

Donald S. Aunapu

F-105 History

16-Dec-66

228

The sixth F-105 RTU Class 67DR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 20 Jul 66 with 16 pilots. It was named "The Hallmarks (When you care enough, you send the very best)" and consisted of 6 Maj's, and 10 Capt's. The class deployed 15 F-105s with the 562 TFS to George AFB CA between 26 Oct - 16 Nov 66 for conventional weapons delivery training.

The squadron commander was Lt Col James A. Young. Capt Robert R. Lawler was the Top Gun and Capt Charles F. Wilhelm the Outstanding Pilot. The graduating pilots and their combat assignments (where known) were:

Maj Stanley M. Dunkle - 357 TFS	Capt James F. "Fred" Wilhelm - 13 TFS
Maj Robert C. Hammerle - 354 TFS	Capt Thomas A. Rush
Maj Everett M. "Ed" Sutton - 354 TFS	Capt John F. Ruby - 421 TFS
Maj William A. Jones	Capt Edgar W. "Ed" Michie, Jr. - 13 TFS
Maj James S. Thompson, Jr.	Capt Donald Z. La Rochelle - 469 TFS
Capt Winfield Scott Harpe - 469 TFS	Capt Donald S. Aunapu - 34 TFS
Capt Wilburt H. Blatter - 357 TFS (TDY)	Capt Robert R. Lawler - 469 TFS
Capt George S. Balog - 357 TFS	

23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm MO554.

12-Jan-67

2407

Maj. Marlin R. Blake from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat, RTAFB, Thailand, flew a non-counter mission. Four F-105Ds.

"Flamingo" flight. Take off at 1255. TOT 1400.

Flamingo 1 - Maj Marlin R. Blake flying F-105D 62-4356

Flamingo 2 - Maj Paul M. Kunichika flying 58-1154

Flamingo 3 - Maj George H. Williams flying 59-1739

Flamingo 4 - Capt Charles F. Wilhelm flying 61-0220

Flamingo was third of five F-105 flights from Korat: Falcon, Hot Dog, Flamingo, Kingpin, Cactus.

Capt Donald S. Aunapu flew his first combat mission with the 34 TFS.

100 Mission Log of Maj. Marlin R. Blake & Don Aunapu, e-mail 6 Apr 2013.

04-Feb-67

1515

F-105s from Korat and Takhli conducted a "... full scale strike ... against (JCS 60), [the] Thai Nguyen Army Supply complex [BE 616-0210 at coordinates 21-38-18N and 105-51-04E]. The 34 TFS [from the 388 TFW] supplied three strike flights and led the entire strike force. Mission Commander was Maj Edward C. Jones. Flight lineup [was] as follows:

"Hotdog" - Maj Edward C. Jones, Capt Donald S. Aunapu, Maj Leo F. Callahan, Maj Clarence Kough, Jr.

"Domino" - Maj William E. Augsburg, Capt Coy W. Gammage, Maj William C. Eagle, Capt William W. Kennedy.

"Acorn" - Lt Col Richard M. Heyman, Jr., 1Lt Donald O. Austin, Maj Homer T. Terry, Maj Harry Pawlik."

Pilots from the 469 TFS also participated in the strike.

"Strike flights were loaded with 3,000-pound GP bombs (M-118s). The strike was most successful and although no BDA is yet available the target was heavily damaged. Strike cameras carried by the second flight recorded the results of the flak suppression attack. The CBU-24s were released on target and gave complete coverage Pilots reported very light inaccurate 37/57/85-MM AAA in the target area. Nine SAMs were observed to airburst within five nautical miles of the strike flights on the inbound run, and four SAMs observed to air-burst within ten nautical miles. During egress from target, 8 MiG aircraft were observed during the attack."

As Hotdog 1, mission commander Maj Edward C. Jones received the Silver Star for leading this mission. (Ed Jones

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letter to Ron Thurlow, 25 March 01.) His citation read, in part, "... Maj Jones was the mission commander in the lead of 40 aircraft directed to attack and destroy a complex Army supply depot. With a complete disregard for his personal safety, he successfully led his strike force through intense AAA, SAM launches, and hostile aircraft to accomplish the assigned mission. ..." (Ed Jones e-mail 26 Apr 2010.)

As Hotdog 2, Capt Donald B. Aunapu was awarded the DFC for heroism. "... Captain Aunapu was a member of a flight of four F-105 aircraft on a strike against a vital army supply depot. With complete disregard for his personal safety in the face of intense ground fire and accompanying threats of surface-to-air missiles and MiG aircraft, Captain Aunapu attacked the target and shared in its destruction. ..." (Citation from Ed Aunapu, 15 Apr 2013)

As Acorn 3, Maj Homer T. Terry received the Distinguished Flying Cross for this mission. "Major Homer Terry distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 pilot over North Vietnam on 4 February 1967. On that date, Maj Terry attacked a high priority target at Thai Nguyen, North Vietnam. Despite intense and accurate hostile ground fire, continuous surface-to-air missile warnings and numerous launches, he delivered his ordnance with unerring accuracy on the target, causing extensive damage. ..." (Homer Terry, letter to Ron Thurlow, undated.)

Maj Ralph Laurence Carlock from the 357 TFS, 355 TFW, was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry for flying on this mission. The award was made posthumously after he died in combat in Laos on 4 March 1967. (Hq 7th AF SO G-453 dated 29 March 1967.)

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1221 and 1222.

05-Mar-67

2573

Maj. Marlin R. Blake from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat, RTAFB, Thailand, flew his 56th combat mission. Two F-105Ds. "Ringo" flight. Take off at 0935. TOT 1015.

Ringo 1 - Major Marlin R. Blake flying 62-4334

Ringo 2 - Capt Charles F. "Fred" Wilhelm flying 58-1154

"No refuel. Dive bomb in RP-1. Poor visibility. Bad stuff to work in." Target was at coordinates 17-35N and 106-18E. This target was probably the Phong Nha truck park (BE 617-G0896) at coordinates 17-35N and 106-18-39E along Route 137. This strike was one of 13 against this target during the period 20 February through 19 March.

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 13th combat mission into NVN.

Capt Donald S. Aunapu, also from the 34 TFS, flew his 31st and last combat mission before going on TDY to Yokota AB, Japan, to train with the newly formed Ryan's Raiders.

100 Mission Log of Maj. Marlin R. Blake & PACAF Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for the period 20 Feb - 19 Mar 1967 & Jack Phillips, e-mail 18 Mar 11 & Don Aunapu, e-mail 6 Apr 13.

04-May-67

3813

On 4 May 1967, four more Ryan's Raiders crews arrived at Korat from training at Yokota. They flew in with the second set of four modified F-105Fs and were the second group of dual-pilot crews since the initial contingent of four crews arrived at Korat on 24 April 1967. The crews who were initially assigned to the 34 TFS were:

Capt John F. Rehm with Capt Calvin Markwood

Capt Donald D. Henry with Capt James Wright

Capt George Bogert with Maj Donald S. Aunapu

1Lt William W. Koelm with Capt Al Esser

The four front seat pilots were TDY from Kadena. Capt Rehm, Capt Bogert, and Lt Koelm were TDY from the 12 TFS. Capt Henry was from the 67 TFS. This was Lt Koelm's fifth TDY combat tour to SEA, and the third to the 388 TFW at Korat.

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F-105 History

George Bogert told about his Ryan's Raider assignment. "I was 'volunteered' due to my 710 hours in the back seat of a 101B prior to Pilot Training. There is a reason the Raider Patch has a screw through the center of the airplane! Don Aunapu was a B-52 AC with a lot of experience in the R-14A radar and a terrific back seater. The missions were designed to keep the NVA awake at night and not a lot more. The Iron Hand support was designed as our radio relay, not to attack SAMs. I will reference another night strike, unknown date. Target was the Yen Bay Airfield. I don't know any crew that used the TA mode for an attack, everybody flew MEAs. We dropped off the tanker about 11:00 pm and descended to about 10,000 feet through Laos. The bad guys would light fires on the mountain tops after we passed to announce our arrival. We swung north to almost DNP, then straight southeast along the river. We got intermediate fire can cuts so they knew we were coming. The 105-F was like a Cadillac on a freeway at 100 miles an hour, just kept rolling. Never used burner, no lights. At about 15 miles, Don had the airfield centered and we used the TBC for a low toss of six 750s across the airfield. I'll never forget watching them hit as we rolled away and ducked for the river. It was also the first time they used search lights, which became a regular event. If we had gone straight across the target, you wouldn't be getting this e-mail. Our Iron Hand support was quite impressed. Another time we were chased out by a MIG well above us, he must have been their squadron commander. It was an interesting few months and enough night time to last me for a long time." (George Bogert, e-mail Saturday, April 21, 2012.)

Don Henry described his Ryan's Raider experience. "... We got much of our information thru Ben Pollard who was the tacit leader at Yokota due to seniority. ...The original Raiders flew exclusively at night and both commanders had primary day jobs. We didn't see them much and they didn't fly our night mission. We saw much more of the Wing Commander, Colonel Chairsell, who seemed to always drop by the planning room in the middle of the night to talk to us and attend many of our briefings. He also spent hours -- literally hours -- talking to our crews."

388 TFW history, Apr Dec 67, Vol II, 13 TFS history, 1 Apr - 31 July, microfilm NO584, frames 0044 - 0045 & Don Henry, e-mail, 16 Oct 2004.

28-May-67

5136

The 34 TFS Ryan's Raider crew of Capt George A. Bogert and Maj Donald S. Aunapu flew a night North Scope mission in F-105F 63-8346 with call sign "Nathan". Using the Toss Bomb Computer in the BTIP mode and flying at 4000 feet, they dropped six 500-pound bombs on target 960, the Yen Bay Railroad Yard. "Calibrated TA, clearance plane very bad. Refueled with Red Anchor 67, excellent. Direct [to Channel] 97. Direct 21-43N/ 103-42E, direct 22-10N/ 104-39E, direct target 21-42N/ 104-53E. Dropped in weather, thunderstorms from first TP all the way. Flew MEAs with Iron Hand support."

388 TFW TWX 280700Z May 67 to 7 AF in PACAF DO Read File for 27 - 29 May 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 00518474.

30-May-67

5146

The Ryan's Raider crew of Maj Donald S. Aunapu (34 TFS) and Maj Ralph L. Kuster, Jr. (469 TFS) flew a night North Scope mission in F-105F 63-8327 with call sign "Hurricane". They dropped six 750-pound bombs on target 1463, the Nui Caay Seed Segment. "On-time takeoff. TA/CM calibration check completed. Excellent refueling. Mission flown as planned except had to fly at higher than planned altitude due to traffic in the area. Alleycat could only clear us in at 9M, released on 30K cursor and freeze looked good on radar. Could not see impact due to weather. Bombs impacted in target area."

388 TFW TWX 310150Z May 67 to 7 AF in PACAF DO Read File for 29 - 31 May 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 00518475.

01-Jun-67

4107

Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr. replaced Lt Col Gerald F. "Jerry" Fitzgerald as commander of the 13 TFS. Lt Col Fitzgerald had just completed 100 missions over North Vietnam as well as 13 missions over Laos. On this same date, the Ryan's Raider crews in the 34 TFS transferred to the 13 TFS.

Lt Col McInerney, along with his EWO Capt Fred W. Shannon, had reported in to the squadron in March 1967 after they both had completed Wild Weasel Class 67WWIII-8 at Nellis. Lt Col McInerney was the squadron's Wild Weasel Operations Officer. He continued transitioning the Wild Weasel crews into the Ryan's Raider operation and releasing the Ryan's Raider back-seat pilots into the strike force as F-105D pilots.

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F-105 History

Most Ryan's Raider back seat pilots transferred as strike pilots to other 388 TFW squadrons. For example, Capt Aquilla F. Britt transferred from the 34 TFS to the 469 TFS. Maj Francis "Frank" P. Walsh a rear seat pilot transferred to the strike mission in the 13th. However, pilots Maj James B. Register and Maj Kenneth D. Oliver remained with the Ryan's Raider Commando Nail mission when they transferred to the 13 TFS and flew together. The Ryan's Raider crew of Capt George A. Bogert and Capt Donald S. Aunapu also transferred to the 13 TFS.

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583, frame 1494 & Jim McInerney, e-mail 1 Nov 2004 & Nancy Fitzgerald 5 Nov 85 letter to Bauke Jan Douma.

29-Jun-67

1509

"Three areas of North Vietnam's Hoa Lac airfield were damaged by Air Force F-105 Thunderchief pilots who bombed the large enemy fighter base for the tenth time since the initial strike, April 24. Pilots from the 388 TFW bombed administrative support buildings plus two separate sections of runway. The northwest end of the runway was cratered in three places. Another runway at the east end of the field was also hit. Dark black smoke covered the field according to reports by the strike pilots."

"One MiG-17 was sighted on the ground and was inside the southernmost revetment. The extent of damage to the MiG was unknown. 'We could see bombs go right down the center of a secondary runway and cross the main runway,' said Maj William T. Twinting."

"Other Thunderchief crews had a busy day striking enemy rail targets north and northeast of Hanoi. Pilots from the 388 TFW hit the large Vu Chua railroad yard, 43 miles northeast of Hanoi."

Two Korat F-105D pilots striking targets this day were from the 44 TFS. The day's missions were designated RT56A-057. Lt Col Fred A. Treyz flew 62-4316 against a target at coordinates 21-04-9N and 105-13-36E. Maj William J. Kriz, flying 61-0068, attacked Kep railroad yard at 21-24-30N and 106-17-24E.

The 13 TFS Ryan's Raider crew of Capt George A. Bogert and Capt Donald S. Aunapu flew their last Ryan's Raider mission together. (Don Aunapu e-mail 6 Apr 2013)

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1506 & NARA records Air Strike Films, Vietnam, Nat'l Archives Archive Control Number NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-41720B.

06-Aug-67

7251

Maj Donald S. Aunapu from the 13 TFS flew a mission for which he received the Distinguished Flying Cross (1 OLC) for extraordinary achievement. "... Major Aunapu successfully attacked and destroyed two missile launcher transporters, and set off sixty secondary explosions in the target area. Persevering in the face of danger and death, he effectively aided in destroying a potential surface-to-air missile site near the demilitarized zone. ..."

Award citation from Don Aunapu, 15 Apr 2013.

13-Aug-67

3359

On 9 August 1967, in response to the Senate Armed Services Committee investigation into the bombing of North Vietnam led by Senator John Stennis, President Johnson had authorized strikes against several targets in the 25-mile deep Chinese buffer zone as add-on targets to Rolling Thunder 57.

On the morning of 13 August, PACAF forces simultaneously struck 3 main rail yards located in the China buffer zone along the Northeast rail line (RR 2). "As an additional harassment factor, time delay bombs were dropped on these three rail yards." (PACAF Briefing)

F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Lang Son railroad yard east, less than 10 miles from the Chinese border. The Lang Son railroad yard (BE 616-00042) was at 21-50-25N and 106-45-44E. Same-day BDA photos showed the yard was unserviceable with 8 of 30 rail cars damaged or destroyed. Strike photography acquired during the attack on the main Lang Son railroad yard confirmed the pilots' report of multiple rail cuts with direct hits on the center of the yard. Post-strike coverage of the yard showed at least 4 damaged or destroyed rail cars and all 4 though rails interdicted. (388 TFW History)

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F-105 History

Three of the F-105D pilots from Korat who flew on this strike were Maj Donald W. Revers from the 34 TFS, Capt Hal P. Henning from the 44 TFS flying F-105D 58-1157 and Capt Irving E. LeVine from the 34 TFS flying F-105D 62-4378. (Nat'l Archives film record)

Irv LeVine recalled this mission. "I was an airborne spare ... and ended up filling in as Green 16, Tail End Charlie. ... Our attack was from a feet-wet, east-to-west heading with a left roll in. Their guns were hammering us and Lead had us sliding and floating further and further north into China ... to get away from the flak. I was soon well into China and since we'd been climbing I was soon out of airspeed. I let the Thud 'float' and gave it time to get its nose down then chased after everyone else who had gone down the chute ahead of me. I was well behind and watched the yard exploding in front of me. I think it was the only time I attacked a target at a 45-degree angle like we did at McConnell. The Force turned east and the guns followed them. I pulled the trigger back to the first detent [to activate the gun camera] as glorious plumes of white smoke were shooting thousands of feet into the air. I assumed these were [railroad] engines blowing up as I'd seen such in combat films from WW II and Korea. No one shot at me all the way down that slide as they concentrated on the main force. I pickled my bombs and while keeping the camera going, I turned east and caught up with the Force.

"I really wanted a copy of that film but Photo Lab said they had fired it off to Saigon because it showed the hits and devastation we caused and they didn't have it to give me. I forgot to ask if they ever got a copy back from Saigon and so don't have any from that flight." (Irv LeVine, letter received 16 April 10.)

Another of the targets struck was the Lang Son railroad yard NNE (BE 616-M2588) on the Northeast Rail Line (RR 2) in RP-6A at 21-52-07N and 106-45-45E. KA 71 BDA photos showed the yard interdicted and unserviceable and 30 of 40 rail cars damaged or destroyed.

Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS received a Distinguished Flying Cross (3 OLC) for extraordinary achievement for the mission he flew on this day. "... Major Britt was a member of the lead flight in a force of twenty Thunderchiefs assigned to make the first strike against a strategic rail yard in the Chinese border buffer zone. The outstanding manner in which the strike was carried out and the exceptional results obtained were greatly enhanced by his courage and exemplary airmanship. ... " (Citation to Accompany the Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (Third Oak Leaf Cluster) (Posthumous) to Aquilla F. Britt provided by his son Bryan Britt.)

Maj Donald S. Aunapu from the 13 TFS received the Distinguished Flying Cross (2 OLC) for the mission he flew today. "... Maj Aunapu was directed to attack a vital unfriendly railroad yard in North Vietnam. Although he was burdened by severe weather, he courageously pressed the attack through clouds and accurate hostile anti-aircraft fire, subsequently destroying the target. ..." (Award citation from Don Aunapu, 15 April 2013)

Air Force planes attacked eight other targets along the Northeast Rail Line (RR 2) in RP-6A. The Lang Son railroad and highway bridge (BE 616-00025) at 21-50-52N and 106-45-42E was struck on 13 August. BDA photos of 13 August showed the bridge was destroyed and one pier and possible 2 spans were down.

The Lang Son railroad bypass bridge (BE 616-02190) at 21-49-55N and 106-46-00E was struck. BDA photos from 14 August showed the bridge was probably serviceable.

The Na Phuoc railroad yard (BE 616-01372) at 21-45-56N and 106-44-22E was struck on 13 August. BDA photos from 13 August showed the yard was serviceable with serviceable rolling stock still in the yard.

The Bac Le railroad bridge (BE 616-01382) at 21-30-42N and 106-26-01E was struck. Pilots estimated the bridge was damaged.

A train on rail tracks at 21-42-00N and 106-44-00E was struck on 13 August. Pilots reported destroying or damaging 3 cars.

Another 10-car train was attacked at 21-36-00N and 106-32-20E but there was no BDA. A rail segment on the Northeast Rail Line at 21-33-13N and 106-30-15E was struck with no BDA given.

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F-105 History

The Lang Giai railroad yard (BE 616-00041) at 21-41-50N and 106-39-58E was struck. BDA photos on 13 August showed the yard was unserviceable with only 2 damaged railcars out of the 52 recognizable in the photos. Pilots striking the Lang Giai railroad yard reported the destruction of 30 to 35 pieces of rolling stock, multiple secondary explosions, and damage to the support facilities. Post-strike photography revealed that all rail lines in the yard had been severed and the storage/transshipment area extensively damaged. Five damaged or destroyed pieces of rolling stock were visible in the yard.

PACAF 16 August 67 Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 24 Jul - 13 Aug 67 & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1756 and 1533 & Nat'l Archives record NWDNM(m)-342-USA-42649B.

23-Sep-67

F-105D 591749 469 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit over RP-1, North Vietnam, by 85-mm AAA during a Combat Skyspot mission. Crashed near Ubon RTAFB, Thailand. 15-14N 104-50E Maj Donald S. Aunapu 469 TFS pilot ejected and was rescued by an HH-43 helicopter. Call sign: "Ozark 01". "Maj Aunapu ... suffered battle damage and had to eject near Udorn. He was not injured."

Don Aunapu described his experience. "We took off from Korat RTAFB in a two-ship formation en route to our target in Route Pack one. When we arrived over the target the weather was bad so we were handed over to a Misty aircraft to accomplish a "Sky Spot". We joined up with two F-4s out of Ubon RTAFB. Almost immediately after bombs away, I was struck by an outside force. I didn't know it at the time but was later told it was 85 MM Anti-Aircraft fire. All I know was that when I was hit my Sidewinders fired without any action from me. One of the F-4s was also hit (by AAA) but the other F-4 and my wingman were untouched. My Wingman and I were diverted to Ubon because of the battle damage and shortage of fuel.

"Once we were over Ubon, I sent my Wingman in first because I didn't know the actual condition of my aircraft. My Wingman told me I had a pretty good size hole in my right wing but I couldn't see it from the cockpit.

"When I started my approach to land I discovered my landing gear wouldn't come down. I went through all of the emergency procedures but they still wouldn't come down. As you know the recommended procedure in the F-105 is to eject if you have gear failure; however I was too proud to leave my aircraft and felt that I could sit it down on the external fuel tanks and they would cushion the touchdown a little.

"Just about the time I was lining up for final, the tower asked me if I would take it around because they had the two F-4s coming in and they were low on fuel. If I landed they would have to close the runway and the two F-4s would have to eject. I told tower that if I took it around that I would have to eject because I didn't have enough fuel for another approach. They informed me it was my decision. I elected to fly away from the airbase and eject. I was vectored to an area void of any built ups and told I could eject when I was ready.

"My ejection was non-eventful and went just like they had always told us it would. The chute opened and I started looking where I would land. My landing was in a bunch of saplings and I banged my head on one but thanks to my helmet did not suffer any damages. Once on the ground I could hear the rescue chopper and before I could get my bearings the para-rescue men were there beside me and led me to the chopper.

"We took off and landed a few minutes later at Ubon. When I got out of the chopper, Col. Robin Olds were there to greet me. He told me that he had looked at his F-4s and that we had been hit by 85 MM. Col. Olds was just about ready to return to the states and they were having a big party that night for him. Many asked us to stay for the party but I told them we should get back to Korat.

"Once back home I started to get a little sore and stiff in my thighs. You know how it was while we were there, the F-4's broke backs and the 105 was tough on legs. Anyway I got pretty black and blue on the back of my legs but my roommate was a flight surgeon (Capt. Kenneth Singer) and he took care of me. In a few days I was back flying."

The rescue mission narrative described the HH-43 helicopter pickup of Maj Aunapu.

"1. Det 3, 38 ARRS was alerted by crash phone at 0217Z on 23 Sep 67 to intercept an F-4C with one engine out and an

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F-105 with hydraulic troubles. During intercept of the F-4C, the tower advised that the F-105 pilot had elected to eject and was being vectored to the base jettison range. The RCC broke off the F-4C intercept after it had touched down safely and off-loaded the FSK on the alert pad. During off-load of the FSK at 0234Z, the ejected pilot's emergency beeper was heard. The RCC initiated takeoff and homed on the beeper using the ARA-25 homer. The beeper signal was positioned off the wing tip to provide separation while the helicopter waited for the parachute to emerge from the clouds. The chute was sighted when it broke out of the clouds approximately one-fourth mile from the helicopter. Visual contact was maintained and at 0240Z, the helicopter landed in a clearing fifty yards from the F-105 pilot. The pilot was uninjured and able to approach the helicopter unassisted. Pick-up was completed at 0245Z and the pilot released to the 8th Tac Dispensary at 0300Z. Weather at launch, en route, and at pick up point was 80 300 140 8 mi R--. No radio difficulties were encountered although continued activation of the emergency parachute beeper prevented voice contact with the downed pilot.

"2. One sortie was flown for 45 minutes.

"3. Recommendations: None.

"4. Rescue Crew Members:

RCC Major Glenn M. Marks, Det 3 Commander
MT A1C James M. Payne
RS A1C Cyrus G. Hartwell
RS A1C David J. Meade"

(Det 3, 38 ARRS Mission Narrative Report (Msn 3-38-11) dated 26 Sep 1967 in AFHRA Folder "Non Combat Saves SEA 1967 July thru Dec", Call # K318.2411-5, IRIS # 1017068)

388 TFW History, Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO584 & E-mail, Don Aunapu (daunapu@dps.state.nm.us) to Don Henry, March 30, 2005.

28-Sep-67

3417

On 28 September, weather conditions over North Vietnam improved unexpectedly during the afternoon; however, strike forces had already been rescheduled or diverted based on weather observations and the continued forecast for poor weather in the northern area.

After flying his last five missions into Route Pack 6, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, was one of the pilots striking a target in the southern region of North Vietnam today. He flew his 12th combat mission against Mu Gia Pass in RP-1.

Maj Donald S. Aunapu from the 469 TFS flew his first combat mission since he had ejected and picked up by a chopper on 23 September. (Don Aunapu, e-mail 6 April 2013.)

PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 18 - 30 September 1967 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 28 Sep 67.

01-Oct-67

848

On 1 October, 388 TFW aircraft destroyed two of four missiles visible in a SAM site near Hanoi. Black smoke rose to 500 feet from the site, 20 miles east-northeast of the capital city. The pilots also reported destroying an electronics support van and seeing their ordnance heavily damage the radar support equipment within the site.

"Another 388 TFW strike force cut both approaches and heavily damaged the center support of the Dap Cau railroad and highway bridge (JCS 16), 20 miles northeast of Hanoi. Capts Robert L. Martin and Lawrence G. Hoppe, 34 TFS, were members of the strike force. Approaches were also cut to a nearby bypass railroad bridge, one mile south of the main bridge.

"Near the DMZ, the 388th joined [F-4C] aircraft from the 366 TFW in a strike against an artillery site 42 miles southeast of Dong Hoi. Secondary explosions resulted. Also struck was the Lang Thip railroad siding 118 miles northwest of Hanoi. Five secondary explosions resulted."

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Also on 1 October 1967, the "... 388 TFW F-105s struck the Kep airfield (JCS 9.1). Smoke and dust covered the area. Other 388th aircraft struck an army barracks area 24 miles northwest of Dong Hoi destroying seven buildings. Maj. Donald S. Aunapu, 469 TFS, and Capt Hal P. Henning, 44 TFS, were on the Kep airfield mission."

Maj Aunapu received the Silver Star for gallantry for the Kep mission. "... Though his professional leadership, aerial skill, and courageous performance of a complex task in the face of intense hostile gunfire, Major Aunapu led his flight striking a devastating blow to a vital North Vietnamese target. Then, without regard for his personal safety, he provided sorely needed protection to several distressed aircrews of another flight, and as a direct result of his superior airmanship, he was able to lead his own flight back to safety untouched by a hostile environment that had damaged many aircraft in the rest of the strike force. ..." (Award citation from Don Aunapu, 15 April 2013)

1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, was another 388 TFW pilot who struck Kep Airfield. It was his 18th combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Kep airfield 32 miles NNE of Hanoi
"Armament: 4x750 .025 2x750 TD

"Water route in. Not one MiG call. At least 4 SAMs launched at us. Bright orange clouds. First 85s real close. Lead flipped over. Three took a hit. Good bombing by all. Four aircraft total hit. None lost. What a way to spend a lazy Sunday afternoon!"

Lt Henderson received his first of eight Distinguished Flying Crosses for this mission. "... Lieutenant Henderson was a member of the lead flight of F-105s assigned to attack Kep Airfield. Flying through intense antiaircraft fire he delivered his bombs precisely on target, heavily damaging this vital airfield. ..."

Under 7 AF SO G2384 dated 30 December 1967, Capt George H. Teas, also from the 469 TFS, received the DFC (3rd OLC) for extraordinary achievement in attacking Kep airfield. "... Captain Teas successfully attacked a vital airfield in North Vietnam. In spite of intense hostile fire over the target and SA-2 missiles launched at him, Captain Teas accurately bombed the runway, helping to render it unserviceable. ..."

Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967, pg 3 & Earl Henderson, combat diary and award citation.

01-Oct-67 18-Oct-67

847

Under PACAF Movement Order 35, dated 20 September 1967, the 13 TFS designation was transferred from the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, to an F-4 squadron at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. The departure of the 13 TFS left the 388 TFW with the 34 TFS, 469 TFS, and 44 TFS. The reduction to three squadrons was a result of combat losses of the F-105.

Under 388 CSG special order AB-3874, sixty officers were transferred from the 13 TFS to the 44 TFS. On 1 October 1967, personnel and F-105F aircraft of the 13 TFS began being absorbed into the 44 TFS, which had arrived at Korat from Kadena on 25 April 1967. The 44 TFS distributed their twenty-one F-105Ds to the 34 TFS and 469 TFS and picked up the Wild Weasel and Ryan's Raider missions from the 13 TFS. The changeover was completed on 18 October 1967.

The 388 TFW commander, Col Edward B. Burdett, led the change of command ceremony. Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr., who had been commander of the 13 TFS, replaced Lt Col Fred A. Treyz as commander of the 44 TFS.

Korat's base newspaper, "The Sawadee Flyer", reported the event but got its facts wrong. "It was noted that the retiring 13 TFS, which came to Korat in June 1965 [wrong year. It was June 1966] from Kadena AFB, Okinawa, had been an offspring of the 44th. A cycle is now completed: from the 44 TFS in March 1965, [1966] then the 13 TFS for over two [one] years and back again to the 44 TFS in September 1967".

One of the 13 TFS Wild Weasel crews transferring to the 44 TFS was Capt Robert E. Dorrough and his EWO Maj Clarence S. Summers. Another crew, this one assigned to night raider missions, was Maj Kenneth D. Oliver and Maj

Donald S. Aunapu

F-105 History

James B. Register. Capt Norman E. Powell was a Wild Weasel pilot who transferred to the 44 TFS.

Capt Calvin H. Markwood, a former Ryan's Raider pilot who was now a strike pilot, transferred to the 44 TFS.

About this time, Maj Robert W. Barnett transferred from the 44 TFS to the 469 TFS. Maj Eugene L. Main transferred from the 13 TFS to the 469 TFS.

While at Korat, Lt Col Treyz flew 107 combat missions in F-105s. He was next assigned to the USAF IG at Norton AFB, CA. (USAF bio Brigadier General Fred A. Treyz)

Maj Donald S. Aunapu transferred from the 469 TFS to the 44 TFS.

Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967 388 TFW history, 1 Oct - 31 Dec 67, USAF microfilms NO584, frame 0031 and NO583 frame 1721.

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Maj Donald S. Aunapu of Leisure City, Florida, from the 44 TFS completed 100 missions over North Vietnam. "... A pilot for the past ten years and a graduate of the Aviation Cadets program, he had flown over 500 hours in the F-86 before going to the B-52s, where he accumulated 3,000 hours of experience.

"He came to the F-105 and used well this past experience to become one of the best flight leaders of the 44th.

"One particular raid last month over the Kep Airfield in North Vietnam, Major Aunapu skillfully and effectively led a flight of four F-105 Thunderchiefs with such artful accuracy that the runway was cut in four different places and photographs subsequently proved it unusable. For this feat of piloting and his disregard for the intensity and accuracy of the enemy's defenses Major Aunapu has been recommended for the Silver Star.

"His next assignment will be back to the B-52s at Griffiths AFB, Rome, New York."

His 100th mission was the last time he flew the F-105. He had accumulated 373.7 hours in the airplane.

EWO Capt Robert Keith Wilson from the 44th also completed his 100th mission around this date. His nickname was "Nit Noi Magnet". He was from Paoli, Indiana. "... An F-105 crewmember, Capt Wilson flew most of his one hundred missions with Maj John Reddoch. This establishes the fact that these missions were flown with great aggressiveness and complete professionalism. A better team would be difficult to find. Captain Wilson is being reassigned to Nellis AFB, Nevada, where he will teach the next generation of F-105 crewmembers all he has learned during his tour of combat."

On 6 October 1967, Capt Wilson and his pilot Maj John H. Reddoch survived a crash landing in F-105F 63-8272. Capt Wilson pulled his injured pilot from the cockpit before the plane burned near the runway at Korat. Capt Wilson flew with other pilots until he completed 100 missions.

Sawadee Flyer, Vol 1, No 6, Friday Nov 10, 1967, pg 2 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.