

Thomas H. Curtis

F-105 History

09-Dec-63

5226

At the 4520 CCTW at Nellis AFB NV, Class 64-F of F-105D Operational Training Course 111506E graduated 24 pilots. The course started on 7 October 1963 and was assigned to the 4523 CCTS commanded by Lt Col Claude D. Phillips. The student pilots and their home stations were:

Lt Col Robert L. Bobbett - Bolling	Capt Neal L. Funston - 388 TFW McConnell
Lt Col James M. Morris - 388 TFW McConnell	Capt Ralph L. Kitchens - 388 TFW McConnell
Maj John P. Anderson - 8 TFW Itazuke	Capt Jack L. Spearman - 388 TFW McConnell
Maj William J. Bailey - 8 TFW Itazuke	Capt Paul H. Storment - 8 TFW Itazuke
Maj John I. Brown III - 355 TFW George	Capt Larry D. Wiggins - 388 TFW McConnell
Maj Robert A. Farnsworth, Jr. - 8 TFW Itazuke	1Lt Edward R. Bracken - 8 TFW Itazuke
Maj Louis G. Pazel - Luke	1Lt Clarence E. Fox - Homestead
Maj John C. Shay - 355 TFW George	1Lt Thomas W. Gallagher, Jr. - 8 TFW Itazuke
Capt Onofiro J. Andrews - Cannon	1Lt Edward J. Haerter - 355 TFW George
Capt Robert B. Bennett - 8 TFW Itazuke	1Lt Robert H. Jones - 457 TFS George - F-104C
Capt Thomas H. Curtis - Shaw	1Lt Bernard G. Lyons - Homestead
Capt Gerald E. Detweiller - 388 TFW McConnell	1Lt Jerry L. Stamps - Homestead
Capt Robert R. Dyczkowski - 355 TFW George	

Two pilots from Offutt AFB attended selected parts of Class 64-F from 9 - 19 Oct 63: Lt Col E. B. Elrod and Maj V. E. Chandler. Also, 1Lt Jared P. Lowe from Shaw AFB attended the class from 10 Oct 63 for 19 hours of academic training.

Lt Col James M. Morris was the commander of the 563 TFS at McConnell and was later assigned as commander of the 8 TFS, 49 TFW, at Spangdahlem.

As an F-104C pilot at George AFB, 1Lt Bob Jones, had "... deployed to Hahn Germany for the Berlin wall dust-up, and to NAS Key West for the 'Cuban Missile Crisis'. I was the last active duty 2Lt to fly the zipper." During his F-105 training, "... I was airborne on my first 'unsupervised solo' in the Thud ... along with Tom Curtis (whom I waxed) the day Kennedy was killed." After his F-105 upgrade, he "... was assigned to the 36 TFS 'Pukin Pups' at Itazuke in the fall of '63." (Bob Jones, e-mail 24 Apr 10)

Capt Benjamin D. Stanton was an F-105 IP who had been at Nellis since September 1960 and was in the 4523 CCTS that trained this class. In December 1963, he was assigned to the 18 TFW at Kadena AB Okinawa. "... While transitioning the 18th TFW [beginning November 1962], I was the squadron Flying Safety Officer (FSO). Col Jonesee Bolt, the DCO of the 18TFW liked my squadron Flying Safety program and asked me to be the 18th wing FSO when I went PCS to Kadena from Nellis. I was attached to the 67 TFS for flying where I got some training flights and got much of my flying doing FCF flights for QC." He also flew combat missions from Korat during deployments of the 67 TFS in 1965.

SO AA-8 dated 8 Oct 63 in History of the 4520 CCTW, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 63, AFHRA Call # K285.5435, IRIS # 0488615 & Ben Stanton e-mail 1 Jul 2013.

15-Apr-65

4561

The 6441 TFW published a TDY order sending 36 pilots from or attached to the 35 TFS at Yokota to Osan AB Korea for nuclear alert and return. "Purpose of TDY: Participate in Directed Training Flights".

"This order becomes effective 23 April 1965 and expires 30 June 1965."

The pilots were:

Capt William Baechle

Capt Kenneth D. Edwards

Capt Jerry N. Hoblit

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Capt William G. Bailey	Capt Kenneth D. Furth	Capt Wayne R. Kimmell
Capt Robert W. Becker	Capt Thomas W. Gallagher, Jr.	Capt Joseph B. Klaumann
Capt Orville B. Boone, Jr.	1Lt Richie W. Graham	Capt Merrill R. Lewis
Capt James T. Brown, Jr.	Capt Robert Greskowiak	Capt William D. Lockwood
Capt Fred Vann Cherry	Capt Carl L. Hamby	Capt John R. Lowry
Capt Thomas H. Curtis	Capt Charles A. Hanson	Col Maurice L. Martin
Capt William G. Donovan	Capt Frank J. Hardy	Capt Bobby J. Mead
Capt Warren L. Efting	Capt Leroy Herrman	Capt Sam P. Morgan, Jr.
1Lt Richard L. Pack	Capt Robert Leland Tidwell	
Lt Col William R. Peters	Capt Richard A. Tribes	
Capt Edward T. Rock	1Lt Miller F. West	
Maj Henry Shudinis	1Lt Lee B. White	

Temporary Duty Order - Military AF Form 626, dated 15 Apr 65 from 6441 TFW DCO received from Ed Rock 9 Aug 2005.

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5564

Key personnel in the 35 TFS, 6441 TFW, Yokota AB, Japan, were:

Lt Col William R. Peters -- Commander
Maj William D. Lockwood - Operations Officer
Capt Kenneth T. Blank - Asst Operations Officer
Capt Kenneth D. Furth - Echo Flight Commander
Capt Alan K. Rutherford - Foxtrot Flight Commander
Capt Frank J. Hardy - Golf Flight Commander
Capt Warren L. Efting - Hotel Flight Commander

The squadron's attached pilots were:

Col Paul P. Douglas, Jr. - 41 AD Commander
Col Allen K. McDonald - 6441 TFW VC
Lt Col Edward D. Thomas - 5 AF Chief of Safety
Maj Henry Shudinis - 6441 TFW Ops & Training
Maj Marvin A. Wicks - 6441 TFW Flight Test Officer
Capt Robert B. Bennett - 6441 TFW Flying Safety Officer
Capt Frank A. Buchanan - 5 AF Flying Safety Officer
Capt Bernard G. Lyons - 6441 TFW Ops and Training

The squadron's 30 line pilots were:

Capt William Baechle	Capt Jerry N. Hoblit
Capt William G. Bailey	1Lt Phillip J. Kelley
Capt Robert W. Becker	Capt Wayne R. Kimmell
Capt Orville B. Boone, Jr.	Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr.
Capt Edward R. Bracken	Capt John R. Lowry
Capt James T. Brown, Jr.	Maj Bobby J. Mead
Maj Fred V. Cherry	Capt Sam P. Morgan, Jr.
Capt Thomas H. Curtis	1Lt Richard L. Pack
Capt William G. Donovan	Capt Robert R. Reed
Capt Kenneth D. Edwards	1Lt Randolph S. Reynolds III
Capt Thomas W. Gallagher, Jr.	Capt Robert W. Spielman
1Lt Richie W. Graham	Capt Richard A. Tribes
1Lt Richard E. Guild	Capt Ralph D. Watkins
Capt Carl L. Hamby	1Lt Miller F. West
Capt LeRoy Herrman	1Lt Lee B. White

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35 TFS history, 1 July - 31 Dec 65, AFHRA Call # K-SQ-FI--35-HI, IRIS # 419883.

18-Apr-66

5176

The 6441 TFW selected the pilots for the squadron that became the 34 TFS to deploy to Korat. Most would come from the 36 TFS; consequently, the 36 TFS was slated to disband.

Bob Pielin from the 36 TFS, who had already flown 87 combat missions during temporary duty tours to Korat and Takhli, remembered how he helped select the pilots for the new squadron. "Fitz [Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald, the squadron's Operations Officer] and I initially made out a list of 25 pilots from the Wing resources to go as 34th members. The list was bounced back from HHQ as being too overloaded in pilots with over 50 missions. They recommended 6 guys in the 0 to 20 mission category, 6 in the 21 to 40, 6 in the 41 to 60, 6 in the 61 to 80, and anyone with over 80 to go TDY."

This distribution was to spread out their eventual departures from Korat as each pilot completed his 100-mission tour. Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked the list "... with some pronounced disapproval from those that were removed from the [original]. ... A 1.5 aircrew/aircraft ratio was authorized for 27 pilots plus Commander and Operations Officer. ... Bob Jones [Capt Robert H. Jones] was removed from the first list since he had his papers in to be discharged. When he found out about the 34th going PCS to Korat, he volunteered to go with [them] and get 100 missions before he got out. Red Dog [Lt Col Howard F. 'Red Dog' Hendricks the squadron commander] worked a 'deal', and he went TDY." (Bob Pielin e-mails, 23 Sep 2006 and 7 April 2007.)

The following list contains the positions and names of the initial twenty-nine pilots assigned to the 34 TFS. This is the revised list after Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked their original to provide a broader base of experience. One of the pilots, Gordon Walcott, annotated his copy of the printed list, dated 18 April 1966, with this comment: "This was the original 34th TFS crew roster when formed as an all-volunteer squadron from the 35 TFS, 36 TFS, and 80 TFS (Yokota AB, Japan)"

Commander - Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks who had been commander of the 36 TFS.
Operations Officer - Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald

India Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Wayne N. Whatley
Capt Robin K. Nierste
Capt James I. Miholick
Capt Douglas G. Lauck
Capt Robert H. Jones
Capt Robert R. Reed

Lima Flight

Flight Commander - Capt James E. Hayes
Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr.
Capt Gordon M. Walcott
Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson
1Lt John Bernard Sullivan III

Juliet Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Kenneth T. Blank
Capt Carl L. Hamby
Capt Thomas H. Curtis
Capt David H. Groark
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley

Metro Flight

Flight Commander - Capt Robert D. Pielin
Capt Alan K. Rutherford
Capt Ralph D. Watkins
Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Capt Rainford "Ray" McMaster Tiffin - 80 TFS

Kilo Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Jack R. Stresing
Capt William O. Lessard
Capt John R. Layman
Capt Rex L. Dull
Capt Clarence E. Fox
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

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E-mail from Monty Pharmer, 22 Sep 2006 forwarding letter to him from Lt Col (Ret) Gordon Walcott dated, 29 July 1988, which included a roster of 36 TFS pilots, dated 18 April 1966.

25-May-66

4957

On Wednesday morning, twenty F-105Ds (18 aircraft and 2 spares) now assigned to the 34 TFS left the 6441 TFW at Yokota for Kadena on the first leg of their movement to the 388 TFW at Korat. The aircraft took off in flights of four using call signs "Yule". Each flight departed Yokota at half-hour intervals beginning at 0800. The deployment's flight line-up consisted of:

Pilot	Call Sign	Acft Tail No	Yokota TO Time	Kadena Arr Time	Acft Maint Status at Kadena
Lt Col Howard F. Hendricks	Yule 01	62-4361	0800	0955	Tacan/Doppler probs
Capt Robin K. Nierste	Yule 02	62-4288	0800	0955	O/R
Capt James I. Miholick	Yule 03	62-4336	0800	0955	O/R
Capt Wayne D. Hauth	Yule 04	62-4303	0800	0955	Gnd blower inop
Maj Wayne N. Whatley	Yule 11	62-4306	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert H. Jones	Yule 12	62-4318	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert R. Reed	Yule 13	62-4308	0830	1025	Autopilot
Capt Douglas G. Lauck	Yule 14	62-4358	0830	1025	O/R
Maj Kenneth T. Blank	Yule 21	62-4370	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Thomas H. Curtis	Yule 22	62-4380	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Carl L. Hamby	Yule 23	62-4364	0901	1058	O/R
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley	Yule 24	62-4277	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Alan K. Rutherford	Yule 31	62-4270	0930	1134	Autopilot
Capt Rex L. Dull	Yule 32	62-4312	0930	1134	O/R
Capt Ralph D. Watkins	Yule 33	62-4378	0930	1134	CIN
1Lt John B. Sullivan III	Yule 34	62-4356	0930	1134	Fire Ctrl/Elec
Capt James E. Hayes	Yule 41	62-4352	1000	1200	Fire Ctrl
Maj Jack R. Stresing	Yule 42	61-0132	1000	1200	O/R
Capt Lothar A. "Andy" Olman	Yule 43	62-4379	1000	1200	Fuel Leak
Capt Robert D. Reichart	Yule 44	62-4354	1000	1200	O/R

(History of the 6441 TFW, 1 Apr 65 to 15 Nov 66, Supporting Documents, Mobility Control Center Log, pg 6, in AFHRA folder K-WG-6441-HI, IRIS# 0462464.)

Capt Alan K. Rutherford was one of the pilots on the deployment. "I recall so well how we formed up with 16 Thuds and midst many tears (from wives) and go get um's from the troops we launched to the war. We were going to 'kill the Cong'. We intended to overnight at Kadena, and then launch the next day with the squadron to Korat. Needless to say it got drunk and rowdy that night ...". (Al Rutherford, e-mail, 21 Sep 2006.)

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was another of the 34 TFS pilots moving to Korat. "We packed our household goods [at Yokota] and sent them along with our cars back to the States. Our wives and dependents had flights booked back to the States." (Doug Lauck, e-mail 21 Sep 2006.)

The pilots from the 34 TFS were to join with pilots from the 13 TFS at Kadena on 25 May and deploy to Korat. Unfortunately, circumstances required the 34th pilots at Kadena to return to Yokota on 26 May.

In the 13 TFS, "the squadron was cocked to move as planned on the 25th of May, but a staying

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order was received, delaying departure for thirty days. Rumors were rife that perhaps the move would not be made at all. Unfortunately, on the basis of the rumors and the lack of further communications, after numerous inquiries to higher headquarters on the subject, many members of the new squadron cancelled proceedings to return their dependents to the United States. As a result, when the order to deploy on 23 June was received with a week's advance notice, many dependents were left to arrange their own moves. Much help was rendered by friends and Wing personnel, of course, to facilitate these peoples' departure. On 23 June, support personnel departed for Korat via C-130. Aircrews departed the following day."

388 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1742 & 44 TFS history, 1 Jan 65 - 30 June 1967, pp 4 - 5.

10-Jun-66

5192

(Approximate date). Six F-105 pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Yokota, flew in a C-130 to Takhli to partially satisfy a PACAF levy on 5th Air Force units to provide pilots on temporary duty to fill shortages in the F-105 squadrons in the 355 TFW at Takhli. The pilots were:

Maj Kenneth T. Blank
Capt Carl L. Hamby
Capt Thomas H. Curtis
Capt David H. Groark
1Lt Phillip J. Kelley
Capt Douglas G. Lauck

In their time at Takhli, some of these pilots would fly combat missions with 355 TFW squadrons. While he was at Takhli, 1Lt Kelley flew two combat missions with the 333 TFS. On his second mission on 15 June 1966, he was shot down and rescued.

Others on TDY at Takhli did not fly missions before they transferred to Korat. Doug Lauck recalled that he "... went through orientation there but did not fly any sorties." (Doug Lauck, e-mail 11 April 2007.)

The pilots stayed at Takhli until approximately 15 June 1966 when they rejoined the 34 TFS that finally arrived at Korat.

Over the next few days, other pilots assigned to the 34 TFS flew on C-130s from Yokota to Korat to join the four advance-party pilots who were already there. During this TDY, they flew combat missions with the 388 TFW's squadrons and airplanes until the 34th's F-105s could be delivered to Korat. For example, Capt Robert D. Pielin, one of the advance party pilots who had arrived at Korat on 21 May 1966, flew two missions with the 421 TFS.

Capt Robert H. Jones was another 34 TFS pilot who deployed from Yokota to Korat.

Tom Curtis, e-mail 3 Apr 2007 and Bob Pielin, e-mail 1 Apr 2007 & Phil Kelley, e-mail 7 May 2012.

31-Oct-66

5152

Six pilots assigned to the 34 TFS in the 388 TFW at Korat completed flying 100 missions during October 1966. They were:

Maj Wayne N. Whatley
Maj Jack R. Stresing
Maj James E. Hayes
Capt Alan K. Rutherford
Capt Thomas H. Curtis
Capt Robert R. Reed

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Capt Reed was next assigned to the Armament Development Test Center (AFSC) at Eglin AFB, FL. "For the next five years, I had the best flying assignment in the USAF -- flying two and three different kinds of aircraft -- dropping all the new experimental conventional ordnance, and no one was shooting back! Indeed happiness! ... While at Eglin, I had the unique pleasure of flying the Thud concurrently with the F-100 D/F, A-37B and the F-4 C/D/E model. This enabled me to, somewhat objectively, compare the qualities of the aircraft The F-105 is still the finest weapon system I have flown, It carried me home from some 1500 of my 4500 total hours, virtually without any problem --- that I did not cause.

"My last flight in the Thud was in December 1971, just prior to my posting to an 'exchange tour' with the RAF at Manby, Lincolnshire, England -- another hardship tour to be sure, but someone has to do it !!!!!" Bob Reed accumulated 1187.4 flying hours in the F-105.

Tom Curtis provided an overview of his Air Force and retired USAF career. " I graduated from the Air Force Cadets, Williams AFB, AZ; class 56G on Jan. of 1956. Went across town to Luke AFB (big move), F-84G's. Then to Germany and France in Photo Recce Flying RF-84F and RF 101C. Back to the states to Shaw AFB, for a while. Then to Nellis AFB to check out in the F-105D.

"I spent 3 years in Japan, Itazukie and Yakota. From there Korat, Thailand 34th TFS, where I flew my 100 missions in the F-105D.

"Went from PACAF to ADC F-106s, Kincheloe and Malmstrom AFB and back to TAC in F-4Es. Did another tour in SEA (F-4E) 34th TFS again. Back to the States, Colorado Springs NORAD. Then back in F-106s Langley AFB for awhile. About 1975 or so I PCSed to RAF Alconbury F-5Es, Aggressors and finally back to the Springs, NORAD, and retired from the Air Force in 1979.

"After retiring from the AF, I went to work for Flying Safety, Cessna Citation simulator instructor and IP, Wichita KS for awhile. I then hired on with Horizon Airlines. I flew with them out of Portland OR and stayed with them for about nine years. Capt. in SA227s, Metro Liner & Dash-8. In 1992 I had to give up Airline flying (age 60).

"I worked part time for CSSI, INC as technician doing RVSM monitoring and flew my last flight at age 77 in 2009. After over 18,000 hours of flying and gobs of airborne monitoring time I hung up my wings. I moved into the AF Village Dec 2005. I have been married to Bonnie for 26 years." (John Revak interview with Tom Curtis via e-mail October 20, 2011.) Tom Curtis accumulated 366.6 hours in the F-105.

1Lt Phillip J. Kelley was reassigned as an instructor pilot to the base where he had earned his wings. He was a former 34 TFS pilot who had been working in the 388 TFW Command Post due to injuries from his ejection from an F-105D on 15 June 1966. "In October 1966, I received assignment to the 3552 PTS, Moody AFB as a T-38 IP. After reporting to Moody and after a period of therapy and rehabilitation, I regained flight status and attended T-38 PIT at Randolph. I remained at Moody as an IP until April 70 when my active duty commitment was fulfilled and I was honorably discharged."

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us/34tfs/scarf.htm> & Bob Reed letter dated March 28, 1988 to Bauke Jan Douma & Phil Kelley, e-mail 7 May 12.

15-May-67

2364

(Approximate date). "In two separate recent ceremonies, one at Nellis AFB in Las Vegas and the other in Washington, 12 F-105 pilots were awarded 100-mission certificates." The pilots were:

Maj Gordon B. Michelson	Col Robert E. "Bobby" Wayne
Maj William L. Broomall	Maj Joseph F. Hansard, Jr.
Lt Col Howard W. Leaf	Capt Norman L. "Norm" Suits

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Maj William F. Loyd, Jr. Maj John E. Malone
Maj Robert K. Dundas 1Lt Henry R. Hutson III
Maj Daniel G. McIntosh Maj Thomas H. Curtis
Maj Leo F. Callahan

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