

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

17-Aug-64

658

Col William Spaulding Chairsell replaced Col William P. McBride as Commander of the 49 TFW at Spangdahlem AB, Germany. Col Chairsell was born in Birmingham, Alabama, July 12, 1919. He was a WW II fighter pilot and served in the Canal Zone between June 1942 and June 1944. "Prior to his assignment here, he served in the Pentagon with the General Operations Division (J-3), Joint Chiefs of Staff [beginning August 1962]."

"I did manage to check out in an F-105 aircraft at Nellis Air Force Base before going to Europe..."

Col McBride became wing commander at England AFB, Louisiana.

Air Force Combat Wings, Lineage and Honors Histories, 1947-1977, pg 79, by Charles A. Ravenstein & 49 TFW history, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1964, AFHRA call # K-WG-49-HI, IRIS # 2-8541-3 & MG W. S. Chairsell letter dated Sept 27, 1985 to Bauke Jan Douma.

31-Dec-64

5759

Key personnel in the 49 TFW, Spangdahlem AB, Germany, were:

Col William S. Chairsell - Wing Commander
Col Frank C. Malone - Wing Vice Commander
Col John P. Flynn - Deputy Commander for Operations
Col Thomas J. Price - Deputy Commander for Materiel
Col James R. Sheffield - Chief of Maintenance

The wing possessed 77 F-105Ds and 15 F-105Fs for an average of 82.5 aircraft during the past six months. Support aircraft included 5 T-33A, 1 C-47, and 1 T-39. The F-105 OR rate was 70.4% and the NORS rate was 4.3%.

Between July and December 1964, "... the wing flew a total of 12,433 hours in assigned aircraft, experiencing three major and one minor aircraft accident for a major accident rate of 24.1 per 100,000 flying hours." The minor accident was with their C-47 that was damaged on takeoff from Engolstadt AB on 4 September 1964, which grounded it for two months. While their C-47 was being repaired, the wing borrowed a VC-47 from Chateauroux AB, France. They flew 10,982 hours in F-105D/Fs.

"Much emphasis was placed on conventional loading during this period. A complete plan on conventional loading was written and several exercises were conducted to test and refine the conventional loading capability of the wing."

The wing experienced two problems with their F-105s during this period:

1. "Overheating and burning of Silver-Zinc Batteries installed in F-105 aircraft was the cause of many incidents that were costly in both materiel losses and operational readiness to the wing. ... Some failures were partially attributed to the failure of the voltage regulator in the electrical system." A MOAMA team visited Spangdahlem to investigate the problem.

2. "A total of 36 P1 and P2 hydraulic pump failures were experienced by this wing. Two failures resulted in the loss of F-105s during flight operations. ... To preclude any further accidents, a temporary flight restriction was imposed and pump case pressure checks were conducted." The item manager at OCAMA "... established a Materiel Improvement Project OC64-100 79RI to investigate and correct [this problem]."

During the past six months, the wing "... achieved the following circular error average scores as an

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indication of overall proficiency in weapons delivery training."

Nuclear Weapons	Conventional Weapons
VLADD - 479'	Skip Bombing - 68%
VLD - 339'	Dive Bombing - 126'
VTIP - 1,780'	Rockets - 75'
RIP - 1,559'	

The wing history documented a "Recapitulation of Close Support Missions - CY 1964". Of the 373 close support missions the wing was tasked to fly in support of Army exercises, 252 missions (62.2%) were cancelled. The large majority of cancelled missions (75.4%) were cancelled due to target weather, base weather and en route weather. Aircraft ground aborts accounted for 13 (6%) of the cancelled missions.

Only 89 missions (23.9% of the missions tasked) were successful.

Of the 52 unsuccessful missions (13.9% of the missions tasked), 33 of them (63%) failed due to target weather. Only 3 unsuccessful missions were due to air aborts of the wing's F-105s.

These statistics seem to say that the F-105 was relatively reliable but its much anticipated "all weather" features did not live up to original expectations.

49 TFW history, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1964, AFHRA call # K-WG-49-HI, IRIS # 2-8541-3.

07-Dec-65

5884

The 49 TFW, Spangdahlem AB, Germany, hosted West German President Heinrich Luebke who visited the base, "... to become acquainted with a typical NATO committed USAF strike unit. He was accompanied by Lt General Werner Panitzki, Chief of Staff of the West German Air Force, and the US Ambassador to West Germany, the Honorable George McGhee. Spending an afternoon with the 49th, the distinguished group was escorted throughout the various areas of the base by USAFE CINC General B. K. Holloway and Wing Commander Colonel William S. Chairsell and his staff. They were given briefings in German by members of the Wing in the Combat Operations Center, the 8 TFS, the Victor Alert Area, and at a special aircraft and munitions display in one of the hangars. ... A highlight of the visit was a simulated scramble of pilots in the alert area and formation take-offs of the F-105 Thunderchief. They also saw simulated strafing runs on U.S. tanks located near the landing runways."

49 TFS history, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1965, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jul - Dec 1965, IRIS # 450717, declassified extract.

31-Dec-65

5888

At the end of 1965, key personnel in the 7 TFS, 49 TFW, "The Bunyaps", were:

Maj James E. Baldwin - Commander
Maj Homer R. Charlton, Jr. - Operations Officer
Maj James E. Sizemore - Weapons Officer
Capt Luther W. Manuel - Maintenance Officer
1Lt Michael D. White - Intelligence Officer

Maj Jerome Grabowski - "A" Flight Commander
Maj George G. Clausen - "B" Flight Commander
Maj Ralph C. Budde - "C" Flight Commander
Capt Howard K. White - "D" Flight Commander

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Since July 1965, the squadron gained eight pilots and lost only one to PCS.

Gains

Maj Homer R. Charlton, Jr.
Maj William J. Kris
Capt Charles E. Greene, Jr.
Capt Charles A. Arquette, Jr.
Capt Robert L. Jackson
Capt Basil L. Bargery
1Lt Guy H. Morgan
1Lt George H. Teas

Loss

Maj John D. Busick

The squadron's accomplishments during the past six months included:

Winning "... the 49 TFW Conventional Weapons Trophy. Capt Randall L. Plumb took top individual honors as both wing nuclear delivery champion and wing overall champion.

"Capt Robert L. Jackson received the Air Medal for actions as an F-105 pilot in Vietnam. He was presented the Air Medal by Maj Gen Henry J. Thorne, 17th Air Force Commander.

"Capt Charles A. Arquette, Jr. received the Commendation Medal from Maj Gen Henry J. Thorne.

"Capt Charles E. Green, Jr. received the Commendation Medal from Col William S. Chairsell, 49 TFW Commander.

"Capt Benjamin R. Fuller III and 1Lt Robert E. Dorrough, Jr. represented the 17th Air Force at the Rotterdam International Air Show with a flyby demonstration in F-105s.

"Capts Bernard C. Reck, Richard L. O'Connor, Glenn A. Griffith, and 1Lt Howard L. Bodenhamer represented USAFE in the flyby for the 4th ATAF change of command at Ramstein AB, Germany.

"1Lt Richard W. Arnold, bomb commander, participated in the USAFE Weapons Loading Competition (LOADEO) at Ramstein AB, Germany [28 Aug - 4 Sep 1965]. He and his load crew placed second in USAFE.

"Capt Ralph L. Kuster, Jr. completed the Fighter Weapons Instructor course at Nellis AFB, Nevada.

49 TFS history, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1965, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jul - Dec 1965, IRIS # 450717, declassified extract.

31-Dec-65

5883

At the end of 1965, key personnel in the 49 TFW at Spangdahlem AB, Germany were:

Col William S. Chairsell - Wing Commander
Col John C. Giraudo - Vice Wing Commander
Col John P. Flynn - Deputy Commander for Operations
Col Thomas J. Price - Deputy Commander for Materiel
Col James R. Sheffield - Chief of Maintenance

During July through September 1965, the wing's F-105s were allocated 5,080 flying hours and from October through December, the allocation was 4,920 hours. "The reduction in flying hours was based on the fact that the Wing lost three aircraft which were reassigned to SEA so that the new ratio went from a previous 75 aircraft to 72. A total of 10,693.9 hours were accomplished in the F-105D/F meeting the allocation requirements."

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By the end of the year, the wing had retired their base-flight T-33s, placing them in flyable storage. In addition to their 72 F-105s, they were assigned one C-47 and a T-39 for mission support. With one F-105D accident in October 1965, "the wing's major accident rate for this period was 8.4 percent of all assigned aircraft."

Much of the Wing's flying involved close support training missions with the U.S. Army forces in Germany. The Wing flew 214 such missions during the last six months of 1965. The mission breakdown was:

Tasked - 312
Successful - 203 (63.6%)
Unsuccessful - 11 (3.5%)
Cancelled - 105 (32.9%)

"The Safety Pack I phase of the Six Pack plus 10 modification project was completed in September; the Pack II phase of this project is still in progress with an estimated completion date in October or November 1966."

49 TFS history, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1965, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jul - Dec 1965, IRIS # 450717, declassified extract.

16-Apr-66

5915

(Approximate date). In April 1966, the 49 TFW "... was awarded a USAF Flying Safety Plaque for 'Meritorious Achievement in Flying Safety' for calendar year 1965. Colonel William S. Chairsell [49 TFW commander] and Major John D. Busic [Wing Chief of Safety] attended presentation ceremonies at Lindsay Air Station. Presentation was made by General Bruce K. Holloway, Commander-in-Chief, United States Air Force in Europe. Additionally, all three Tactical Squadrons [7 TFS, 8 TFS, 9 TFS] and the Support Aircraft Branch were presented USAFE Unit Achievement Awards for twelve consecutive months of accident free flying."

49 TFS history, 1 Jan - 30 June 1966, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jan - Jun 1966, IRIS # 450718, declassified extract.

21-Jun-66

659

Col John C. Giraudo ("The Big Kahuna") replaced Col William S. Chairsell as commander of the 49 TFW at Spangdahlem AB, Germany. Col Giraudo had been wing vice commander since his arrival at Spangdahlem in August 1965 from his assignment as Vice Commander of the 7272nd Flying Training Wing at Wheelus AB, Libya.

During the change of command, "... German and French military leaders, Luxembourg Embassy officials, and civilian guests attended the parade and luncheon afterwards. ... Col Chairsell received the first oak leaf cluster to the Legion of Merit at the ceremonies."

On 17 August 1966, Col Chairsell became commander of the 388 TFW at Korat RTAFB, Thailand.

Air Force Combat Wings, Lineage and Honors Histories, 1947-1977, pg 79, by Charles A. Ravenstein & 49 TFS history, 1 Jan - 30 June 1966, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jan - Jun 1966, IRIS # 450718, declassified extract.

30-Jun-66

5918

At the end of June 1966, key personnel in the 7 TFS, 49 TFW, Spangdahlem AB, Germany, were:

Lt Col Homer R. Charlton, Jr. Squadron Commander
Maj Carl R. Geise Maintenance Officer
Maj George G. Clausen Operations Officer

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Maj Ralph C. Budde	"A" Flight Commander
Maj Robert A. Perkins	"B" Flight Commander
Maj William J. Kriz	"C" Flight Commander
Maj Earl H. "Ike" Coleman	"D" Flight Commander

During the past six months the squadron gained two officers and lost four to reassignments.

Gained	Lost
Maj Carl R. Geise	Maj James W. Baldwin
Capt William D. Stigers	Maj Jerome Grabowski
	Capt Richard P. Cisco
	Capt Luther W. Manuel

"In the 49th Tac Ftr Wg gunnery competition for the period, the 7th Squadron placed second overall and Capt Howard L. Bodenhamer was the squadron top gun, placing fourth in the individual Wing competition."

"Capt Charles W. Couch was named as an honorary member of the 8th Infantry Division for his efforts as a Forward Air Controller in the Division's annual field training exercise 'Winter Arrow'. He received a letter of commendation from the 8th Infantry Division commanding general."

"Twelve pilots of the 7th Squadron were the first officers in the 49th Wing to receive the newly designated Combat Crew Readiness Medal. They received the medal in a special ceremony in the Wing Commander's office from Col. William S. Chairsell, 49th Tactical Fighter Wing commander."

In planning for the arrival of their F-4Ds, the squadron had drawn up plans "... for additional construction on the present squadron operations building."

49 TFS history, 1 Jan - 30 June 1966, AFHRA Call # KWG-49-HI Jan - Jun 1966, IRIS # 450718, declassified extract.

17-Aug-66

480

Col William S. Chairsell assumed command of the 388 TFW at Korat RTAFB, Thailand. He replaced Col Monroe S. "Saber" Sams. Col Chairsell had previously commanded the 49 TFW at Spangdahlem AB, Germany.

The 388th wing had four squadrons of F-105s: the 13 TFS, 34 TFS, 421 TFS, and the 469 TFS.

388 TFW Chronology compiled by SSgt Bryon Beers, 388 TFW Historian

20-Oct-66

6069

Maj Edward J. Kohlmeier, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 57th combat mission dropping via Skyspot into RP-1, North Vietnam.

"This was my easiest mission since coming here. The Wing Commander, Col Chairsell, flew my wing. We took off, had a real small on-load from the tanker, joined up with an F-4C, flew one mile inside the package at 20,000 feet, and pickled them off on a count from a ground controller. I would fly five of those a day if I could.

"A young Lt who was one class behind me at McConnell who is over here now, was FEBd [Flight Evaluation Board] yesterday. He took off seven times for package 6 and just wouldn't go in. He either wouldn't get his fuel, burn it with burner on, or like on three of the flights, simply desert his flight and turn up on final here at Korat. You have to feel sorry for him and even sympathize with his fears. I must agree with the board action, though, because if you are not going in, you shouldn't

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take off because you really put your flight on the spot when you leave them short handed. But I sure know what he was going through. Though, I can honestly say it never once entered my mind to abandon my flight."

Ed Kohlmeier's mission diary.

22-Nov-66

6249

Four F-105s in "Bear" flight from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, were scheduled to hit the Ha Gia POL storage area in RP-6A but were diverted to RP-5 due to weather. The lineup was:

#1 - Maj Harris J. Taylor

#2 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 59-1768 on his 22nd mission. He logged 3:50 flying hours.

#3 - Capt Donald F. Smith

#4 - Capt Buddy L. Bowman

"Last night the weather office at 7th Air Force reported that the Hanoi area would be clear, so all systems were go for the big raid that we have been building for. We had a total of about 16 four-ship flights going in on the POL Storage Area just north of Phuc Yen airfield. We were scheduled for a 05:40 briefing, but that was slipped at the last minute to an 07:10 briefing. We got our mass briefing by Intelligence, Weather, and then Col. Chairsell, our Wing Commander, gave us the pro-football game pep talk.

"'Bear' flight, of which I was a member, was scheduled to takeoff behind Laredo or the Iron hand flight at 09:45 plus or minus a minute. The takeoff timing on these mass gaggles is very critical.

"Just prior to our taking the runway, politics reared its ugly head to throw a monkey wrench into the works. There were strike flights stacked all the way back to the ramp waiting their turn to take off when the Thai base Commander's C-47 reported 5-mile final. Instead of making him go around to expedite our departure, tower held up all the strike flights for 10 minutes until he landed. A couple of flight leads called in, 'Come on tower, you're holding up the war!' Finally we got off to fuel with Red Anchor 27.

"After dropping off, just as we got to the Red, we changed to strike frequency only to find everybody coming back out because the weather was too bad. About that time we heard 'Dogwood Lead' yell, 'Get out of it.' Then a long pause and, 'They got my number two man.' Laredo asked him if it was flak or SAM. He said that he took a direct hit with a SAM. He thought he had seen one chute, so that indicated it must have been an F-4 or Iron hand F-105F from Takhli. He was reluctant to leave him, even though they were still in a high-threat area.

"Laredo started southeast down the Red towards Hanoi to help and we followed. About 15 miles out, Laredo called 'Launch!' and, sure enough, one SAM burst out of the clouds about three miles ahead and exploded into a white mushroom cloud at about 12,000 feet. Laredo had seen another go off just below. Laredo lead said, 'I am sorry Dogwood, but there isn't much we can do now!' Pathetically, Dogwood said, 'Roger, we are coming out.' At that point we turned around and went back to Yen Bay to cut a road with our bombs.

"Everything went normally until we came off our post-strike tanker. Just after leaving the tanker, we got a call from 'Bear 4' [Capt Bowman] saying his aircraft was running rough, then we didn't hear anything else. When I looked back, he was losing on us rapidly. We dropped the boards and flaps and bled our airspeed down as we dared (200 knots) trying to back up to him, but to no avail. Finally Lead maneuvered to his left wing and I got on the right. When he had coasted through 6,000 feet, and hadn't gotten it started or bailed out, we began to tell him on guard to bail out.

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Finally at 5,000 feet he got out.

"I was amazed at the ride the new rocket seat gave him. It launched him like an Agena. He was separated from the seat and the chute opened at least 200 feet above the aircraft. Lead told Three to follow the aircraft and if it was going to hit in a village to shoot it down. Then he and I broke in to CAP Buddy. His beeper was going and he deployed his kit so we knew he was alright. When he finally hit, he hit in the only tree within 400 yards of an open field. The aircraft crashed about three miles south. As soon as he hit, he got on his radio and started talking to us on guard. We kidded with him a little and then went over to start getting a RESCAP tanker in the area. Number three hit 'bingo' fuel and had to head for home. I finally got a tanker (Blue Anchor 74). When I hooked up, I called us over to RESCAP frequency and headed for the area.

"I got a hold of Lead who was leaving with low fuel and he came over to take on fuel. I went back to CAP Buddy, while Major Taylor went to escort the chopper in. By this time, Buddy had been picked up by the villagers and taken into town. He was set up on the local soccer field waiting for the chopper. We waited 'till the chopper set down, made a high-speed formation pass, and headed home. We all went out to meet the chopper bringing him in."

Clint Murphy, combat log.

23-Nov-66

2149

The day after the crash of Capt Buddy Bowman from the 469 TFS, "... several members of the General Electric maintenance team at the 388 TFW accompanied other wing personnel to inspect the crash site. The General Electric people gathered up the remains of the two (QRC-160A-1) jamming pods that were on the (crashed) aircraft and took them back to their work area at Korat. From the remains of these two pods, and some new parts, they created a single pod. This pod was really produced with tender loving care!"

"It was only a short time before this pod held the record for flying hours without a malfunction. Because of its durability and reliability it quickly earned the name of 'Old Reliable.' Col Chairsell would not let his Director of Maintenance inform 7th Air Force of the existence of Old Reliable. It did not exist, it was listed in no unit's asset records - so the wing had an extra pod for its F-105Ds. Of course, Col Chairsell recognized the value of the jamming pods from the onset, but what better example to cite to demonstrate the change of the tactical fighter pilot's attitude toward electronic warfare, and carrying jamming pods."

Joe Telford, unpublished manuscript, "Introduction of the QRC-160A-1 Jamming Pods ... "

01-Dec-66

6110

Maj Edward J. Kohlmeier, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 80th combat mission, another Skyspot in RP-1.

"The 4 was cancelled due to weather again so I led this one as all it is in formation plus Col Parsons [Col Robert P. Parsons, the 388 TFW DO] was flying on my wing and he may have been unhappy had I substituted leads, as he specifically requested to fly with me. With both he and Col Chairsell [Col William Spaulding Chairsell, the 388 TFW Commander] requesting to fly with me, it raises the old ego. I think I must be accepted as a qualified lead and with my background [as a bomber pilot] this is both an accomplishment and a comfort.

"Tomorrow I had a 6 north of Thai Nguyen but late tonight they changed the whole bit, based on a possibility that we may get into 5110. The forecast is for partly scattered, what ever the hell that is. So I'm back on the tough one. Not 19 and I could care less. I have 10 more to sweat and I shall sweat them but with that weather, I won't sweat real hard.

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"The 469th, due to weak leadership, has four of the eight tough ones tomorrow."

Ed Kohlmeier's mission diary.

04-Dec-66

6113

After his mission to JCS 19 (the Yen Vien RR Classification Yard) was cancelled, Maj Edward J. Kohlmeier, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 83rd combat mission against a target in RP-5.

"There is too much to put on one page, but I'll try. First, we got a 1st alternate and I went to 5 as lead. I found a target by the tit deep in North Vietnam and rolled in. I dropped and when I pulled, the aircraft went completely out of control. I ended up on my back and called, 'I think I must be hit'. It all flashed through my mind. Monty, Cliff, Shirley and the kids and the thought, 'After 83 missions now I'm a POW'. But the bird responded and the next thing I knew I was under control. I have now experienced what those poor guys go through when they are zapped over the target.

"Today they got into 19. Roy Dickey got a MiG [Maj Roy S. Dickey]. They left the target in shambles. All I could think was (astonishingly) 'I wish I had been there'. Ray Bryant [Maj Ray H. Bryant] took two hits, three others got hit. We lost none.

"Tonight Col Parsons told me he and Col Chairsell think I'm one of only three on the base who qualify as mission commander. Pike Grubbs came to me tonight at Harry Taylor's going away party that despite himself, he likes me and that I have balls as big as these. He said I'm a fighter pilot and that anyone on the base would fly my wing. I guess I'm now convinced, and for an old B-52 pilot, it took a long time. I'm proud. My contemporaries think I'm the best."

Ed Kohlmeier's mission diary.

20-Dec-66

6129

Maj Edward J. Kohlmeier, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew two more missions into RP-1.

"Flew #98 and 99. Wild Weasel and Skyspot. Pack 1.

"There is a way. Hit a truck park in the morning and went with Matty [Capt Soloman D. Mathison] on his 100th mission. And what a reception when we landed. There waiting by the birds were the Bob Hope show. They had just landed. I shook hands with Hope and Vic Damone and got kissed by all of the females in the show including Phyllis Diller. Anita Bryant gave me about ten kisses and the guys watching said I turned a slow red starting with my neck and working up to my hair line. Then we watched the Hope show and it was really great. I hope that I can come by some of the pictures that were taken by the aircraft. They ended the show with Silent Night and it really got to me. I'm sure I could never have gotten through it if it were not for the fact that tomorrow morning early I will fly #100 and in less than seven days from this moment will be back with my family and my wife. God bless her."

Maj Frank L. Yow, Jr. from the 469 TFS also remembered the Bob Hope show. He recalled that Capt Mathison "... had recently been passed over for promotion to major and happened to be returning from his 100th a little after the Bob Hope Special Christmas Show was to start at Korat. The entire 469th Sq. decided to forget the Hope show and go to the flight line to meet [Mathison] and give him his parade. Well the Hope entourage was late arriving and we were well into the parade with fire trucks, helicopters, flares and all as they taxied in. Bob Hope asked B/Gen Chairsell, our wing CO, what was going on and when he told him, he insisted on coming over to watch. They got there with their cameras rolling. There were a lot of beautiful show girls and Miss Universe and Phyllis Diller... . We had the Champaign and the captain's new 100-mission flight suit. He had gotten out of his combat gear and was down to his underwear, which were boxer shorts and ready to put on his new suit when someone came up behind him with a CO2 fire

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extinguisher and squirted him. He jumped and as he did a private part of him became public!!! Everyone roared and the cameras kept running, but I never saw that part on TV. We all then went to the show and got front row seats and the captain was brought up on stage and introduced to the crowd of some thousands."

Ed Kohlmeier's mission diary & Frank L. Yow letter dated 8 Dec 1986 to Bauke Jan Douma.

22-Dec-66

6131

One day after flying his 100th mission, Maj Edward J. Kohlmeier, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, was on his way home.

"First leg home Kadena.

"It doesn't seem possible but Korat is now history. I left them at 20:15 last night and it's 6 AM on the 23rd now. I'm in my usual state of exhaustion. It was a rewarding day for me in that just about every man in the squadron found time to come to me and say something nice, most about my leadership and about bombing accuracy. The boys from Bitburg and Spangdahlem were particularly impressed with the bombing. Col Chairsell and Parsons both called me in to tell me how pleased they were with my work. All and all I'm convinced that I was a fighter pilot and exceptionally proud of my 100 missions.

"Now I want to get home. I still haven't found a way to let Shirley know I'm done. MARS no go and commercial no go. I plan to look into it at Kadena. I still have a chance to beat the program and make it for Christmas."

Ed Kohlmeier's mission diary.

08-Jan-67

6281

Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, led an F-105 flight into North Vietnam. The lineup was:

- #1 - Capt Murphy flying 61-0126, "Miss Texas", for 2:25 on his 48th mission.
- #2 - Maj James S. Thompson
- #3 - Maj John A. Graff
- #4 - Maj Ralph Lloyd Kuster, Jr.

"Originally, I was scheduled to hit the tanker just ahead of Ray Bryant's flight. That meant that I would check in with Cricket first and get the weather for a counter. Ray would then have to scramble for his. We had joked about doing each other out of a counter. When I took off, I had about a five-minute lead on Ray's flight, but when I got to the Anchor, our tanker was not there yet. This changed the rules, because when tankers did get into the Anchor, Ray's flight was closest and they joined up first. We started throwing a few jabs at each other over the air. We both started maneuvering our tankers to be dropped off as close to the Mekong River as possible. It was obviously a race for a counter. Ray dropped off and hit the river about two miles ahead of me. When I checked in with Cricket, Ray was already on his way for a weather check. Cricket was in a good mood and sent us both in to check different areas. We had a lot of fun re-hashing the race when we got back.

"After checking the weather, we got serious again and got our target assignment. I was to work with two FACs. When I checked in with them and got their position, I just happened to be directly over them at 15,000 feet. They were going to mark a road cut for us. As he started in to mark, an AA gun site opened up on him. He marked it with a 'Willy Peter' instead. I was in a perfect position to roll in, so we all put our bombs on the site before the Willy Pete smoke had time to blossom. The [FAC] said that that was the fastest instant retaliation he had ever seen.

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"About that time, his prop ran away from him from a probable hit from the previous ground fire. He thought he was going to have to ditch. I contacted Cricket and told him to hold Ray's flight and prepare for a possible recycle and RESCAP. We then went low to CAP for him. He managed to limp all the way home nursing his engine.

"Tonight we had a wing dining in. During the break, Col Chairsell (Wing Commander) asked Major Yow if he had gotten a counter today and he said yes. Col Chairsell asked how, and if he had dropped in Package 1. He said, 'No, I was directed in on a weather check, then dropped in Laos'. Col Chairsell got very irritated and said, 'No, that was no counter'. He actually made the statement that 'He didn't feel that Package 1 should be considered a counter'. Several of the people just turned around and left.

"This really seems ridiculous when you know that Package 1 has accounted for more downed aircraft than any other package. Out of the pilots that were known to have bailed out, very few have been listed as captured. Most of them were shot at in the chute on their way down to give you a clue as to their fate.

"He is trying to arrange it so the only way we can get credit for a mission is to go to Hanoi, which is defeating and distorting the original purpose of the 100-mission rule. This seems even more rotten when you realize that he will not fly a mission in Package 6. His excuse is that 7th does not want wing commanders to be sent into that area. That rule does not bother true leaders like Col Olds, who led the very successful MiG raid on the 2nd, which resulted in 7 kills, of which one was his. That is the difference between a leader and a commander.

"Ray led a flight into Laos today. He rolled in on a bridge just below Mu Gia Pass. The whole area lit up with 37-mm fire, which, as he described it, was the most he had been fired on since Package 6. That target was considered a non-counter though.

"We found out that from now on, every morning each Squadron Commander had to go justify each counter to Col. Chairsell personally. He would make the determination from then on. It is as if he has a personal vendetta against his own pilots.

"Major Graff was liaison to 7th in Saigon for one week. He said 7th was not really exerting any pressure to cut down on the number of counters. However, while he was there he received a call from Col Johnson with a message from Col Chairsell. The message was to advise Cricket to quit sending the F-105s in for so many counters. Major Graff looked into the subject and found that of all of the correspondence concerning counters had come from the 388th TFW signed by Col Chairsell. ...".

Clint Murphy, mission log.

10-Jan-67

6282

Four pilots in a flight from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew a mission into North Vietnam and Laos. The flight lineup was:

- #1 - Capt Winfield Scott Harpe
- #2 - Maj John A. Graff
- #3 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 59-1739 for 3 hours 25 minutes on his 49th mission followed by a non-counter.
- #4 - Maj Ralph Lloyd Kuster, Jr.

"We were scheduled to go into northern Laos and work under Dogpatch Control. After coming off

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

the tanker, we headed up across the Fish's Mouth toward Channel 97. When we checked in with Dog Patch, he was busy with two other flights. He sent us to Route 7 to recce while waiting for our turn with the FAC.

"After we felt that the other two flights had had time to finish, we checked in on the strike frequency. The minute we checked in, we could tell something had just happened. The FAC was shouting directions into the mike. It wasn't long before we realized someone had crashed. It turned out to be 'Zorro 2' [Captain James P. Gauley, 34 TFS, KIA].

"Zorro Flight had taken off just in front of us. We checked in with Rescue Control (Crown Alpha) and advised them that we still had all our ordnance and were in the area if they needed us. He told us to stand by. We could see two FAC planes down in the hills with the rest of Zorro Flight circling. The FACs had located a chute, but there was no sign of life. Another bad sign was the fact that the pilot had not checked in with us on his survival radio.

"The FACs were reporting no enemy ground fire, so Control told us to go drop our ordnance in Route 7, then return for RESCAP. Scott Harpe was not familiar with Route 7, so I took the lead. I found a break in the overcast and led the flight in to drop on a hilltop. There were numerous villages in the area, so I didn't want to drop through the clouds for fear of hitting one. Harpe then regained the lead and headed back for the target area.

"We flew CAP while the rest of Zorro Flight headed out for fuel. When they returned we headed back out to recycle. By the time we got back, it was all over. The Jolly Greens had come in and dropped two PJs to check on the condition of the pilot. They found him dead. They did not have the proper equipment to get him out of a deep ravine, so they had to leave him.

"When we returned, the pilots were literally in a boil. One of their friends had been killed on one of Col Chairsell's non-counters. It is not known if he was shot down or just lost control of the airplane, however, this does not matter. The fact is that one of our friends and an American fighting man's body is lying in a ravine tonight unable to be recovered, and he will not receive credit for having flown the mission because of a silly rule.

"I have seen moral at a low ebb before, but never to the extent that it has fallen among the pilots here.

"Captain Gauley was a member of the 34th TFS and was flying his 34th mission."

Clint Murphy, mission log.

12-Jan-67

4562

Col William S. Chairsell, commander of the 388 TFW, sent a letter of appreciation to Col Neil J. Graham, 18 TFW commander, for the support that 18 TFW F-105 pilots gave to the 388th. "I am long overdue in writing you to express our appreciation for the significant contributions made by pilots of the 18th Tactical Fighter Wing who have served here on a temporary duty basis. Without their help, we simply would not have been able to fulfill the fraged sortie load on many occasions. Their experience and leadership have been appreciated by our pilots, many of whom are recent RTU graduates, and much of the praise heaped on this wing by higher headquarters has been earned by 18 TFW pilots. ..."

"I would like to cite the names of those who have served with us - a sort of Honor Roll - and pray that the collective memory of the present 388th Wing hasn't omitted anyone:

Maj Ralph H. Bowersox

Capt John L. Measenbourg

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

Maj Dana B. Cromack	Capt Cowan G. Nix [POW 1 Oct 66]
Maj Pike G. Grubbs	Capt William W. Raitt
Maj Howard E. Johnson	Capt John F. Rehm
Maj Glen C. Ward	Capt Anatole Semenov, Jr.
Capt Allen L. Anderson	Capt Donald F. Smith TDY to the 469 TFS
Capt Thomas E. Boatman	Capt William H. Snell
Capt John H. Busbee	Capt Burton Spurlock
Capt John E. Cozine, Jr.	Capt John T. Stadler
Capt Patrick Dotson	Capt Michael C. Stevens
Capt Jack L. Francisco	Capt George H. Vipond
Capt Vernon E. Frank	Capt Albert C. Vollmer
Capt Wayne Eugene Fullam	Capt Samuel E. Waters, Jr. [KIA 13 Dec 66]
Capt Charles H. Hofelich, Jr.	Capt Duane H. Zieg
Capt Edward L. Jones	1Lt William W. Koelm
Capt Thomas E. Mason	

"In conclusion, may I say that I wish we could have permitted all the 18 TFW pilots who were here last month to remain here. You have helped us when we needed you and it's frustrating that we can't help you in return. But the last two weeks have seen the many expected replacements from RTUs arrive and by next week we should be overmanned. Now that the Personnel pipeline is pumping, there seems no way to regulate it. We are having to build more hootches to accommodate them.

"Again, warm thanks to you and your professionals for seeing us over the hump."

History of the 12th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 July - 31 Dec 1966, pgs 15 - 16.

13-Jan-67

6284

Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy from the 469 TFS did not fly today but described events at Korat in his mission log.

"Friday the 13th. I had an unusual experience today. We were due to have a visit by Air Force Secretary Harold Brown. Yesterday, three officers from each squadron were asked to go participate in an informal conference with him this morning at the club. My squadron C.O. asked that Ray Bryant, Dennis Wills, and I go represent our squadron.

"Early this morning an Airman from the PIO Office came and told us there was going to be an awards ceremony in which we were to participate. Captain Bryant and I were to receive an Air Medal. We got up, dressed, and went to the main briefing room to wait for the party. When the party arrived, Secretary Brown entered after General Momyer and Col. Chairsell and proceeded directly to the front. He is still a very young person for his position, being in the mid-thirties. He has a short crew cut, prominent nose and very thick horned-rimmed glasses. He was wearing a military-type 1505 uniform with a civilian belt, no rank, and dirty suede fruit boots. His uniform showed signs of being slept in for the past week. His appearance was in sharp contrast to other dignitaries we have had come through.

"He immediately presented our medals and then sat down to take advantage of a briefing set up in his behalf. Throughout the briefing, he would interrupt to ask questions, which at times had even the General stumped. He was very astute to our problems. He, like Senator Stuart Symington, wanted to talk with the pilots.

"We were to gather with other squadron representatives at the club. When we arrived, the tables were all set up in banquet style for our conference. He walked in, pulled up a chair on the other

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

side of the room and said for all of us to pull up a chair and sit in a circle. All the elaborate planning for the tables was by-passed. One four-star General standing beside me said, 'That really screwed up those plans.' It was quite warming to know that here was a man that wasn't interested in pomp, but was interested only in the meat of the subject.

"We discussed essentially the same problems that we had discussed with Symington. However, Dr. Brown was interested more in the nuts and bolts of the subject. I brought up a problem we had with fuzing and others brought up other problem areas until we finally got around to targeting. He was under the false impression that to attempt hitting the airfields meant we would lose more aircraft. We explained to him that we are now operating inside the airfield defenses, except we are hitting lesser targets. To hit the airfields would cost us nothing extra. He then asked if we thought the MiGs would operate out of China. We explained that they might, but then they would be of no real threat because of their small fuel load and operating radius. When he left, I think he might have been convinced we need to hit the fields.

"I noticed in Time Magazine his statement concerning the bombing of the airfields after last week's MiG losses. Quote, 'We're doing pretty well without attacking the airfields'. Only time will tell. In general we were pretty well disappointed with his opinions on targeting because he just reflected the administration's views.

"The weather cleared up in Packages 1, 2, and 3 this evening. One of the flights found a truck convoy and asked for help. Most of the flights were recycled to go back in for a recce while the weather was good. Col Bowie's flight got two SAMs fired at them out of Vinh and two other flights got some flak out of the area. There were several new troops in the flights that came back wide-eyed talking about all the flak. If they thought they saw flak today, they have a real treat in store the first time they go to Package Six. All in all 'Friday the 13th' has been pretty good to everybody.

"We had a cook out tonight between the hooches. About halfway though, Maj Dickie's flight came in from debriefing. They had had two missiles fired at them. Col Bowie was in the flight. Jim Wilson was the only member of the flight to get a launch indication on the Vector gear. As they rolled over to look in the direction of the threat, a missile passed between Dennis and Wilson. Wilson then looked back for the next one and sure enough it was coming straight for him. He jettisoned his bombs, stroked his burner, and started to climb just in time to cause it to pass behind him. He and Dennis both said that they were the biggest, fastest things they had ever seen. Wilson said he could see the fins on both and that they appeared to be camouflaged."

Clint Murphy, mission log.

14-Jan-67

6285

Four pilots in a flight from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew a non-counting mission into Laos. The lineup was:

- #1 - Capt Ray H. Bryant
- #2 - Capt John E. "Mac" McMahon
- #3 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 60-0444 for 2 hours 15 minutes.
- #4 - Maj Jack C. Spillers

"We were scheduled to the Oil Storage at Phuc Yen Airfield. This morning as well as last night, the weatherman was saying that all indications and pilot reports were that the Delta was clear. We all knew that we would be going. At the last minute they changed it. We are through trying to out-guess 7th. Every time we have been launched before, the weather has been forecasted to be bad and, sure enough, it was. Today for the first time, it was forecasted to be good and they didn't send us. Considering the target, it is just as well.

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

"We were sent over to work with Hillsboro, who sent us into southern Laos to work with a FAC. If we keep hitting targets like the one we hit today, I am afraid we do not deserve to win this war, if we are really trying. We all have our doubts about that, though. Our target was a ten-foot wooden bridge across a small gully in the road. Then we were to crater the road on either side of the bridge. All of the pilots here are proud of our bombing ability. Given a good target, even with flak, MiGs, and SAMs, we can put our ordnance right on the target, but this was asking a little bit too much. It was exactly the same as trying to drop our bombs into a #2 tub from 7,000 feet.

"We made our runs along the road dropping only two bombs on each pass, so we would be able to correct our impacts each succeeding pass. Although we didn't hit the bridge, we cut the road in several places; but that was the most ridiculous part of all. The road went right through the middle of an open field. We could have put all 24 bombs on the road and they would have just moved over ten feet and bypassed the cuts. Another \$24,000 worth of taxpayers' money down the drain.

"We now notice that Johnson was asking for another 6% tax increase to pay for the growing expenses of this war. We got an outstanding figure out of the briefing yesterday. Out of all the ordnance dropped on 'out-of-country' missions -- (an out-of-country mission, by definition, means out of South Vietnam) -- over the past three months ending on January 1st, only 10% was dropped on North Vietnam. The rest was dropped on Laos on targets of the caliber we hit today. Since the 'out-of-country' bombing accounts for a great percentage of the total cost of the war, you can see where literally billions of dollars worth of taxpayers' money is going. It makes me sick to see our national resources being depleted and our implements of national defense being whittled away like they are. What really hurts is to see our President have the audacity to ask for a tax increase to support this waste.

"We almost had a rebellion over counters versus non-counters this morning. Col. Chairsell tried to take one of Major Dickey's counters from him. Major Dickey had been sent in to find a truck convoy, which had been reported. He was unable to find it, so he decided to return to a tanker for more fuel. It was on the way out of Package 3 from the Vinh area that they got the missiles fired at them. They then refueled and went back despite the threat to drop their bombs. Col. Chairsell said he didn't consider the first trip in as a counter because they didn't drop ordnance. At the same time, he said he had twelve other pilots who had been directed to strafe an active flak site in Mu Gia Pass [who] shouldn't get a counter, because he didn't consider 20-mm as ordnance. The Squadron Commanders just flat out said they would have to get a reading from higher, because they didn't consider that a fair evaluation of the missions. At that, he finally backed down and let them count."

Clint Murphy, mission log.

18-Jan-67

6289

Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, led an F-105 flight into RP-6, North Vietnam. The lineup was:

- #1 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 58-1161 for 3 hours 45 minutes on his 53rd mission.
- #2 - Maj James S. Thompson
- #3 - Maj John A. Graff
- #4 - Capt Gale B. Anstine

"Today we were scheduled to hit a major bridge along the northeast rail line leading from China into Hanoi. The bridge was about 15 miles northeast of Hanoi. We were to go in using the over-water route. This was my first time to use this route as it was everyone else's in the force.

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

"We briefed, then Col. Chairsell got up and gave a little pep talk, which was meaningless. This was actually embarrassing to everyone in the room. He has never taken the time to do this in the past three days; however, today the PACAF inspectors were on base and attending the briefing. His motives were obvious.

"The Flight Leaders finished their maps, discussed tactics, etc., then we all went to have chow before heading for the aircraft. We are short on airplanes and we do not have enough engines for the ones we have, therefore, it was like a four alarm fire drill trying to scrounge enough birds to fill the schedule. We only had one bird to use for spare and since these birds had been used for the morning mission, most pilots were finding that the bombs had not been loaded yet. I found my aircraft had not been refueled yet. It was still warm from the previous mission.

"By the time I got refueled and started, the rest of my flight was at the end of the runway waiting to take off. I asked all the other flights to move to the left on the taxiway, so I could scoot by on the right. Again, I assumed the lead and we managed to get only 15 seconds late.

"Everything went well, through joining up with the tankers out over the gulf until we started trying to drop off. Some of the flights had taken off late and had not refueled by drop-off time, so Major Rowan, the Force Commander, had to slip drop-off by six minutes. It managed to work out and all the flights managed to drop off within sight of each other. About ten minutes later we were in perfect formation heading for the IP, which was at the north end of Pork Chop (island).

"After we formed up, all the flights started going through their last minute pre-strike checks. Way off at 9 o'clock we could see the entrance to Haiphong Harbor and just ahead at about 10 o'clock were the large Cam Pha mines, which are just south of Pork Chop. At the IP, we all fixed our Dopplers and headed due west to Bac Ninh and the bridge. At about thirty miles out, we started getting quite a few launch lights and then we began to see a few missiles burst, which were very inaccurate and far off.

"Traditionally the Force Commander has rolled in first with CBUs to hit the flak sites. Lately they have gotten smart. They won't fire at the first flight, so as [not] to give their positions away. Then they start firing at the second flight. Today I was briefed to roll my flight in first to draw fire, then the CBU flight would go in.

"When we got to the target, I rolled in from the east to west to get a good cut at the bridge. Just as I started down the slide, I got a launch light. Again, I was committed, so I kept going. Sure enough, at about 10,000 feet, three missiles exploded about 1500 feet from us. As expected, the guns did not open up on us as we went in.

"After I released, I rolled to the left sharply to BDA the flight's bombs. I hit in the water about 50 feet short and blew up a large column of river mud and klong water. Major Thompson in number two was a little long, but #3 and #4 hit directly in the slot. Just after #4's bombs hit, I could see the CBUs going off on the flak sites, which were going full blast by now.

"As I was in burner climbing for altitude, #3 said, 'Move it Lead, they are on your ass.' I broke hard to the right to see a string of 85-mm bursts coming right up my tailpipe. We kept moving it until we were out of range.

"I listened for each succeeding flight to roll off hoping no one would get hit. We were lucky again. Everyone made it. From there on, it was just a matter of getting back to the tanker for more fuel. For some reason, I decided to take a little extra fuel for the flight. We left the tanker with 4,000 pounds each, more than we needed to get home.

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

"Crossing over the southern portion of North Vietnam into southern Laos, I decided to go down and recce the area. Immediately we found a truck convoy in one of the passes. Just as I started to call Airborne Control to get verification for a strike, my radio transmitter went out. Major Graff assumed the lead and got the verification. We made four passes apiece firing a total of 9,000 rounds into the trucks. None exploded, but I am sure they will be there for quite awhile.

"We will have to wait for post-strike target photography to see the final results. But it looks good now.

"The RF-4C, that went in yesterday for photography, didn't make it out." The RF-4C was 65-0888 from the 11 TRS, 432 TRW at Udorn. Maj Gary Gene Wright and 1Lt Frederick Joseph Wozniak were both KIA.

Clint Murphy, combat log & CNA Loss/Damage database, USAF loss 502, pg G21.

20-Jan-67

6291

Four pilots in a flight from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew a mission into RP-1, North Vietnam. The lineup was:

#1 - Capt Dennis L. Wills

#2 - Col Robert P. Parsons

#3 - Maj John A. Graff

#4 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 58-1161 for 1 hour 45 minutes on his 55th mission.

"Originally we were scheduled to go up into northern Laos; however, the weather clobbered in, so we were sent to work under Airborne Control. Because of the Package 6 effort this evening, 7th had to divert our tankers, so we didn't have a scheduled refueling.

"Col Parsons, being the Assistant D.O., is very definitely against what Col Chairsell is doing to the pilots with respect to the 'counter system'. Today during the briefing, he said, 'I don't care what you do, Captain Wills, but get me a counter.'

"We took off and headed straight for the coast. Upon checking in with Cricket, they said they wanted us to work with a FAC, but he wouldn't be there for about 20 minutes. Dennis told him we didn't have the fuel, so we would like to go to Mu Gia Pass, since we could see that it was open. Reluctantly he said OK.

"When we got there we found that all of the northern Package 1 was opening up. Regretfully, we didn't have enough fuel to recce, so we hit a road through the mountains and a river ford.

"When we left, we reported that everything was open and available for recce. We found out later that he refused to send two other flights in to recce, even though we reported the area open. We wrote this up in our post-strike debriefing. It is almost impossible to figure out what our goals are in this war.

"Every morning and every evening for almost a week now, we have been sending flights up into Package 6 mostly against the Northeast Rail Line. It is almost spooky, because it is like the calm before the storm. We haven't even had anyone hit, much less lost.

"We found out that they have 50 more MiG-21s, than the 27 reported the other day. They are still crated and stored in a cave in Thud Ridge. That may be the storm we are expecting."

Clint Murphy, combat log.

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

01-Feb-67

2546

Maj. Marlin R. Blake from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat, RTAFB, Thailand, flew his 43rd combat mission. Two F-105Fs each carrying two 1,000-pound bombs and two F-105Ds carrying six 500-pound bombs.

"Carbine" flight. Take off at 0650. TOT 0815.

Carbine 1 - Maj Leo F. Callahan/Maj Alfred J. "Lash" Lagrou, Jr. flying F-105F 63-8330

Carbine 2 - Col William S. Chairsell flying F-105D 61-0132

Carbine 3 - Maj Marlin R. Blake and Maj John R. DesJardins flying F-105F 63-8302

Carbine 4 - Capt David H. Coats flying F-105D 58-1169

Spare - Maj Eugene D. Main in F-105D 60-0432

Carbine was the second of three F-105 flights from Korat: Domino (0645 takeoff), Carbine (0650 takeoff), Neptune (0715 takeoff).

100 Mission Log of Maj. Marlin R. Blake.

01-Feb-67

6297

Four pilots in a flight from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew a mission into Laos and RP-1, North Vietnam. The lineup was:

#1 - Maj Ray H. Bryant who had been promoted to Major on 20 Jan 67 with date of rank 25 Aug 1966.

#2 - Capt John E. "Mac" McMahon

#3 - Capt Charles C. "Clint" Murphy flying 62-4387 for 2:10 on his 58th mission.

#4 - Capt Patrick Dotson

"We were originally scheduled to be the flak suppression flight for a strike on the Northeast Rail line. Due to bad weather, it was cancelled and we were sent to work with Hillsboro Control. They sent us to GCI for a Combat Proof in southern Laos.

"Col Chairsell has finally reversed his stand on the counter situation. He is up to his chin in pilots now and wants to start getting rid of some of us. Now he has another problem on his hands. He has put so much pressure on the airborne controllers in the last month to quit sending flights from our Wing into North Vietnam, that now he wants us to go in, they won't send us. We will have to see how he resolves that problem."

Clint Murphy, combat log & Ray Bryant e-mail 12 Apr 2010.

15-Feb-67

1129

After a 5-day bombing pause for the Tet new year, the Rolling Thunder 53 bombing campaign of North Vietnam began again. "The Tet standdown consisted of a 48-hour cease-fire followed by another 36-hour cease-fire."

"Finally, the whole abortive peace-seeking endeavor was brought to a close on 15 February when Ho Chi Minh sent President Johnson a reply in which he unequivocally rejected the notion that the U. S. should expect any reciprocity from North Vietnam and made it clear that we must unconditionally halt the bombing before any other issues could be considered."

"Not only had our attempt to get to the negotiating table failed dismally, but the North Vietnamese had also taken full advantage of the Tet truce with unprecedented resupply activity, as the military had consistently predicted would happen during any such standdown. The daily sightings of watercraft and trucks between seventeen and eighteen degrees north latitude were the highest ever seen, and truck traffic moving south from the Mugia Pass area during Tet was the highest

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

ever observed in a four-day period. ... In all, during the 1967 Tet, between 22,300 and 25,100 tons of supplies were moved from the north into the area below nineteen degrees."

Pilots from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew some of today's RP-6 missions.

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew a "non-counter with Col Chairsell, Wing Commander."

"Rolling Thunder" by John T. Smith, pgs 120 and 336 & Project CHECO, Rolling Thunder Jan 1967 - Nov 1968, pg 18 & "Strategy for Defeat", by Admiral U.S.G. Sharp, USN (Ret.), pg 147 & Jack Phillips, e-mail 18 Mar 11.

24-Feb-67

2569

Maj. Marlin R. Blake from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat, RTAFB, Thailand, flew a non-counter combat mission to Laos. Four F-105Ds each carrying six 750-pound bombs. "Rattler" flight. Take off at 1440. TOT 1545.

Rattler 1 - Major Marlin R. Blake flying 60-0464
Rattler 2 - Maj William T. Twinting flying 62-4316
Rattler 3 - Maj George H. Williams flying 61-0132 (designated spare aircraft)
Rattler 4 - BG William S. Chairsell Flying 62-4283
Spare - Capt Edgar W. "Ed" Michie

"Refueled and went to Laos. Worked with FAC. Bombed and strafed a truck park. Good show."

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 10th combat mission into NVN.

100 Mission Log of Maj. Marlin R. Blake & Jack Phillips, e-mail 18 Mar 11.

19-Mar-67

1133

In the program paralleling the "Ryan's Raiders", both the 355 TFW and 388 TFW flew F-105 radar bombing missions using the techniques developed by the Tactics Working Group directed on 13 March 1967 by the PACAF Commander, General Ryan. During the Sunday morning missions, both wings practiced the technique for the afternoon missions.

An F-105D from Korat crashed during the morning practice run and the pilot, Lt Col Joseph Clair Austin, the commander of the 34 TFS, was killed. Other members of "Warhawk" flight were #2 Capt Jack A. Phillips, #3 Maj Carl W. McKenzie, and #4 Capt David C. Carter. This was Capt Phillips' 21st combat mission into NVN.

Phillips recalled the circumstances of the mission. "The 34th had been tabbed to do a risky low level run on a power plant in bad weather; Carl McKenzie picked Dave Carter and me since it would be a 3 ship, in-the-trees run. The new squadron commander, Joe Austin, told Carl that he would lead the mission. Carl did not want this to occur and Austin told him it was an order. So we planned everything, but due to Austin's lack of experience, Carl insisted that we do a practice mission. Carl briefed the whole thing and went into great detail regarding the snake-eyes we would be using since Austin had never even seen one before. We headed off to a lower package and flew around 100 feet to get Austin some practice. He got the word that the primary weather was socked in and chose an alternate, which was only a bit better. We found the target okay, but for some reason Austin pulled up to about 3,000 feet and started a shallow dive run instead of a level delivery. I was number 2 and saw him pull hard enough to envelop the aircraft in vapor, then hit the side of a hill. No ejection and no beeper. I never even saw him release the bombs.

"After we recovered, the head shed would not let us fly the planned mission [in the afternoon], so we helped John Rowan and gave him all our stuff. They flew it later that day and it was a success. They went to give Rowan a silver star and he refused, saying it was an AF Cross mission; they

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

relented and he got it. All in all, an unusual day. I think Chairsell was afraid of losing both the commander and ops officer of the 34th if he let us take the mission." (Jack Phillips, e-mail 21 Mar 2011.)

Also in the morning, a flight of four F-105s from the 355 TFW, at Takhli "... took off for a practice mission in Laos." "Gainful" flight consisted of Lt Col Danny Salmon lead, Maj Randy Plumb number 2, Maj Kenneth H. Bell, the Stan Eval Officer number 3, and Maj Ted Tolman number 4. "The plan was to penetrate the clouds over a target in Laos where a FAC could observe our radar bomb delivery and report the accuracy of the weapons. We would drop 500-pound retarded Snakeye bombs using a simple radar technique called 'lay-down bombing'. ... Once in the air, we got to our rendezvous point with the FAC only to learn that he was too busy to handle us. Colonel Salmon decided to divert to Route Pack One and find a target on our own. ..."

After flying to the coast where the weather was bad and a SAM site threatened them, they flew back to the Mu Gia Pass area. "Colonel Salmon finally found a suitable radar target on a road junction in a narrow valley, and we dropped our bombs together on his command. Twenty-four Snakeye bombs rippled off the racks and disappeared into the murk below us. The bombing system worked, but it was impossible to tell how accurately."

For this mission, Lt Col Salmon received the Silver Star "for gallantry while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force" (Hq 7th AF SO G-582 dated 21 April 1967.)

Jack Phillips mission summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11 & "100 Missions North", pp 202 - 207

31-Mar-67

5156

Six pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat completed flying 100 missions during March 1967. They were:

Capt Alan J. Fick
Maj Leo F. Callahan
Capt Coy W. Gammage
Lt Col Richard M. "Dick" Heyman, Jr.
Capt Donald J. Hankins
Maj Edward C. Jones

After Maj Jones had flown his 100th mission, he volunteered to remain at Korat as a Functional Check Flight (FCF) pilot for an additional three months to allow his reassignment to the States in June 1967, after his children had finished their school year. The 388 TFW commander, Col Chairsell, agreed with his request and allowed him to fly one combat mission each month to qualify for combat pay. By the time he left Korat, he had flown 103 counters over North Vietnam and 27 other combat missions to Laos.

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Ed Jones, phone interview, 26 April 2010.

24-Apr-67

1276

The first four Ryan's Raiders crews arrived at the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand. They had been training on radar bombing at Yokota since March. These first crews, all F-105 pilots, were:

Capt Donald Heiliger with Maj Ben Pollard,
Capt Nicholas J. Donelson with Capt David W. Forgan,
Capt Peter P. Pitman with Capt Robert A. Stewart,
Capt Dave Burney with Capt Aquilla Friend Britt.

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

The four modified F-105Fs that they flew from Yokota were: 63-8269, 63-8312, 63-8345, and 63-8269.

The front seat pilots had been instructor pilots from the 35 TFS and 80 TFS at Yokota. Two of the IPs from the 35th, Capt Paul W. Hansen and Capt Lawrence E. Huggins, remained at Yokota. Larry Huggins explained why. "Paul Hansen did not deploy since he had already flown 100 missions over the north. I was not allowed to deploy because I had just finished revising the 5th AF SIOP target set and had a 'special' TS clearance." (Larry Huggins, e-mail 15 Dec 04.)

The rear seat pilots were recent graduates from McConnell's F-105 RTU. Captains Stewart and Forgan had graduated from F-105 RTU class 67ER on 6 January 1967. Maj Pollard and Capt Britt had graduated from F-105 RTU class 67FR on 13 February 1967.

Eleven other Ryan's Raider aircrew members arrived in May 1967.

The group was initially assigned to the 34 TFS under the command of Lt Col Alan G. Nelson, but later operated as a provisional unit within the 13 TFS commanded by Lt Col Gerald F. "Jerry" Fitzgerald. On 1 June 1967, it was integrated as a separate operation of the 13 TFS when Lt Col Jim McInerney took over the squadron. The Ryan's Raiders were guided by Maj Ralph Kuster from the 469 TFS. Jim McInerney explained Maj Kuster's role: "... He was [388 TFW Commander] Colonel Chairsell's 'helper' having served under him at Spang."

Maj Frank L. Yow, Jr., the 388 TFW Weapons Officer, also helped the Raiders. "Maj Ralph Kuster and I worked with them and helped plan the missions although I disagreed with the way there were doing it."

"Because of changes in mission and compromise, the name of the project was changed from the original Project Northscope to Operation Commando Probe to Operation Commando Nail."

Before they had left Yokota, Capt Donelson recalled, "The crews called it Ryan's Raiders and created a special patch showing an F-105F with a golden screw through the rear cockpit. This represented the dissatisfaction of the pilots that had to occupy the rear cockpit." (Nicholas J. Donelson in *River Rats Vol III*, pgs 52 - 53.)

The 388 TFW history for the period October - December 1967 described the technical and operational problems encountered by the Raiders. "Several difficulties, some of which are not yet resolved, have complicated the operation of the Raiders. Chief among these was the challenge of electronics. Modifications were made to the R-14 radar. An expanded scope now provides an improved presentation. A fast sweep in the center of the scope allows the operation to have a fast constant paint of the target. New test equipment obtained from Yokota AFB have greatly improved the terrain avoidance and contour mapping capabilities. Still to come are replacement of the rear seat scope by a Cathode Ray Tube and the addition of a radar absolute altimeter. Daily improvements reflect the success of the efforts of our Armament and Electronics Squadron and our maintenance in general. Other difficulties encountered include incomplete maps and charts of North Vietnam, (a problem partly resolved by radar photography of these areas), and lack of experience in Raider operations and techniques, which necessitated exchange of information with the A-6 Intruder pilots of the Bonhomme Richard. Daily crew meetings under the inspiring leadership of Major Ralph L. Kuster, his knowledge and experience in the airplane, and devotion to duty, have been most successful in advancing the Raider program." (13 TFS history, 1 Apr - 31 July 1967, USAF microfilm NO584, frames 0038 - 0040.)

388 TFW history, Jan - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO583, frames 1449 and 1582 & Corona Harvest Chronology

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F-105 History

of Significant Airpower Events in Southeast Asia, 1954 - 1967, pg 133 & Frank Yow letter dated Sept 1, 1986 to Bauke Jan Douma.

26-Apr-67

71

Two days after the crews arrived at Korat, the first Ryan's Raider night missions were flown over North Vietnam. The crew of Capt Don Heiliger and Maj Ben M. Pollard from the 34 TFS struck the Yen Bai railroad yards (BE 616-00338) about seventy-five miles northwest of Hanoi at coordinates 21-41-58N and 104-53-04E. The target for the second crew was the Ron Ferry in RP-1.

Wild Weasel pilot Maj Robert N. Johnson from the 13 TFS provided Iron Hand support to this night strike. (Maj Gen James E. McInerney, Jr., manuscript for article for "Aviation Illustrated" magazine, revised Feb 00).

Maj Pollard, the group's senior officer, learned of the mission from the 388 TFW commander, Col William S. Chairsell. He "... said, 'You've got a target. Your first target is 10 o'clock on Wednesday night, Package V at Yen Bai, and you are going to go down the Red River'. ... I said, 'Okay, if anybody is going to go first, it's going to be me,' so we started briefing that night. ... We were briefed that night and all day, all afternoon, all night on Tuesday."

"We got up the next morning and did our flight planning. ... We got the SAR ... briefing. In every one of our missions, the briefing was, 'There is none.' If you fly at night over North Vietnam in deep Package V and VI, there is no search and rescue. ... Our SAR briefings were really, really short."

"That night we took off (at) 8 o'clock or so and climbed out and hit the tanker, and we went up the Red River ... and ... hit Yen Bai ... at 10 o'clock, ... 50-some hours after we landed at Korat. The other airplane went out about two or three hours later and hit a target in Package I." (Pollard interview)

"The tracks provided a good radar return, but darkness inhibited bomb damage assessment, as did craters left by earlier bombing. Impressive results were not produced by these raids or those that followed against Thai Nguyen and other targets in the delta." (To Hanoi and Back)

WarbirdTECH Vol 18 Republic F-105 Thunderchief, pg 46 & Air Force Academy Oral Interview with Col Ben M. Pollard, 5 Nov 92, pgs 13 -15 & "To Hanoi and Back", pgs 60 - 61.

01-May-67

1453

The commander of the 388 TFW at Korat, Col William Spalding Chairsell, was promoted to Brigadier General.

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1735.

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 from 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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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.

04-May-67

4108

Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr., the 13 TFS Wild Weasel Operations Officer, briefed the 7th Air Force staff, including the commander, Gen Momyer, on the 388 TFW plan to have the Ryan's Raider night bombing missions flown by Wild Weasel crews. The missions were being flown by dual-pilot crews assigned to the 34 TFS.

Col McInerney had developed this concept during Wild Weasel missions when he had trained his EWO, Capt Fred Shannon, to operate the F-105's R-14 radar. "While it was clear to me that the Weasel pilots could have done the mission by themselves, as they had for years in Europe and the Pacific, it was not clear how the Electronic Warfare Officers (EWO's) would fit into the scheme. In an effort to find out, I tested my own EWO, Fred Shannon, to the limits. After the final post-strike refueling coming back from an Iron Hand mission, I would turn the flight over to number three - the element leader - and go off on our own to put Fred through the drill of working the terrain avoidance and contour mapping modes of the R-14-A radar."

After Capt Shannon became proficient with the radar, " ... I was able to formulate a plan which would enable us to simultaneously apply the experience of the Weasel crew to the enormity of the task at hand and the very low morale of the Raider crews. ... I started with my own Weasel crews simply saying, 'if Shannon can do it, you can.' You bet came the cry in response. Next was the 388th Wing staff. Fortunately, General Chairsell had personal knowledge of many of my Weasel pilots in his previous roles as Commander, 49th Tactical Fighter Wing at Spangdahlem, Germany, and his enthusiastic support swayed the Wing staff."

Seventh Air Force approved the plan. "Perhaps it was helpful that I had served under General Momyer in the waning days of the Korean War when he commanded the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing. Also, instrumental to that favorable decision was the presence at the briefing of then L/Col Garry Willard, Commander of the Weasel training program at Nellis AFB who assured one and all that the Weasel training program at Nellis could be adjusted to insure that all graduating crews were fully capable of performing around the clock all-weather bombing missions upon arrival in theater.

"Without further ado the program was changed. At Korat the Weasel crews started picking up the North Scope mission. The Raider crews joyfully moved into the front seat of the F-105 in other squadrons - with special glee on the part of those who thought Ryan Raiders meant consignment to the back seat of a Thud for 100 missions. Weasel crews from Nellis started arriving with the full understanding that their first fifteen to twenty missions would be night all weather strikes into the heartland of the North Vietnam air defense systems."

MG James E. McInerney, Jr., manuscript revised Feb 00, for an article published in Aviation Illustrated magazine.

22-May-67

103

Starting in the afternoon, the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, hosted the first Red River Valley Fighter Pilot's Tactics Conference. The conference was initiated by the 388 TFW Director of

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Operations, Col Howard C. "Scrappy" Johnson and sanctioned by the 388 TFW commander BG William S. Chairsell, so that "... Fighter, Bomber, Escort and Tanker folks could talk it over face-to-face." The project officer was Maj Alfred J. "Lash" Lagrou from the 13 TFS. Col Robin Olds, commander of the 8 TFW, and his vice commander, Col Chappie James, attended the conference as did Brigadier General William D. Dunham, 7th AF Deputy Chief of Staff.

Maj Frank L. Yow, Jr., the 388 TFW Weapons Officer who was assigned to the 469 TFS, attended the tactics conference. "Representatives from all the outfits that flew up 'North' and the supporting tankers, ECM, etc. along with several VIPs from Saigon came. We met for a few hours. This is where the 'Snoopy' message originated. This was a message the designated Mission Commander sent to the other outfits each night telling them how he wanted them to ingress and at what time, etc.

"Then we started partying!!! And what a party!!!! It was formal. Everyone had to wear dark trousers and a light colored shirt. 'Chappie' James made a speech and sang some songs after dinner and then it was fun and games for the rest of the night. A few digits and a couple of ankles got broken, but nothing serious. The next morning we had the two Korat Goonie Birds, 'Grunt 1' and 'Grunt2' shuttle us all down to Bangkok where we had reservations at the Siam Intercontinental, a pretty nice hotel where the party continued. This is where Robin Olds suggested we organize and proposed the name of 'River Rats'. We did and the official title became 'The Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association'." (Frank L. Yow letter dated September 1, 1986 to Bauke Jan Douma.)

Lt Col Richard F. B. Gimmi, Jr. from the 13 TFS was also at the conference. ("Airman. The Life of Richard F. B. Gimmi", by Russell M. Gimmi, iUniverse, Inc., pp 255 - 257.)

Maj Edward C. Jones from the 34 TFS also attended. (Ed Jones, phone interview 29 Apr 10)

Maj Kenneth H. Bell and Lt Col Nelson McDonald were the only representatives from the 355 TFW. The other wing officers remained at Takhli for the 100-mission party for Lt Col Phil Gast, the only one of the last three 354 TFS commanders to have survived his combat tour.

Scrappy Johnson recalled the activities. "... Robin and Chappie were elevated to the tops of the first two elephants and led the parade. If the six elephants weren't impressive enough, we had the Royal Thai Provincial Police Band from Korat following to firm up attention. We stopped off at Wing Headquarters and held the tactics meeting for two hours. The most productive thing to come from that was "Snoopy" report. It was the one exchanged by Wings regarding their targets for the day. We had been flying up north hitting targets and not knowing what the other wings were hitting. We passed this report back and forth ourselves. We didn't have to depend on the Seventh Air Force -- we sent it to each other on our own. After the meeting we headed back to the elephants ready for phase two." (Scrappy Johnson, e-mail to CASBAR via Dave Brog, January 21, 2005.)

In addition to producing the "Snoopy Report" that dealt with "the monumental task of getting the 'ALPHA' task force in and out", the conference held a parade and a party. The parade from the flight line to the Officer's Club featured six elephants. "Chappy" James was the guest speaker at the dinner party with "... fun and games administered by 'Mo' Seaver." Col Robin Olds introduced the "River Rat Mig Sweep".

"The RRVPA gathering was dubbed a practice reunion in honor of all prisoners of war being held in North Vietnam. The group adopted the nickname "River Rats" during its second practice reunion (at Ubon on 18 August 1967). A contest was held to select the group emblem and nickname and

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the pilots of the 469 TFS submitted the winning entry."
(<http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/history/vietnam/469th/p49.htm>)

The "River Rats" became dedicated to providing college scholarships for children of aircrew members who died in the Vietnam war.

History of the 388 TFW, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO583 & "100 Missions North", pgs 239 - 242 & "River Rat History" by Col Howard C. Johnson, printed in 27th Anniversary Reunion program booklet, 27 Apr - 1 May 1994 & MiG Sweep #42, summer 1983.

29-Jun-67

4680

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. and his EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers, after their Wild Weasel training in class 67WWIII-11 at Nellis, arrived at Korat RTAFB, Thailand. They were assigned to the 13 TFS. During the next 7 months, this crew flew 100 missions over North Vietnam. Capt Dorrrough kept a daily diary of his activities and combat missions.

"Bangkok. Thurs; Left Manohra Hotel at 0530 to catch C-47 leaving Don Muong RTAFB at 1030. Got tired of waiting, so caught bus. The driver was a frustrated Indy man. Scared the hell out of us. Group included Capt's Dick Arnold, Jim Bartsch, Joe Howard, George Shamblee, and Maj Bud Summers.

"It was good to see the old 49 TFW gang again.

"Base facilities excellent. Gen. Chairsell looked good. [BG William Spaulding Chairsell, 388 TFW Commander who had previously commanded the 49 TFW.] Officer's club has longest bar in SEA. 84 feet. .10 cent V.O. bourbon tonight. Ground pounders called 'grunts'."

Bob Dorrrough's Combat diary

30-Jun-67

5117

The 34 TFS history summarized the events that occurred in the squadron during the month of June 1967. "The 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron conducted numerous strikes in the month of June on the enemy's rail system. These critical supply routes were interdicted on numerous spots and heavy damage was inflicted on rolling stock."

The squadron flew 406 combat missions, 402 to North Vietnam and 4 in Southern Laos, for a total combat time of 1047:45 hours.

"Changes have been noted in the enemy AAA defenses. They have strengthened their gun emplacements at key points around the rail yards in an attempt to counter our repeated attacks on that system. MiGs have been reported airborne on nearly all strikes but they appear to be extremely reluctant to engage in aerial combat."

"Combat pilot strength stood at 19 line pilots including the commander and operations officer. Three attached pilots, wing staff members, were also available for combat." The acting commander was Maj Earl Johnston and the Operations Officer was Maj Carl W. McKenzie.

"During this month of June, three squadron pilots completed their tour of 100 missions over North Vietnam. Those completing were: General William S. Chairsell, Lt Col Alan G. Nelson, Major Carl W. McKenzie. ... "

Maj McKenzie's 100th mission was his last F-105 flight. He had accumulated 1194 hours in the airplane. His 100th was also the last F-105 flight for Lt Col Nelson. He had accumulated 351 hour in the airplane.

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"... Four losses were suffered during the month, three in combat and one for medical reasons." The combat losses were Maj Dewey Smith, MIA due to AAA on 2 June; Maj Clarence Kough, rescued/injured due to AAA on 3 June; and Capt John W. Swanson, MIA due to AAA on 15 June. Capt Jack L. Spearman returned to the States for medical reasons.

By the time he left Korat, Capt Spearman had accumulated 789 hours flying the F-105.

Incoming pilots during June were: Maj Dwight E. Sullivan, Capt Nickolas J. Donelson (a Ryan's Raider pilot reported as having arrived in May 1967), Capt Hugh W. Davis, and Capt Harry Guy Paddon III.

34 TFS history, 1 - 30 Jun 67, USAF microfilm NO584, frame 0075 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.

28-Jul-67

3155

In an early morning mission from the 388 TFW, the two F-105Ds in "Hot Rod" flight flew armed reconnaissance in Laos and RP-1, North Vietnam. Maj Robert W. Barnett was "Hot Rod 1" and 1Lt Karl Wendell Richter, flying F-105D 62-4334, was "Hot Rod 2". The pilots were from the 44 TFS and each plane was loaded with six 750-pound bombs.

In an interview years later, Maj Barnett described their mission. "Richter was finishing his tour. He had been in the 44th. I was in the 44th at that time. I was going to be a flight leader due to my rank. I had been flying a long time; didn't have a lot of experience in the 105 other than going through RTU. This was my fourth mission. Richter had 298 but he had another 30 some that he didn't even count. They were Laos missions, they weren't counters.

"We briefed and we were going up by Dien Bien Phu. There was supposed to be a FAC up there. So we take off, refuel, and go up by Dien Bien Phu. ... I called for the FAC and they said they scrubbed the mission. 'Why don't you go down to PAK 1 there's a Misty FAC -- F-100s -- down there.' ... So we turn around and we head on down to PAK 1. ... As we were getting closer, I called ... Misty and he was on the tanker. He said he had gone up by Ron Ferry and there was a railroad train in there. 'Why don't you go there to see what you can do up there.' He said, 'Be careful. It might be a flak trap.'

"So we go up there. We were at 8 to 10 thousand feet, jinking, looking, I couldn't see any trains. We were looking around and I couldn't find anything moving. We were getting pretty low on gas. I said to Karl, 'Why don't you take the lead. You can pick out a target and then I'll just drop my bombs wherever you drop yours.' So we switched. There was a little dirt bridge across a little stream." The bridge was a ford across a small stream about 38 nautical miles west northwest of Dong Hoi along Route 110C.

"We were looking at it. I was up about 12 thousand feet. He rolls in and I'm looking. All at once we started getting triple A. I said, 'They're shooting at us.' ... I'm turning and he said, 'Roger, I'm watching him.'" The time was 0125Z.

"Just about the time he drops his bombs, I see some smoke come off the bottom of his airplane. He said, 'I've been hit!' He turns. I just punched my bombs off. We kind of meet half way. I join up pretty close to him."

The two planes headed west toward Laos and Korat. They flew for five more minutes and made it as far as the North Vietnam-Laos border when the condition of Lt Richter's plane grew worse and he had to eject.

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"The last thing he ever said, that I can remember, is, 'I lost my oil pressure.' ... Shortly after, the fire started coming out of his tail. I said, 'You're on fire.' Now I went over on Guard Channel and ... said, 'Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is Hotrod 1. Hotrod 2 has been hit. He's going to eject.' About this time the flame was as long as his airplane. I said, 'You'd better get out. You're really burning.' I'm flying right by him. I moved out a little bit. He goes up ' and over, and then he ejects. ' I'm going 365 knots, I hit my burner, come around, and saw his parachute. I went around him a couple of times, he's going down, and he goes into the clouds." Lt Richter ejected at 10,000 feet over Laos about 6 nautical miles west of the border with North Vietnam.

"Pretty soon the F-100 came back -- the Misty. When he got there I went over the clouds and said, 'He went down about here. I'd better get going. I'm going to run out of gas here.' I found a tanker and went back to the base."

One of the Misty pilots was Maj William "Bill" Mayberry (Misty 5) flying in the rear cockpit of an F-100F. "We were on the tanker, when we got a call on Guard for help. ... Although there was a total overcast, the wingman had a tree marked where lead's parachute had disappeared into the jungle, but he hadn't heard from him. It was easy enough to find the wingman, and he showed us the tree. He was on fumes and had to leave, but we maintained the position until the other Misty came off the tanker. The pair of us were able to keep a lock on that spot until the chopper arrived. ... " ("Misty", pg 44)

At 0400Z, a rescue helicopter from Nakhon Phanom located the downed pilot and picked him up. Eighteen minutes later, the initial OPREP 3 PINNACLE report from the 388 TFW was cryptic but encouraging. "... Location - Hit at 17-53-20N and 106-03E, down in vicinity of 17-51N and 105-34E. Cause of loss - probable 57-mm. Crew status - Good chute and beeper. Pilot recovered 0400Z. Presently en route to Nakhon Phanom thence Korat."

But three hours later, an equally cryptic message from the wing reported, "... SAR initiated and successful. Pilot recovered unconscious and died during RTB for hospitalization." Crewmembers of the rescue helicopter were Capt Evan Thompson, pilot; 1Lt Ed Sichterman, copilot; SSgt Floyd Watson, flight engineer; and PJ TSgt Charles D. Smith.

En route home, Maj Barnett called in the loss to the Korat command post. "I got on the radio and I told the tail number who was bagged. There was still some confusion who was 'Hotrod 1' or 'Hotrod 2', who was who, and who got shot down.

"... When I got back, I pulled into the parking area, and here comes General Chairsell (the 388 TFW commander) in his car. I got out of the airplane and he wanted to hear everything that happened. He wanted to know if he (Lt Richter) had released the bombs too low. He probably would have got hit anyway. I thought he probably released a little low but he wanted to bomb where he put his bomb -- a little dirt strip that didn't mean anything.

" ... From what I understand, somewhere in the whole process (of ejecting) he broke both of his legs in the thighs. I knew a couple of other people who broke their legs, too. John Flynn broke his legs. Jim Hiteshew, he broke both of his legs. Apparently he (Richter) had thrown up in his mask and suffocated. Then he had fallen down on a karst. He had a big flap of scalp that was back. The reason I knew this, they brought him back to Korat. We had a flight surgeon who was in our squadron. He was part of the autopsy and that's what he told me."

Lt Richter's loss hit Korat heavily. He was famous for being the youngest pilot to have shot down an enemy aircraft when he downed a MiG-17 on 21 September 1966 at age 23 on his 75th mission. Due to his experience and leadership, he was one of the few Lieutenants qualified to lead

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entire missions over North Vietnam. His loss was especially sad since this was to be his next to last mission. "That would have been his 199th. For the next mission, he and this guy named Piper [Maj Robert B. Piper], who had been an instructor at the Air Force Academy, (and had 99 missions) ...were going to fly together. They were all going to land at Saigon (and) ... get a medal from Momyer. A big deal. That was all cancelled."

1Lt Richter was born 4 October 1942. He entered the service from Holly, Michigan. His name appears on the Vietnam Memorial Wall on panel 24E line 13.

TWX 388 TFW 280418Z Jul 67 JOPREP JIFFFY DOI 3819 Jul 67/OPREP-3/Pinnacle 001 & tape-recorded interview with Bob Barnett, Fort Worth, TX, 23 May 2002 & 388 TFW TWX 280715Z JOPREP JIFFFY DOI 3821 Jul 67 OPREP 4/RT 245.

01-Aug-67

483

After being fast-tracked through his F-105 upgrade program at McConnell AFB, Col Edward B. Burdett assumed command of the 388 TFW. He replaced Brig Gen William S. Chairsell who had been Wing Commander since 17 August 1966.

In his "End of Tour" report dated 8 July 1967, Gen Chairsell gave his observations from his year at Korat and highlighted the record of the 388 TFW during his tour. He began by discussing the effectiveness of the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign. "... It was ... gratifying to my entire organization, when in late 1966 and early 1967, we were directed to strike hardened targets in North Vietnam who's destruction would seriously degrade the enemy's war-making capability. The earlier campaign against POL storage areas, with few exceptions, failed to produce tangible results in terms of fires or secondary explosions. This convinced us that following the 29 June 1966 raid on the Hanoi POL Storage the enemy pumped most of his POL out of major storage areas and dispersed it in barrels throughout his major cities or in the Buffer Zone where he realized it would be safe from attack."

"... More recently we have denied the enemy the continued use of his northeast rail line, while at the same time have interdicted his lesser important northwest rail line. Should future political considerations permit us to mine and/or destroy his principal harbor facilities, I believe we could quickly and decidedly cripple his entire war-making capacity."

On the subject of tactics evolution General Chairsell made these comments: "The introduction of the (QRC-160A-1) ECM Pod to the F-105 ... in November 1966 was the singular and basic factor which enabled us to bring about a major change in our tactics, achieve an improved bombing performance and at the same time reduce our aircraft loss rate. Prior to the ECM Pod our aircraft were required to ingress and egress to and from target areas using terrain masking for protection and employ the 'pop-up' maneuver over target. This tactic had the disadvantage of placing our aircraft well within the range of the majority of AW and AAA as well as mak(ing) our aircraft extremely vulnerable to SA-2 firings and AAA at the peak of their 'pop-up'. Once equipped with ECM Pods our aircraft could now roll into the target from medium altitude - 12,000 to 15,000 feet. This altitude also provided for more positive target identification, thus reducing the possibility of 'short rounds'."

"A second factor ... in achieving a reduced loss rate, was the introduction of the flak suppression flight. Employing CBU 24/29 and attacking as the first or second flight over target, ... has greatly discouraged enemy AW/AAA gunners from remaining at their normal firing positions. The CBU 24/29 has also been an effective instrument in SA-2 site destruction."

"... Aircrew discipline and adherence to successfully proven tactics in the high threat areas have also directly contributed to our overall effectiveness. Maintaining flight integrity and proper positioning by altitude has garnered us maximum benefit of the ECM Pod against Fansong and

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Firecan Radars and has presented a complex and formidable problem to any attacking MiG aircraft - to the point of completely discouraging them from attacking."

"... Since its inception Commando Nail has ... undergone major changes and is now being employed primarily as a harassment instrument against North Vietnam during hours of darkness. Our efforts to assess its effectiveness in terms of 'bombs on target' have been frustrated by a lack of high speed KA-71 film. ... Armed with the knowledge we are acquiring from Commando Nail we should be in position by early September to provide ... a 24 hour bombing capability, employing the large strike force Pathfinder tactic during daylight hours, and the Commando Nail harassment tactic during hours of darkness."

In the area of research and development, General Chairsell recommended development of ECM pod adapters for Fansong Radar C and E Bands in anticipation of the North Vietnamese upgrading their SA-2 radars. He also gave results of missile firings. "From August 1966 through 30 June 1967 a total of 340 Shrikes were fired by our Wild Weasel crews against Fansong and Firecan radars with the resultant possible 82 hits. This represents a 24 percent effectiveness rate."

"... I also recommend that we be provided a more reliable VT type fuze for flak suppression purposes. The present VT-188 fuze has proven unreliable and has caused our aircrews concern because of its premature detonation characteristic."

General Chairsell summarized improvements in aircraft maintenance and supply capability during his tour at Korat. "... Using every means available during the year, ... the ... wing rapidly constructed and put into operation a functional MOB second to none in Southeast Asia. By November 1966, the 388th ... depended on Kadena only for jet engine support and by April 1967 became independent in that area. ... The NORS rate dropped from 8.1 in July (1966) to .9% by January 1967 and has continued at that level through the first half of 1967. ... The wing continued to meet all mission requirements with an ever decreasing abort rate, from 2.4 in August to 0.6 in December, 0.5 in March and remaining below 1.0 through June."

On the subject of aircrew programming, the General commented on sporadic replacement of aircrews that resulted in projected shortages and about an excess of Wild Weasel crews. "... Until March 1967, manning of Wild Weasel III crews was excellent, based on an authorized strength of 8 crews ... and an average of four sorties fraged per day. With the increase of assigned Wild Weasel crews, that reached twenty-two during May 1967, without a proportionate increase in sorties and UE aircraft, effective utilization of these crews was difficult. ... To ... assist in the utilization of the excess Wild Weasel crews, I have recommended that all F-105F assigned aircraft be modified to have dual capability in Wild Weasel activity and in Commando Nail. I have also recommended that all F-105F crews be qualified for both missions. ... Meanwhile, in view of the shortage of F-105D pilots, it has been necessary to reassign pilots from the Commando Nail program and the Wild Weasel program to provide an adequate number of F-105D pilots for the strike mission."

General Chairsell concluded his report by citing flight, missile, and ground safety statistics. "During FY 67 the 388th ... flew 56,573 hours in F-105 aircraft and experienced eight major aircraft accidents. Five of the accidents occurred during the first six months of this period. Five accidents were attributed to material failure, one to maintenance factor and two to possible pilot factor. Our accident rate at the beginning of FY 67 was 35.5. After the first six months this rate had been reduced to 21.3. At the end of FY 67 our accident rate has further been reduced to 9.1."

"After returning from Thailand, he was assigned as vice commander of Air Force Systems Command's Armament Development and Test Center at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., in August of

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1969." (NOTE: It was August 1967.)

"He was promoted to the grade of major general effective Feb. 24, 1970, with date of rank Aug. 10, 1965."

General Chairsell's End of Tour Report, 8 July 1967 in USAF microfilm NO463, frames 1976 - 1996 & USAF biography of MG William S. Chairsell at <http://www.af.mil/information/bios/bio.asp?bioID=4966>.

15-Sep-67

2366

(Approximate date). At Phoenix, Arizona, this month, certificates of recognition were given to 23 F-105 pilots and EWOs who recently completed 100-mission tours in SEA."

The men, and the squadron from the 355 TFW and 388 TFW to which they were assigned (when known), were:

BG William Spaulding Chairsell - 34 TFS	Maj Kevin A. "Mike" Gilroy - 354 TFS
Col Robert Ray Scott - 333 TFS	Maj William B. Hoeft - 354 TFS
Maj Jack C. Brown	Capt Donald J. Hankins - 34 TFS
Maj Ray H. Bryant - 469 TFS	Capt Larry G. Lighty - 357 TFS
Maj Merlyn Hans Dethlefsen - 354 TFS	Capt Thomas A. Loken - 333 TFS
Maj William C. Eagle - 34 TFS	Capt Stow
Maj Thomas B. Hitchcock	Capt Norman L. "Norm" Suits - 421 TFS
Maj Robert N. "Bob" Johnston - 13 TFS	Capt Lloyd A. Sjulstad - 333 TFS
Maj Bruce H. Kline	Capt George H. Vipond - 67 TFS
Maj Robert F. Loken - 421 TFS	Capt David E. Weaver - 34 TFS
Maj Milton V. Rickman - 357 TFS	1Lt Glenn Gidel - 354 TFS
Maj Larry D. Waller - 13 TFS	

Republic Thunderchief Worldwide Report, Vol III No 2, Oct 67.

31-Jan-68

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Four pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat completed flying 100 missions during January 1968. They were:

Capt Hugh W. Davis
Capt Robert M. Crane
Maj Donald W. Revers - Flew 100th on 8 Jan 68
Capt Sam P. Morgan

The 388 TFW provided a public relations announcement on Maj Revers' 100 mission accomplishment. "Major Donald W. Revers, 37, Ironwood, Mich., has added his name to the traditional 100-mission scarf of the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

"The seven-foot long scarf, inscribed with the names of all squadron pilots who have completed 100 combat missions in the F-105 over North Vietnam, was draped over the Major's shoulders by Colonel Paul P. Douglas, Jr., 388th Tactical Fighter Wing Commander, following his landing at Korat Royal Thai AFB recently following his 100th mission.

"The 388th TFW pilot considers a raid in early October against the Cu Van POL (Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants) storage area the most memorable of his combat tour.

" 'From a pilot's view this was an extremely rewarding mission, since we could see the results almost immediately.'

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

"Continuing, the major said, 'As I acquired the target and rolled in, the flak became extremely heavy. The strike force pressed on and did a tremendous job. The area just erupted and the whole hillside seemed to be devoured in smoke and flames. Smoke rose 5,000 feet in the air.'

"The Major also participated in two of the major 'firsts' of the air war.

"In the early part of August he was on the first strike against the Doumer Bridge, 1 1/2 miles from the center of Hanoi.

" 'We were very elated with the results,' Revers commented, ' having dropped a span.'

"The first raid near the Chinese Communist border, against the Lang Son railroad yard, also proved very successful as, according to Major Revers, the 388th pilots caught about 180 railroad cars in the yard.

" ' There were numerous secondary explosions and we destroyed 75 - 80 percent of the rolling stock. It was a real pleasure to hit such a lucrative target.' "

"Although he has completed his 100 mission, Major Revers will not be going home immediately, but will assist in the 388th Tactical Operations Center." (Draft 388 TFW Korat Release 68-02-03, via e-mail 30 Mar 2010.)

Don Revers remained at Korat for another three months. "The general asked me to stay a couple of months and help him out." He worked for General Chairsell rewriting "... all fighter refueling procedures in SEA."

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Don Revers, e-mails 30 and 31 Mar 10.

31-May-68

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F-105D 60-0482 was put on static display at the USAF Academy. "During special ceremonies ... (the) Thunderchief was put on permanent display ... and a scholarship was dedicated in honor of Lt. Karl W. Richter, ... who was killed over North Vietnam after completing 198 missions. The Thunderchief, built from parts salvaged from ten F-105s which had been battle-damaged in Vietnam, was presented to the cadets prior to the scholarship dedication.

"The F-105 was put together at Sacramento Air Materiel Area, McClellan AFB, California, by members of the 2951st Combat Logistics Support Squadron. Cadet Second Class Terry L. Balven, chairman of the Cadet Heritage Committee, dedicated the aircraft. The Richter scholarship was presented by the Fairchild Hiller Corporation immediately after the dedication. ... Also a portrait of ... Lieutenant (Richter), painted by artist Maxine McCaffrey, was presented to the academy. ... Richter, who graduated from the Academy in 1964, was the first Air Force Academy graduate to be so honored. The yearly scholarship will provide a year's preparatory schooling to a qualified candidate who desires to enter the Air Force Academy."

Attending the ceremony were: "Lt. Gen. Thomas S. Moorman, Academy Superintendent; Donald J. Strait, General Manager, Republic Aviation; Maj. Gen. George B. Simler, Director of Operations, Hq. USAF; Brig. Gen. Robert F. McDermott, Academy Dean of Faculty; Brig. Gen. William S. Chairsell, Asst. for Southeast Asia, Air Force Systems Command (who was Richter's wing commander in SEA); Col. Robin Olds, Cadet Commandant; Col. Robert R. Scott, who commanded the first Air Force F-105 squadron and later the 355th TFW at Takhli; Col Frank Merritt, Athletics Director, Air Force Academy; Maj. Merlyn H. Dethlefsen, a former F-105 pilot and Medal of Honor recipient; and Capts. Leonard C. 'Lucky' Ekman and Howard L. Bodenhamer, both academy graduates ... who have completed 100 combat missions or more over North Vietnam. ...

William Spaulding Chairsell

F-105 History

"The nine members of the 2951st Combat Logistics Support Squadron who reassembled the Thunderchief at the Air Force Academy ... were ... Lt. Richard A. Follett, M. Sgt. Jack D. Jones, T. Sgt. Walter B. Hill, Sgt. John H. Russell, S. Sgt. Carl Dyer and Airmen 1. C. Marty Quattlebaum, Raymond E. Granstrand, Creighton P. Wong and Joseph D. Ayotte."

"Thunderchief World Wide Report", Vol. III, No. 10 June 68.

25-Apr-69

27-Apr-69

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The Red River Valley Fighter Pilot's Association held their first official "practice" reunion at McConnell AFB KS. Approximately 725 fighter pilots attended the reunion held at the Lassen Motor Hotel in Wichita KS. The 23 TFW's Transient Alert parked, serviced, and launched 191 different types of planes flown in by reunion participants. This reunion was a follow-on to the tactics conferences held in SEA during 1967 - 68.

"Wichita became the 'Fighter Pilot Capital of the World' Friday as more than 600 fliers from three armed services gathered here for the first official reunion of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilot's Association.

"The association, more commonly known as the Red River Rats, is composed of pilots who have flown at least one mission over the Hanoi area of North Vietnam.

"Members of the association from the Navy, Marines, and Air Force began arriving at McConnell Air Force Base early Friday from their home bases throughout the United States. They flew here on nearly every type of aircraft, from the latest supersonic jet fighters to lumbering C-47 cargo aircraft of World War II vintage, for the three-day convention at the Lassen Motor Hotel.

"The idea to form the River Rats was conceived by Col Howard (Scrappy) Johnson, now of the 835 Air Division, Perrin Air Force Base at Sherman, Tex., as a way for pilots flying over North Vietnam to get together and discuss ways of penetrating the defenses around Hanoi.

"... Friday night some 600 of these veterans of missions over the North -- many with a 100 or more to their credit -- were gathered at the Lassen. Their flying suits were of nearly as many colors as the aircraft they arrived in. More colorful were the shoulder patches each flier wore to designate the unit to which he currently is attached as well as one to show the unit he had served with in Southeast Asia.

"... One non-flier at the reunion, AF Chaplain Chris Martin, Oxnard Air Force Base, Calif., said he was here because he had served at two bases in Thailand where pilots flying missions against the North were based. 'I am here because I was invited,' Chaplain Martin said, 'and of course out of interest. I think these men did a terrific job over there.'"

River Rats attending included BG William S. Chairsell, Col Robert T. Scott, Col Howard C. "Scrappy" Johnson, Col Lawrence J. Pickett, and Maj. Robert V. Baird. "Five Air Force officers, each with more than 100 flying mission to his credit over probably the most sophisticated air defense system in the world, said here Saturday they were firm believers in the effectiveness of bombing North Vietnam. All officers agreed that they thought the American fighting effort has been hurt and American lives lost due to the bombing halt called by President Lyndon Johnson on March 31, 1968. The men ... were quick to agree, however, that their 'job was not to argue about the bombing policy, but to put the bombs where the man (president) wanted them,' as Gen. Chairsell said.

"... The officers said there is no doubt enemy attack capability in South Vietnam has been

William Spaulding Chairsell

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increased since the halt. 'When we stopped the bombing,' said Gen. Chairsell, 'they (Viet Cong) were bound to get more equipment and more ammunition from the north. They are able to move supplies more freely now throughout the length and breadth of North Vietnam,' Col Scott said. Anti-aircraft guns have been moved south since the halt, he said, and 'we are losing a few more airplanes now than we did before. The pilots that have returned recently tell us the anti-aircraft (flak) is heavier.'

"... After the bombing halt, 'we also had insurgency action in Thailand that didn't happen before,' said Col. Scott, who as commander of the 355 TFW based at Takhli AB, Thailand, led his wing of F-105 Thunderchiefs in many strikes into 'package six'. On March 26, 1967, he joined the elite group of American 'MiG killers' by downing a MiG-17 in aerial combat.

"The bombing pause has allowed the North Vietnamese 'to repair all their bridges and now they are moving a lot more trucks down the Ho Chi Minh Trail,' Gen. Chairsell said. 'They are moving their supplies with impunity.' "

Gen Chairsell retired 1 July 1973 and died 27 November 1994. (USAF Bio of MG William S. Chairsell at <http://www.af.mil/information/bios/bio.asp?bioID=4966>)

23 TFW History, Jan - Jun 69, USAF microfilm MO555, frames 0570 and 0618 - 0619, reproducing pages from the Wichita Eagle and Beacon 26 Apr 69, pg 2A and 27 Apr 69, pg 5A.