

THAT TIME AN UNPILOTED F-106 INTERCEPTOR AUTONOMOUSLY LANDED IN A SNOW-COVERED FIELD

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The F-106 that autonomously landed in a snow-covered field



The F-106 featured in the photos of this post was involved in a [very unusual incident](#).

On Feb. 2, 1970 the F-106A (S/N 58-0787) flown by Maj. Gary Foust was performing a [training mission](#) from Malmstrom Air Force Base (AFB) when it suddenly entered an uncontrollable flat spin forcing the pilot to eject. Unpiloted, the aircraft recovered on its own, apparently due to the balance and configuration changes caused by the ejection, and miraculously made a gentle belly landing in a snow-covered field near Big Sandy, Mont. After minor repairs, the aircraft was returned to service. It last served with the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadron before being brought to [the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force](#) in August 1986 where the interceptor is currently on display.



All-weather interceptor

As we have already explained [the Convair F-106 Delta Dart](#) was an all-weather interceptor developed from the company F-102 Delta Dagger. Originally designated F-102B, it was redesignated F-106 because it had extensive structural changes and a [more powerful engine](#). The first F-106A flew on Dec. 26, 1956, the deliveries to the U.S. Air Force (USAF) began in July 1959 and production ended in late 1960 after 277 F-106As and 63 F-106Bs had been built.

Noteworthy the “Six” (as the F-106 was nicknamed by its aircrews) used a Hughes MA-1 electronic guidance and fire [control system](#). After takeoff, the MA-1 could be given control of the aircraft to fly it to the proper altitude and attack position. Then it could fire the Genie and Falcon missiles, break off the attack run and return the aircraft to the vicinity of its base. The pilot took control again for the landing.

In the following video Maj. Foust tells the story of his unusual incident.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=87&v=3M2XZEYqIpQ>

Photo credit: U.S. Air Force

Source: [National Museum of the U.S. Air Force](#)