



# **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **GODDARD'S VIETNAM FIGHTER JET COMING TO THE MUSEUM OF AVIATION**

Warner Robins, GA – An F-100D fighter once flown by retired Air Force Major General Rick Goddard during the Vietnam War is coming home to the Museum of Aviation. As a young fighter pilot, Goddard flew 226 combat missions in F-100s, 180 of them in this exact aircraft (#56-2995) from September 1968 to October 1969 while assigned to the 309th Tactical Fighter Squadron in Vietnam. The aircraft was eventually retired from active service in 1978 and put on display at Otis AFB, Massachusetts. The aircraft is being trucked to the Georgia Museum and is expected to arrive on Monday, December 13.



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“I was very surprised that the aircraft was still around,” said Goddard, who was the Commander of the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center at Robins Air Force Base from November 1997 to February 2000. “I found out about it from a web site contact and notified the Museum of Aviation.” Museum Director Ken Emery contacted the Massachusetts base and negotiated a deal to trade the plane for another less significant F-100 in the Museum’s collection.

The F-100 coming to the Museum was built by North American Aviation in Inglewood, California in 1957 and ironically came first to Robins AFB for modifications before being assigned to an operational flying unit. During its 21 years of flight history, it was assigned to units in England, North Africa, Germany, Italy and Arizona before going into combat in Vietnam in 1968. From 1971 to 1978 it flew its final missions with the Massachusetts Air National Guard.

“This is part of our ongoing effort to upgrade our Museum inventory with aircraft that have combat time or a significant history,” said Emery who has brought five other aircraft with combat time into the Museum’s collection in the last 3 ½ years. The Museum now has a total of 14 aircraft that once flew combat missions in Vietnam and is converting one whole hangar into a Vietnam War display hangar.

Developed as a follow-on to the F-86 Sabre used in the Korean War, the F-100 was the world's first production airplane capable of flying faster than the speed of sound in level flight (760 mph). The prototype, the YF-100, made its first flight on May 25, 1953 at Edwards Air Force Base, California. Of the 2,294 F-100s built before production ended in 1959, 1,274 were D models, more than all the other series combined. The D, which made its first flight on January 24, 1956, was the most advanced production version. Its features included the first autopilot designed for a supersonic jet and a low-altitude bombing system.

The Super Sabre had its combat debut in Vietnam where it was used extensively as a fighter-bomber in ground-support missions such as attacking bridges, road junctions, and troop concentrations. It was equipped with four 20mm nose cannons, two GAM-83A Bulldog missiles, four GAR-8 sidewinder missiles, rockets, special stores and/or a maximum of 7,040 lbs. of external stores. Its single Pratt & Whitney J-57-P-21 (or -P-21A) engine could produce 16,000 lbs. thrust with afterburner to take the aircraft to a top speed of 926 mph.

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