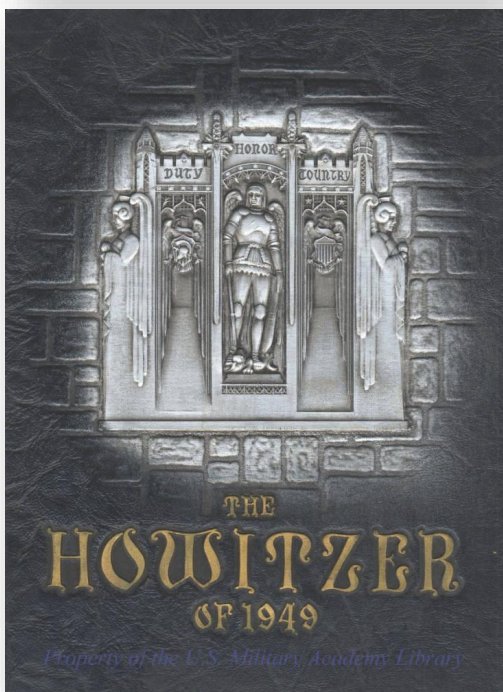
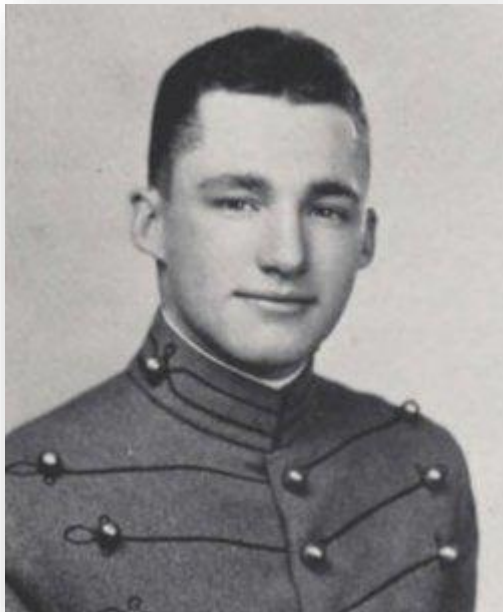


Overton Field, Andrews, SC



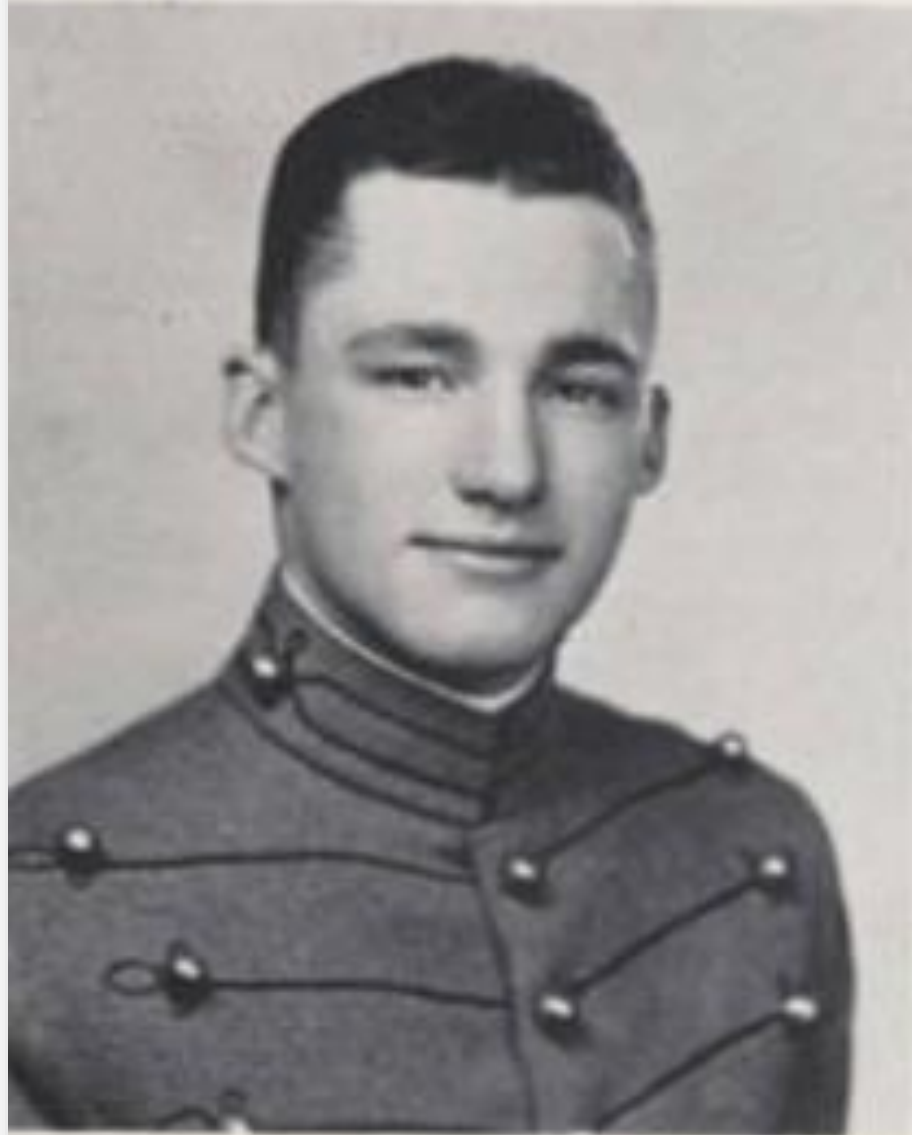
- Likely airfield where the young Dolph **learned to fly**.
- As a child Overton built **balsa model planes** and devoured popular books about **World War I flying aces**. (from QB Elliott White Springs?) He inherited a life-long passion for planes and flying **from his father** who was also a pilot. Overton bought his first **airplane at age 14 for \$1**. It was the first of many classic airplanes and cars he would rescue from forgotten fields and hangars throughout his life.
- He **soloed in a Piper J-3 Cub** when he was 16, and got his pilot's license at 17.
- **Susan Dusenbury**, of Walnut Cove, NC, America's first female IA, former Burlington cargo pilot, learned to fly at age 15 at Overton Field. Dolph Overton's mother and Susan's grandmother were best friends all of their lives. Susan is the current President of the EAA Vintage Aircraft Association. She grew up in Andrews / Georgetown, SC.

QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton



- After graduating from **Andrews High School**, he entered **The Citadel** in 1943, leaving after a year to join the Navy. After a brief stint of **naval service during World War II**, Overton attempted to become a **naval aviator** in 1945 but there was little demand for additional aviators at the time, as the war was nearing its end.
- He completed his education at the **United States Military Academy at West Point**, earning a bachelor's degree in **engineering** in 1949 and being commissioned as a **second lieutenant**.
- Overton became one of 92 graduates to join the newly formed **United States Air Force**. In 1950, Overton earned his aviator wings after a year of training at **Williams Air Force Base** in Phoenix, Arizona, alongside **Ivan Kincheloe**, who would later also become a **flying ace in Korea** and a test pilot at Edwards AFB.

USMA YEARBOOK HOWITZER 1949



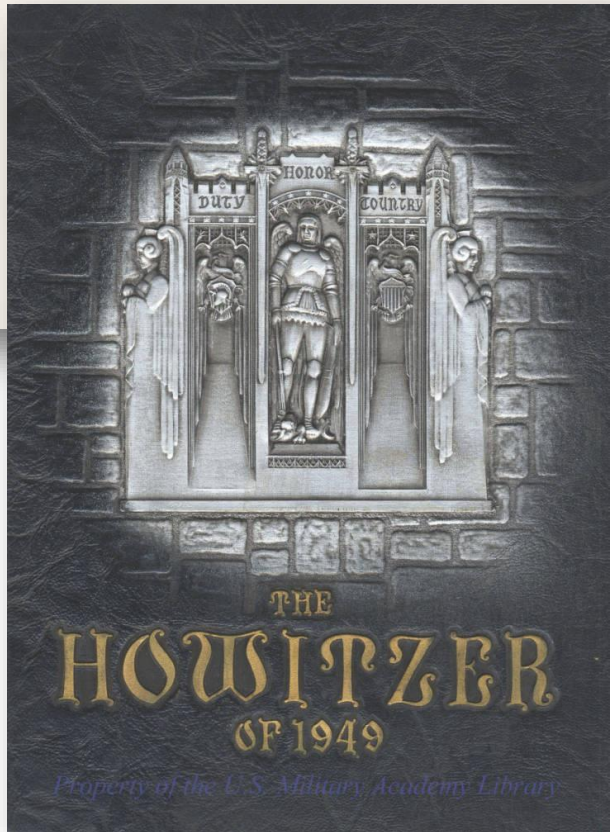
DOLPHIN D. OVERTON

Andrews, South Carolina

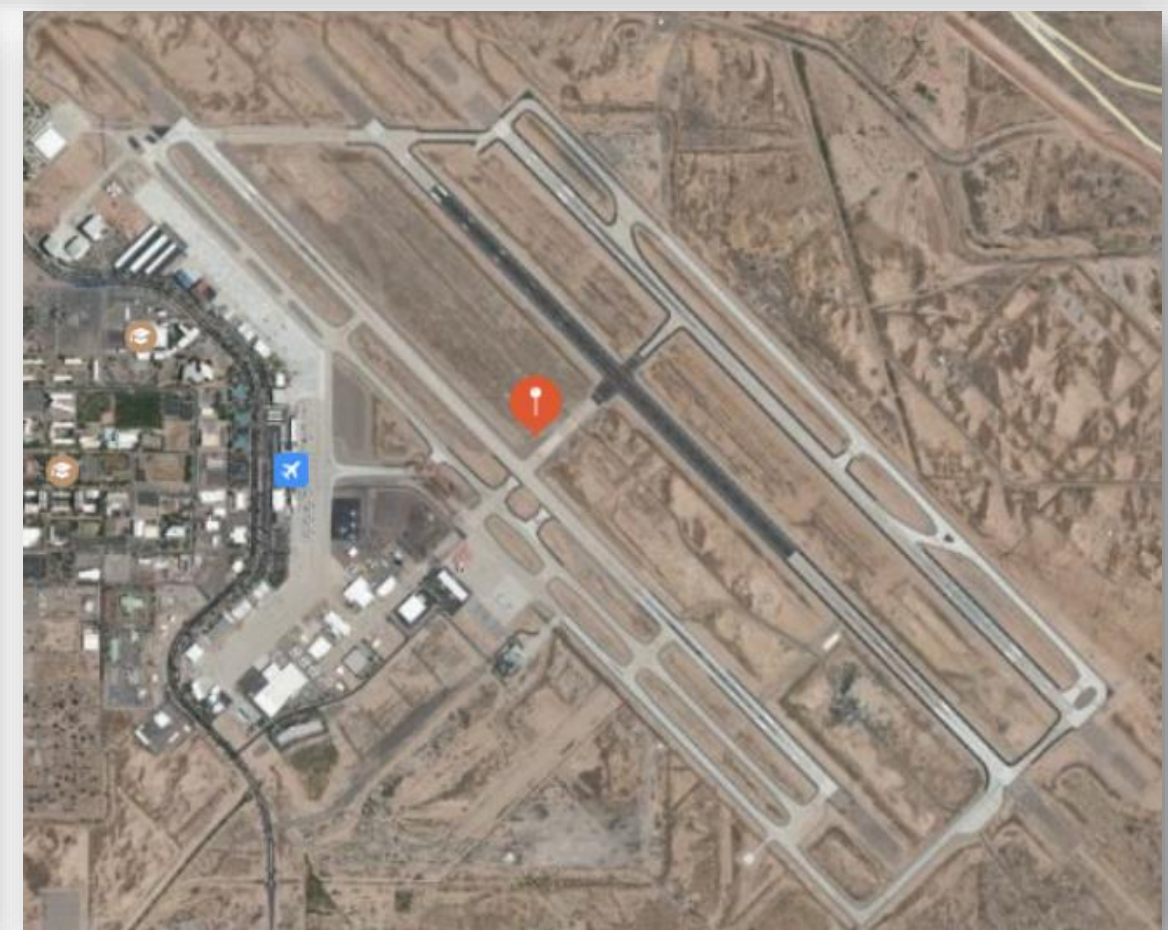
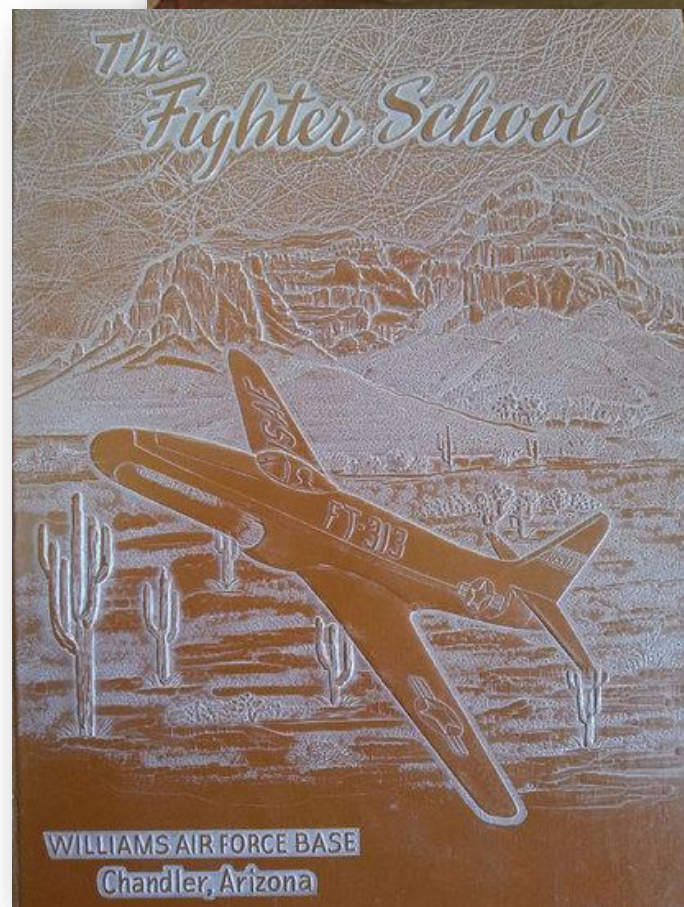
L-2

An incurably avid Air Force man, "D.D." could usually be found deeply engrossed in one of his daily "fly-boy" magazines. Being a natural born hive himself, he spent much more time on the academic problems of his more ill-favored classmates than on his own. With his additional qualities of genuine friendliness and natural leadership, "D.D." will surely succeed in whatever he may attempt.

Track	4-3-2-1
Numerals	
Monograms	
Soccer	3
Football	2
Ski Club	4
Corporal	2
Sergeant	1



Williams AFB Chandler, AZ – 1950s & Today



QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton

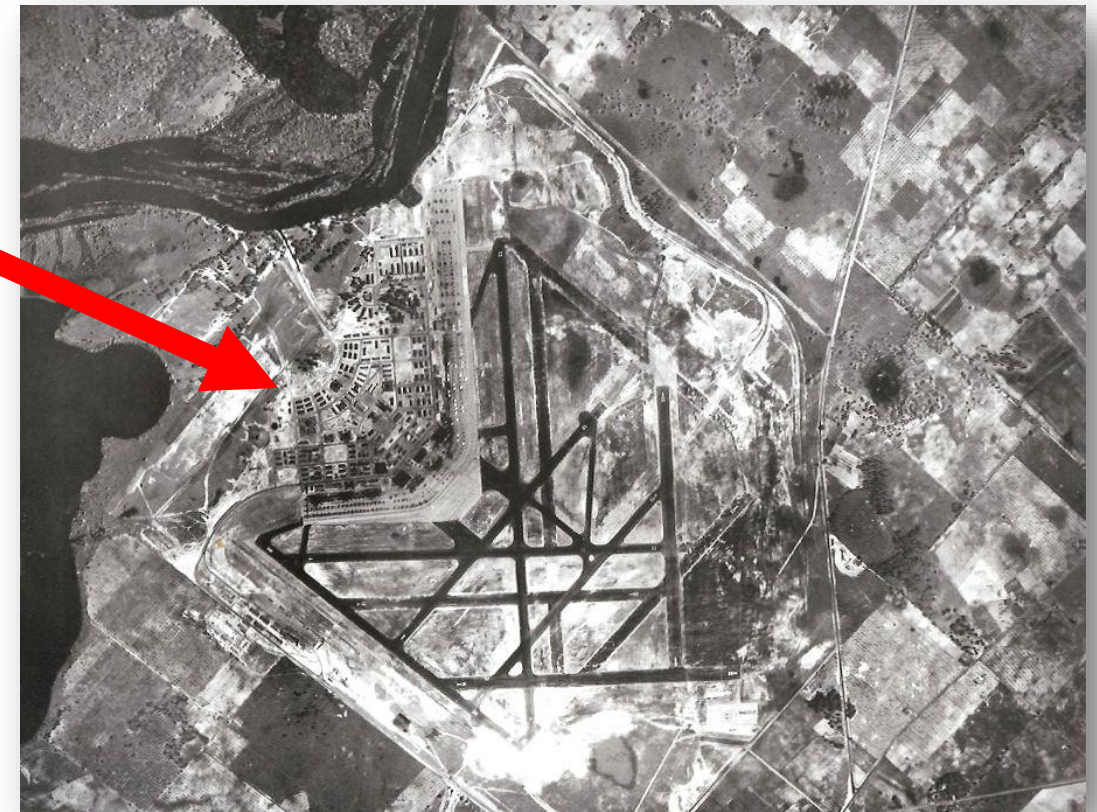


- Overton's first assignment in 1950 was with the **31st Fighter Group** at **Turner AFB** in Albany, GA, commanded by **David C. Schilling**, sixth-leading **ace** of the 8th Air Force in WWII. At Turner AFB Dolph flew the Republic F-84 Thunderjet fighter-bomber.
- Shortly after the beginning of this assignment, Overton **nearly died** in a training incident. On his third flight in the F-84, as he tried to set a record for completing an obstacle course in the shortest time, he was involved in a major crash. The crash threatened to end his career, but **Schilling**, determined to prevent Overton from being discharged, gave him extra assignments to **keep him in the military**.
- Overton flew F-84s with the 31st Fighter Group. He was a part of the first major trans-Atlantic deployment of F-84s to the **United Kingdom** in late 1950. He volunteered for deployment to South Korea for **the Korean War** in 1951.

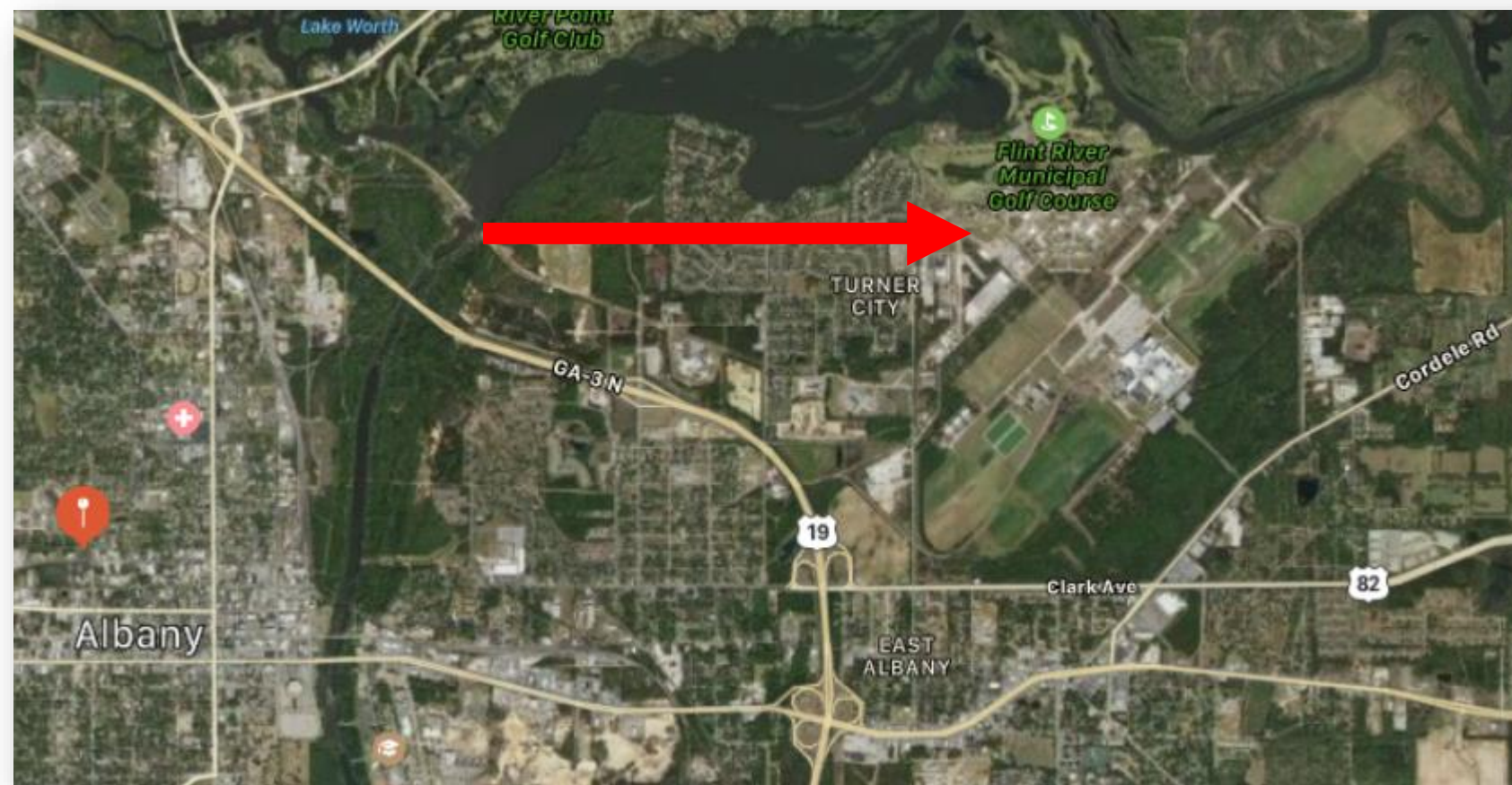
31st FIGHTER ESCORT WING & TURNER AFB



F-84F of the 31st FEW, 1952



Turner AFB, 1947/48, 7 Runways!



31st FIGHTER ESCORT WING & TURNER AFB

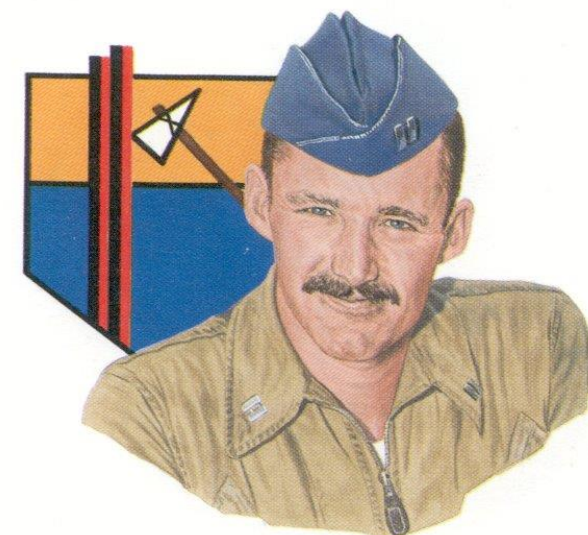


31st Fighter Wing - F-84C 47-1512 Turner AFB, GA 1949

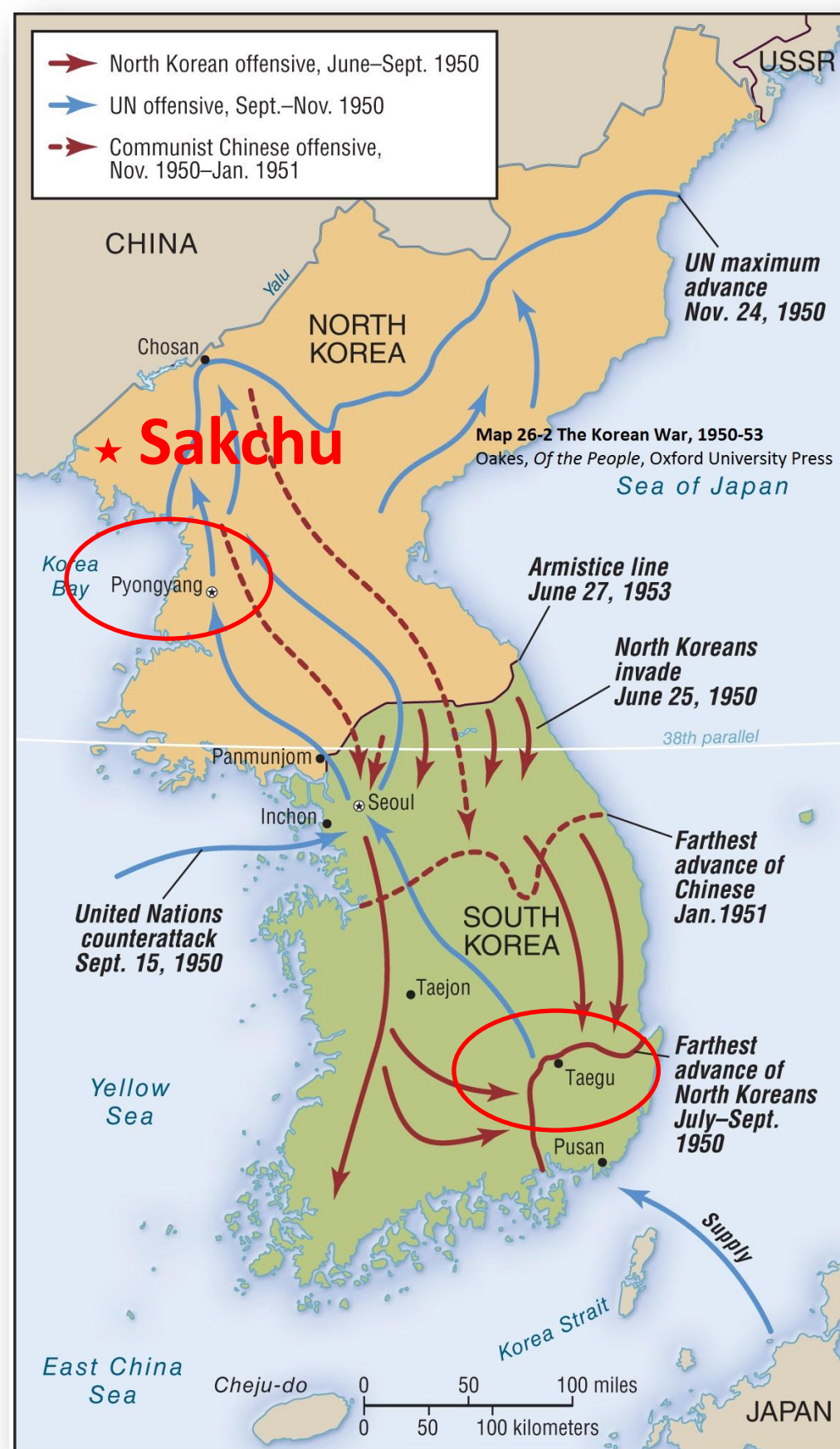
Dolph's First Tour in Korea



- In **February 1952**, Overton joined the **8th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 49th Fighter-Bomber Wing**. Overton was the most experienced jet aircraft pilot among them, so he was made a **flight leader** and the **assistant Operations Officer** of the squadron.
- The unit flew out of **Taegu (K-2)** and its missions consisted primarily of **close air support** and **interdiction** missions in support of United Nations ground forces.
- In this time, Overton also took assignments as a **forward air controller** and directed air support missions to troops on the front lines.
- Overton spent some of this time on the **USS Valley Forge (CV-45)** to assist US Navy pilots with their own **close air support** doctrine.



Dolph's First Tour in Korea



- On 15 June 1952, Overton led a bombing raid over **Pyongyang** to destroy a series of targets near the **Pyongyang Air Base**. The targets had been unsuccessfully bombed earlier by a similar strike force, but Overton's group was **successful in destroying** almost all of the targets while none of his aircraft took major damage from the 48 anti-aircraft and 100 automatic weapons, and without harming the many nearby UN POWs.
- On 28 June 1952 Overton leading a group of 24 F-84s, directed attacks on a **convoy of Chinese vehicles**. Despite taking intense anti-aircraft fire is aircraft **destroyed 150 vehicles**. Though the circumstances in the event were lost in subsequent actions, Overton would later be decorated for this achievement.
- On 4 July 1952, Overton led a group of 37 F-84s on an attack mission against the **North Korean Military Academy** near Sakchu when they were attacked by almost **200 MiG-15s** in the largest engagement of the war. In spite of the intense fire, Overton's group took **no losses**, and the results of the engagement, as well as Overton's heroism were cause for **subsequent decoration**.
- With this unit, Overton flew **102 combat missions** over the course of a 6-month tour. It concluded in **August 1952**.



Dolph's First Tour in Korea



USS Valley Forge off Korea, 1952



Republic F-84G #52-3253, displayed as 0-1191A, "Dolph's Devil", flown by Dolph Overton. Carolinas Aviation Museum, CLT.

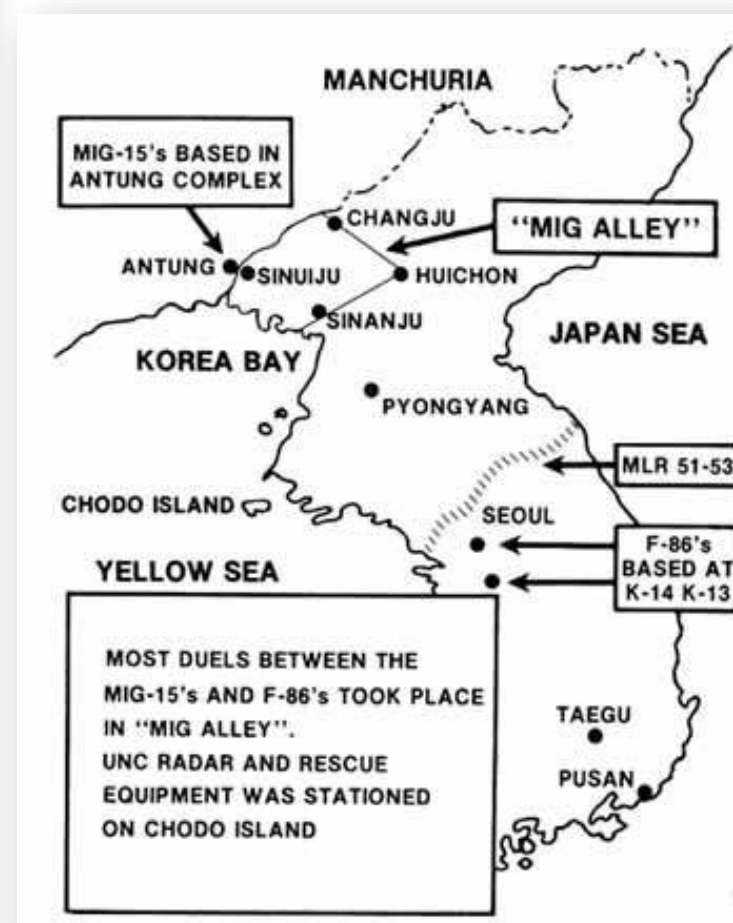
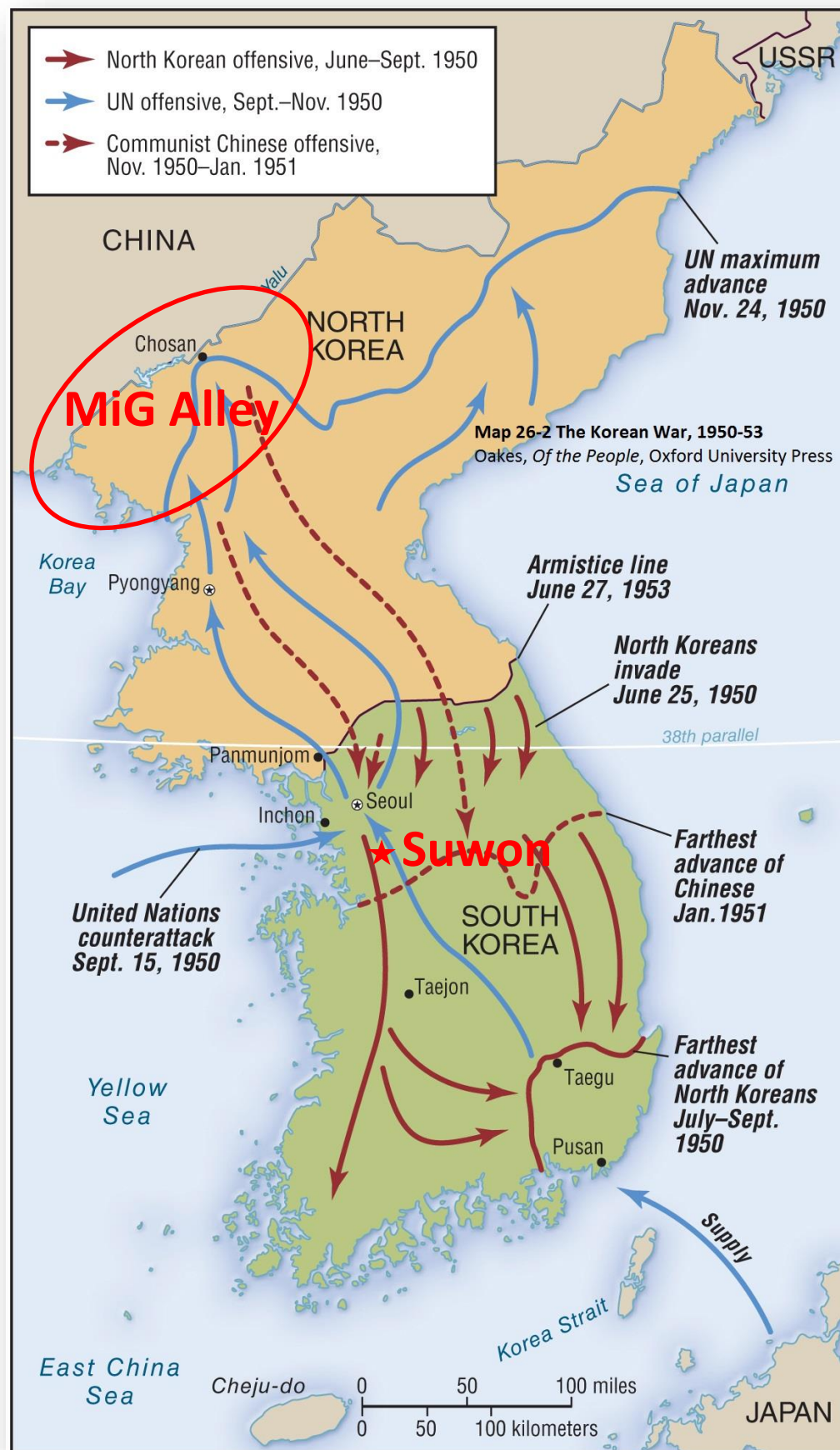


Dolph's First Tour in Korea



Dolph's Second Tour in Korea

- At the end of his first tour, Overton volunteered for a second tour in Korea in a fighter unit. For this tour, Overton joined the **16th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing at Suwon Air Base.**
- He flew 40 missions into MiG alley without making contact with any Soviet, Chinese or North Korean pilots. He flew an F-86 Sabre, tail number 50-631, nicknamed **Dolph's Devil** and **Angel in Disguise.**



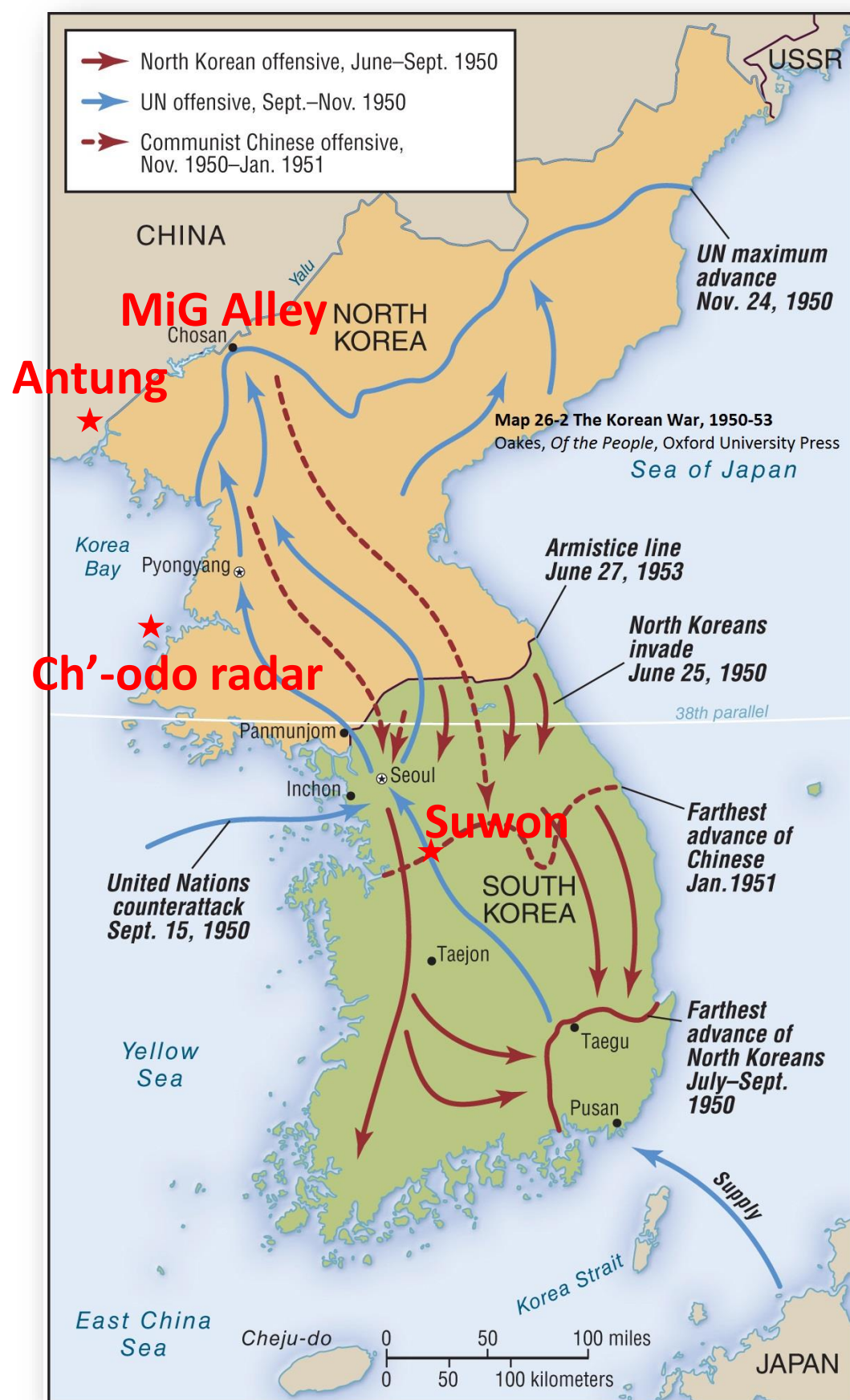
Dolph's Second Tour in Korea



F-86E-1-NA 50-631 'Dolph's Devil' of the 16th FIS / 51st FIW flown by Capt. Dolphin D. Overton



Dolph's Second Tour in Korea



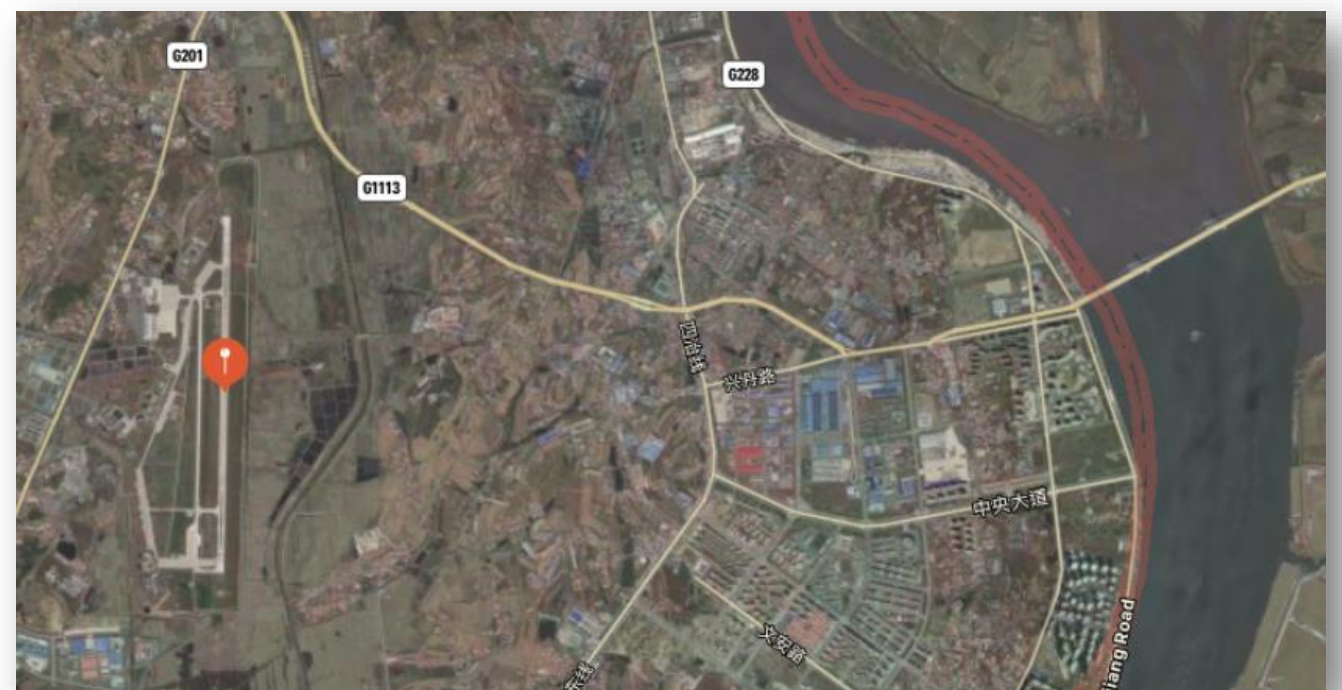
- Overton was described by fellow pilots as being a **"smart and serious professional."** He visited the Ch'-Odo radar site in his spare time to **memorize the flight patterns** of the Soviet and Chinese fliers. By the end of January 1953, Overton had learned the **MiG patrol and landing patterns.**
- On 21 January Overton began successfully downing aircraft **north of the Yalu River.** Over the course of four days and four missions, he downed five Soviet aircraft; two on 21 January and one each on 22 and 23 January.
- Overton himself expressed surprise at how successful his strategy was, noting he was never discovered until it was too late, and he considered the victories relatively easy. He downed his fifth and final Soviet pilot on 24 January 1953, his 49th mission of the tour. **This meant he attained ace status in the shortest time** of any pilot in the war.

Dolph's Technique for Shoot-Downs

- During a visit to an **Air Force radar site** on Cho-do, he had learned where MiGs orbited while waiting to land, how long they stayed airborne and how they made their **approach to landing**.
- Overton positioned his jet **above the MiGs'** landing pattern, flying a racetrack pattern with **minimal maneuvering** to lessen the possibility that the sun's glint off his Sabre's wings would give away his position. Then he waited to **pounce on his prey**.
- He **turned off his IFF**, hoping to fool enemy radar operators into thinking his aircraft was just another MiG getting ready to land.
- Overton also tried to keep his **jet between the sun and the MiGs** in order to arrive at their 6 o'clock position undetected.
- All of his kills were achieved at close range **without the use of the radar-ranging** feature of the Sabre's gunsight. **"They never seemed to see us or recognize us until too late," he boasted.**



*Antung airfield,
just northwest
of the mouth of
the Yalu River.*



Dolph's Second Tour in Korea



Dolph Overton - Scapegoat

- **Swiss observers** to the peace talks at Panmunjon were traveling through Manchuria on foot when they spotted a **UN-Soviet dogfight** and lodged a complaint, prompting an investigation which eventually **indicted Overton**.
- No pilots before Overton had been punished for crossing the Yalu. Overton himself expressed frustration at the move, as he had been the **rearmost pilot** in the formation that crossed the Yalu River on 24 January, and his wing commander, **Colonel John W. Mitchell**, had been known to cross the border and condoned the action. No other pilot was individually punished—possibly because the ground crews **threatened to mutiny** after learning of Overton's fate.
- Fellow ace and unit member **Francis Gabreski** challenged the move, claiming that US pilots were outnumbered, and it was the only way to maintain air superiority.
- Mitchell told him he was **being grounded** and sent home, and "made clear that he was not going home a hero". Overton was told he would **not be given the decorations** he had earned in Korea, including the awards from his previous tour which had not yet been written up.
- Overton remarked, "**I know that shit flows downhill**, but it seemed to me that this was a long way down." Within a year he **resigned his commission** and left the service.
- See "MiG Madness: The Air War over Korea", historynet.com, for a good summary.



Dolph Overton - Scapegoat

- **Colonel Francis Gabreski**, the top American ace in the European theater during World War II, chased a MiG over the main runway at Antung. After shooting down the Soviet pilot, Gabreski interrupted his flak-dodging maneuver to execute a victory roll over the Chinese airfield.
- **Colonel Harrison Thyng**, commander of the 4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing, ordered a pilot to buzz Antung at an altitude of 10 to 15 feet at Mach .9. He reasoned that the sonic boom would infuriate the MiG pilots and entice them to rise to the bait.
- **Georgy Lobov**, the first Soviet MiG commander of the war, complained, “Americans were constantly crossing the border.” Lobov’s unit, the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, lost 26 aircraft over their own airfields during the first six months of 1952. American planes would often circle at high altitude over the mouth of the Yalu and swoop down on Communist pilots after seeing dust swirling on their airfields, an indication that MiGs were taking off. The Soviets were so frustrated by the aerial blockade that they simply kept their jets on the ground when Sabres were reported overhead.



Dolph Overton - Scapegoat

- **Captain Robinson “Robbie” Risner**, a Korean War ace with eight victories, was one of those celebrated aggressive pilots. On October 22, 1952, he chased four MiGs across the Yalu while escorting a flight of fighter-bombers. Risner finally caught the tail-end Charlie deep inside Manchuria and fired a burst that shattered the MiG’s canopy. The enemy pilot, trying to escape, performed a split-S and managed to pull out of the maneuver 10 feet from the ground. The MiG was so low at that point that Risner saw its jet engine exhaust kick up dust from a dry riverbed. “He was not in very good shape,” recalled Risner, “but he was a great pilot—and he was fighting like a cornered rat!” The MiG pilot pulled his throttle to idle and put out his speed brake in an effort to get the Sabre to overshoot. Risner rolled over the top of the MiG and came down on the other side next to his wingtip. “We were both at idle with our speed brakes out, just coasting,” Risner recalled. “He looked over at me, raised his hand, and shook his fist. I thought, ‘This is like a movie. This can’t be happening!’ He had on a leather helmet, and I could see the stitching in it.” The MiG valiantly evaded his pursuer all the way back to Ta-tung-kou airfield, 35 miles into China. Risner and his wingman, Lieutenant Joe Logan, doggedly pursued him even as the **enemy jet flew at 300 knots between two of the airfield’s hangars**. Risner eventually got in an opportune shot and peppered the enemy with bullets until he blasted off part of the MiG’s wing. The MiG crashed alongside the runway.



QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton



- At the age of 25, a storied military career behind him, he spent the next 60 years in private enterprise, starting in the **tobacco industry** in Mullins, S.C., the “**Tobacco Capital**” of South Carolina, where he would eventually become an **international businessman**.
- Among his businesses were the **C&O Development Company**, **Systems Control**, a shipping company based in Kenly, NC, and industrial parks in Kenly and Santee, S.C. He was also involved in the development of hotel, plant and various facilities for the **Squibb Corporation**, the **Sunbeam Corporation**, **Revere Copper and Brass Inc.** and **Ramada Inns Inc.**, among others.
- In 1979, Dolph made a bid to purchase the cigarette division of **Liggett & Myers Tobacco Company** for about \$122m.



QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton



- Overton **continued flying** as a hobby after the military. He built a **personal aviation library** with 10,000 books and began **collecting and restoring aircraft**.
- In the mid 1960s Dolph developed the **Wings & Wheels Museum** in Santee, SC, to house his collections. This remained open until the late 70s.
- By 1999, Overton had **acquired and restored over 90 aircraft**, eventually donating most to museums and institutions around the United States and abroad. Among this collection are several more Piper Cubs and **Ford Trimotor** aircraft, which he flew regularly for leisure. Some aircraft came from **Tallmantz Aviation** in Santa Ana, CA and **Salis Collection** in Cerny, France.
- He was also active in the development of a state aviation museum for North Carolina. The **Carolinas Aviation Museum**, established in 1992, named its library for Overton.

Wings & Wheels – Santee, SC



Three Ford Tri-Motors at Wings and Wheels in 1972.



Dolph Overton's KR-21. This plane is now owned by Jim Wilson of Cross, SC.



Wings & Wheels – Santee, SC

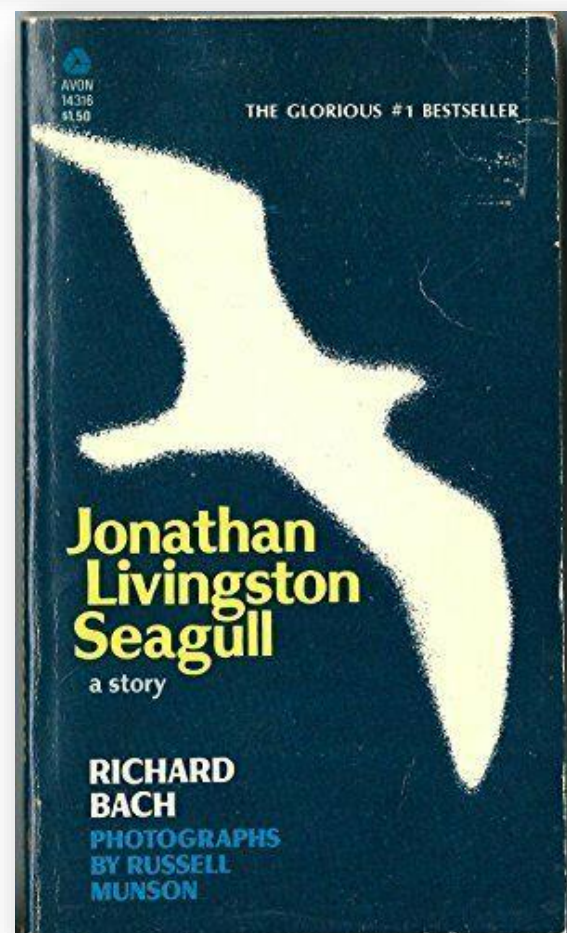
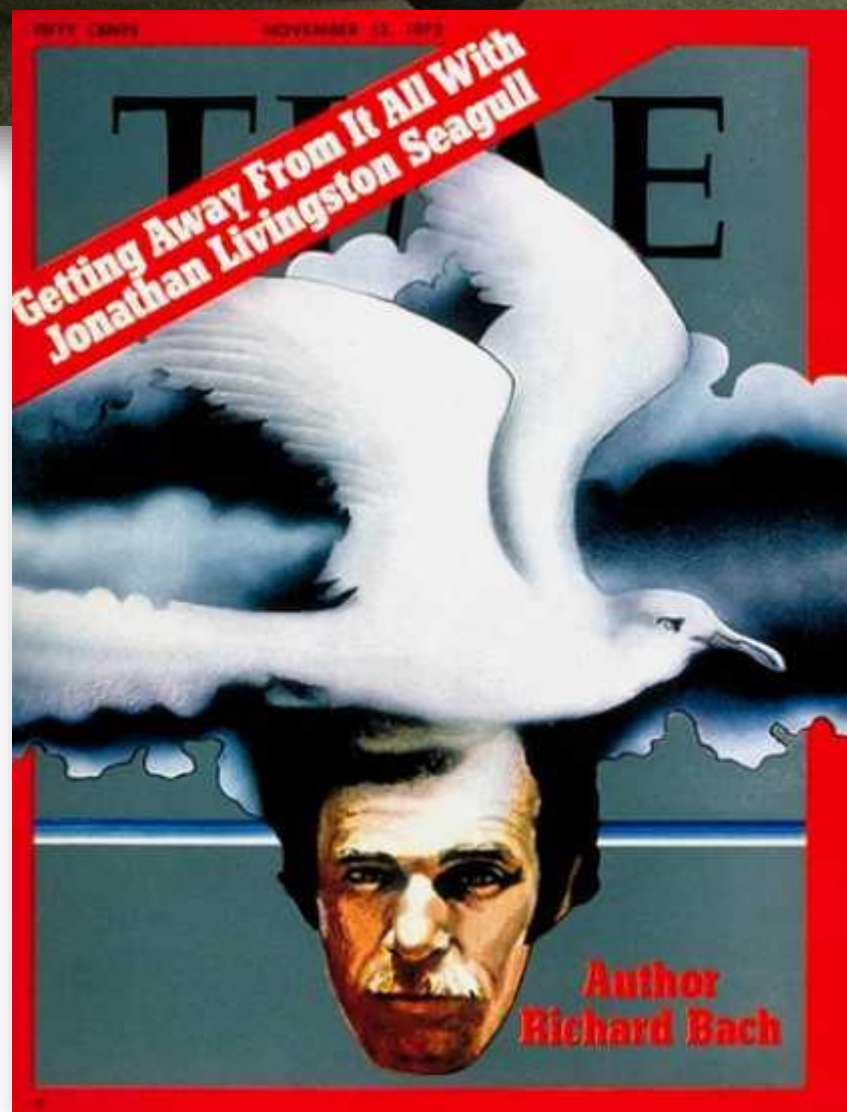


MAIN DISPLAY BUILDING WINGS AND WHEELS Santee, S. C.

Housed in a building, enclosing more space than a football field, the museum collection consists of more than 40 antique planes, many cars, engines, and machine guns. Beginning with a reproduction of the Wright Brother's first plane, the visitor is given a vivid picture of the history of American aviation up to World War II.



Wings & Wheels – Dick Bach Connection



AAA president Bob Taylor was on hand at Gastonia in 1964 to present the group a charter, making the Foundation an affiliate of the **Antique Airplane Association**. The following year at Gastonia, the new editor of the AAA magazine, (NJANG F-84F pilot) **Richard Bach**, would be on hand to represent the national organization. Richard would later become the world-acclaimed author of the aviation allegory, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. It sold over 1m copies in 1972.

Dolph Overton – Exonerated & Honored



- While helping a fellow West Point graduate, retired **Air Force Lt. Gen. Charles G. Cleveland**, gain the credit he deserved for his own fighter ace status, Cleveland recognized that Overton had been **denied his own honors** and tirelessly worked to piece together the evidence and serve as a witness before the **Air Force Board for Military Corrections**.
- In a 2009 ceremony at the Air Force Association Air & Space Conference in Washington, D.C., 57 years after the fact, Overton received the **Distinguished Service Cross** from then **Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz**.
- A full accounting of his military honors would include the **Distinguished Service Cross**, **Distinguished Flying Cross** with four oak leaf clusters, four **Silver Star Medals**, Korean Service Medal, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, United Nations Service Medal for Korea, **Air Medal** with eight oak leaf clusters, and the Korean War Service Medal, among others.
- He was the **most highly decorated alumni** of the **Citadel**, earning Distinguished Service Cross, 4 Silver Stars, 6 Distinguished Flying Crosses and nine Air Medals.





Distinguished Service Cross Citation

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to (then) First Lieutenant Dolphin D. Overton, III, United States Air Force, for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy of the United States as Group Leader of twenty-two F-84 type Aircraft, 49th Bomber Wing, FIFTH Air Force, on 28 June 1952. On that date, Lieutenant Overton's group was diverted against a target of truck convoys discovered by a previous recce flight. Working in and through an overcast, Lieutenant Overton planned and executed a very difficult attack, sequencing his aircraft in such a manner as to provide maximum coverage of the target with minimum risk from heavy ground fire. With disregard for his own safety, Lieutenant Overton remained in enemy fire under the overcast so that he could visually direct the attacks and withdrawals. So successful was Lieutenant Overton's direction of the attack, that one hundred fifty trucks were destroyed and confirmed by photograph, making it one of the largest such strikes of the war. Lieutenant Overton's command of this strike in such adverse conditions and with such devastating results highlights his superb flying skill and extraordinary heroism in the face of fierce enemy opposition. Lieutenant Overton's actions reflect great credit upon himself, the FAR EAST Air Force, the United States Air Force, and the United Nations Command.



4th Silver Star Citation

First Lieutenant Dolphin D. Overton III distinguished himself by gallantry in action during military operations against an armed enemy of the United States as F-86 Pilot over Korea. During his second combat tour, in a torrid 4-day period of 21-24 January 1953, Lieutenant Overton led the 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing in the confirmed shoot-down of four enemy MiG-15s. On 25 January 1953 while flying his aircraft near Uiju, Korea, Lieutenant Overton shot down his fifth enemy MiG-15. This accomplishment set a record in his becoming a jet Ace in the shortest period of time, becoming the 24th of the 38 Aces of the Korean War. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Overton in the dedication of his service to his country reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton



Left: Dolph Overton, Bevo Howard, and Bob Bryant with the Ford 5AT at Wings and Wheels, 1969. Right: Dolph with Zeke Saunders, one of Piedmont's first pilots.



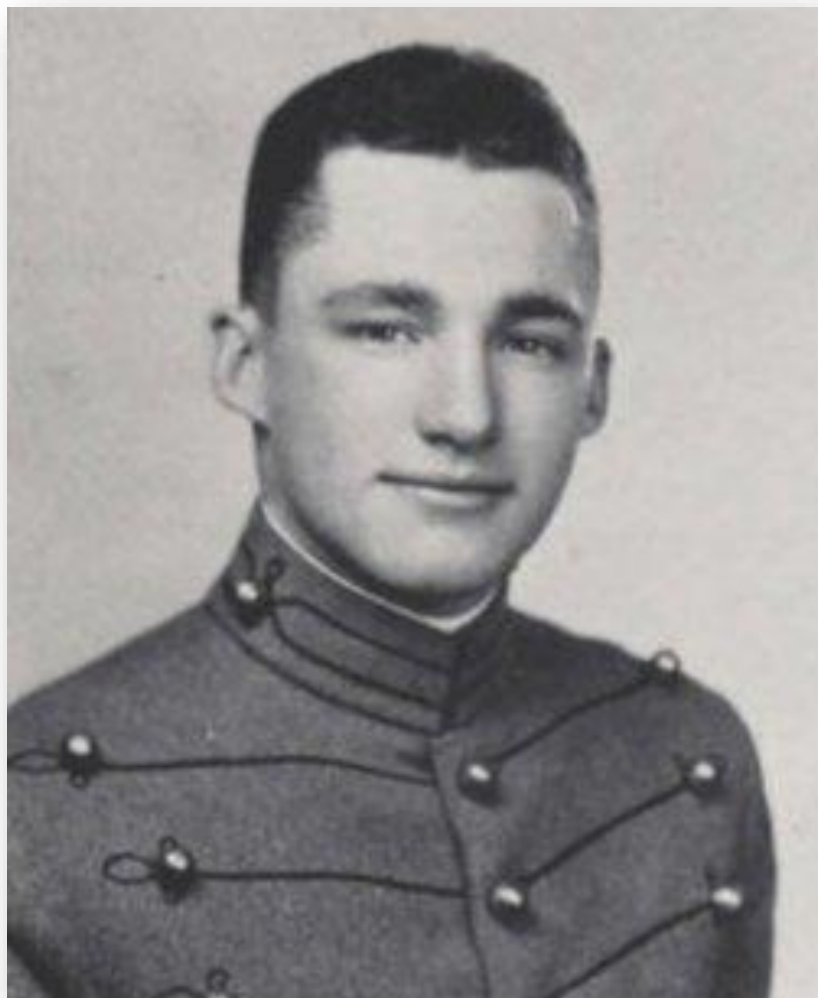
Left: The late Jack & Golda Cox of Asheboro, NC, managed Wings & Wheels before joining the EAA as head of Publications.

QB Profiles – Dolph D. Overton



- Dolph Overton died March 25th, 2013 (age 85) in Georgetown, SC, only a few miles from his birthplace of Andrews, SC.
- He is buried at Prince George Winyah Cemetery in Georgetown, SC.

CAVU FOREVER BROTHER QB



Thank You



QUIET BIRDMEN



PINEHURST NC HANGAR

**THESE QB MEMBER PROFILES FOUND AT
www.aerosouth.net/QB**

But wait...there's more !



Hindenburg: The New Evidence

Starring: USAF Colonel Jason Harris

Former EAA1114 member, SpecOps Pilot

Premiers on PBS, Wed., 5/19/21, 9PM

