

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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15-Jul-67

234

The twelfth F-105 RTU Class 67JR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 13 Feb 67 with 22 pilots, all but two from the Air Defense Command. However, one pilot was eliminated due to a fear of flying. The class was named "Roaring 20 + 1".

Maj James D. Murray, Jr. was the "Top Gun" in the class.

The class deployed for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 30 Jun - 14 Jul 1967 with the 560 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Louis D. Braun, Jr.

The graduating pilots and their SEA squadron assignments (where known) were:

Col Carl M. Hagle - Did not graduate	Maj Donald Eugene "Digger" Odell - 34 TFS
Lt Col William C. Decker - 469 TFS	Maj Paul F. Swanson - Korat
Lt Col Orland W. Jensen - 354 TFS	Capt Anthony Charles Andrews - 34 TFS
Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. - 34 TFS	Capt Douglas A. Beyer - 34 TFS
Maj Robert W. Hagerman - 469 TFS	Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver - 34 TFS
Maj Leslie J. Hauer - 469 TFS	Capt William H. Nottingham - 333 TFS
Maj Stanley Henry Horne - 469 TFS	Capt Robert A. Zang - 469 TFS
Maj David D. Igelman - 34 TFS	1Lt William Wallace Butler - 469 TFS
Maj Ronald Ruynan King - 333 TFS	1Lt Earl J. Henderson - 469 TFS
Maj Thomas P. Larson - 354 TFS	1Lt James L. Taylor - ?
Maj James D. Murray, Jr. - 469 TFS	

Col Hagle did not complete his F-105 training due to ulcers.

Maj Dickson was a former ADC F-106 pilot from Selfridge AFB, MI. Before starting his F-105 training at McConnell, he settled his wife, Carolyn and children near her hometown of Sherman, Texas, near Perrin AFB where he had been stationed earlier. His family remained there during his combat tour. When he departed for Korat in August, he was seen off at the airport by his wife's two uncles, George and Ben Blanton, Carolyn's mother's brothers. As a departing gift, they gave him a box of cigars and instructions to smoke one with a drink after each combat mission. During his stay at Korat, Dickson used the backs of the cigar bands to record each of his combat missions. (Dickson interview)

1Lt Bill Butler and 1Lt Earl Henderson were two ADC F-106 pilots from the 94 FIS at Selfridge. After their F-105 training, both pilots went to Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Philippines, en route to Korat.

Maj Odell and Capt Zang were also F-106 pilots from the 71 FIS at Selfridge.

Maj Igelman came from Ent AFB, Colorado, where he was a computer programmer in the 1st Aerospace Surveillance and Control Squadron. This squadron kept track of all space objects orbiting the Earth. In prior assignments he had flown F-86Ds and F-102s at Selfridge and F-102s at Goose Bay, Labrador. He arrived at Korat in August 1967 and flew his first combat mission in early September.

Capt Beyer had been an F-104 pilot assigned to the 331 FIS at Big Spring TX. Both he and Capt Andrews reported to the 34 TFS in August 1967. (Doug Beyer, e-mail 27 Apr 10)

*23 TFW History, Jan - Jun 67, USAF microfilm MO554 & telephone interview, Carolyn Dickson, 23 Apr 2009 & Earl Henderson, e-mails 13 July 2007 and 3 Aug 2009 & Dave Igelman, e-mail 4 Apr 10.*

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**31-Aug-67**

3825

The 34 TFS history for the month of August 1967, reported that, "... numerous targets were struck by pilots of the squadron in the Chicom Buffer Zone and within the Hanoi restricted area. A marked increase was noted in all modes of defense (AAA, SAMs, MiGs) due primarily to the sensitivity of the targets." Squadron pilots flew 411 combat missions during the month, 407 to North Vietnam and 4 to Laos for a total combat time of 1063:20 hours.

"Combat pilot strength stood at 36 line pilots. During the month of August, four squadron pilots completed their tour of 100 missions over North Vietnam. Those completing were: Maj Harry Pawlik, Maj Donald F. Fryauf, Capt Jack A. Phillips [on 2 Aug] , and Capt David C. Carter. [Not listed in the squadron history for completing his 100th mission this month was Maj John O. Rollins II.] No losses were suffered during this month and 13 replacements arrived during this period of time. Two officers, Captains Skoglund and Shulmister, that had been on temporary duty with the squadron from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, returned to their home station."

The 13 pilots arriving in the 34th in August were: Maj William M. Blakeslee, Maj Kenneth W. Mays, Maj Donald Eugene "Digger" Odell, Maj James L. Taylor, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., Maj William J. King, Maj Raymond Walter Vissotzky, Capt Robert M. Elliot, Capt Robert B. Middleton, Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver, Capt Douglas A. Boyer, and 1Lt Lee E. Hollingsworth.

The Squadron Commander was Maj George G. Clausen. Maj Roderick Gene Giffin was the Operations Officer and Maj William M. Blakeslee the Executive Officer.

*388 TFW history, Apr Dec 67, Vol II, 34 TFS history, 1 - 31 Aug 1967, microfilm NO584, frame 0080.*

**02-Sep-67**

3378

Air Force planes struck three targets along the Kep-Thai Nguyen rail line (RR 9) in RP-6A.

F-105s from the 388 TFW bombed the Hung Vi railroad yard (BE 616-M9173) (ART 5163) at 21-27-50N and 106-13-05E. Pilots reported the yard was interdicted. It was struck again on 15 September.

The Mo Trang railroad yard (BE 616-M2142) at 21-31-03N and 106-07-15E was struck on 2 September. Pilots reported their bombs hit the SE end of the yard and seeing 12 to 15 pieces of rolling stock. The yard was again struck on 16 and 17 September.

The Mo Trang railroad bridge (BE 616-G0522) at 21-30-30N and 106-07-50E was struck on 2 September. BDA on 8 September showed the bridge was still serviceable. It was struck again on 16 September.

The 388 TFW from Korat struck the Quang Hien railroad causeway (ART 5451).

Maj George G. Clausen, 34 TFS commander, received the Silver Star for a mission he flew today. "Major George G. Clausen distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force over North Vietnam on 2 September 1967. On that date, Major Clausen was the force commander leading a strike force of twenty aircraft against a heavily defended railyard, located thirty three miles northeast of Hanoi. In spite of extremely adverse weather, intense antiaircraft fire and a barrage of fourteen surface to air missiles, Major Clausen led his force on the attack, resulting in the destruction of numerous pieces of rolling stock and severe damage inflicted to the railyard. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Major Clausen has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Award citation provided by George Clausen, received 12 Apr 2010.)

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Having arrived in the 34 TFS in August 1967, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flew his first combat mission today. As instructed by his wife's uncles when he left the States, he smoked a cigar to celebrate the completion of the mission.

Maj Kenneth W. Mays, also in the 34th, was Dickson's roommate during their stay at Korat. "... I too had to absorb some of the smoke." (Ken Mays, e-mail, Tuesday, May 19, 2009.)

Starting with this first cigar, Dickson began the practice of annotating the back of the cigar band with the mission number, the date, and the name of his target and mailed them in letters to his wife, Carolyn. She saved the bands displaying them on a board as she received them, which formed a unique record of her husband's 100-mission combat tour. (phone interview with Dickson's cousin, Charlie Weaver, Winston-Salem, NC & letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 2 Sep 67.)

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 28 August - 17 September 1967.*

### 04-Sep-67

5221

F-105s teamed with A-1 Firefly FACs from the 602 FS to attack a storage in Laos. "... A storage area on Route 65, 5 KM south of 6/65 intersections, was attacked, and 8 F-105/F-4 aircraft FAC'd against the same target. One hundred percent target coverage attained."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his second combat mission today. It was over Mu Gia Pass and southern Laos.

*56 ACW Weekly Activities Reports, 26 June - 24 Sept 1967, pg 11, AFHRA Call # KWG-56-SU-RE-W, IRIS # 451171 & letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 4 Sep 67.*

### 05-Sep-67

4744

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, at Korat flew their 40th mission over North Vietnam.

"Tues - Was on the afternoon strike force, but the Weasel flight was cancelled and the "D"s went to Pack 1 since the weather was bad in 6.

"However, we flew a R.R. [Ryan's Raider] support to [Pack] 5 for #40. The flight was bad news all the way. The A/C was in bad shape, we were joined with the tanker 80 miles south of our ARCT, the ECM gear was unreliable, and the weather was marginal. The weather was not very good in the target area, and two SAM sites were up, so I sent the Raiders to their alternate in Pack 1."

Also on this day, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 3rd combat mission. His target was some trucks 30 nautical miles north of the DMZ in RP-1.

*Bob Dorrrough's Combat Diary & Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 5 Sep 67.*

### 08-Sep-67

5834

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his fourth combat mission into North Vietnam.

*Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 8 Sep 67.*

### 10-Sep-67

5835

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his fifth combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was in Mu Gia Pass and southern Laos.

*Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 10 Sep 67.*

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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**13-Sep-67**

5836

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 6th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was in Mu Gia Pass and Dong Hoi in RP-1.

*Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 13 Sep 67.*

**15-Sep-67**

2180

Air Force planes struck four targets along the Kep-Thai Nguyen rail line (RR 9) in RP-6A. The line was closed by today's strikes due to the interdiction of the approaches to both Lang Lau bridges. Today was the only day during the 21-day period between 28 August and 17 September that the rail line was closed to traffic.

The Lang Lau railroad bridge (BE 616-00524) at 21-33-06N and 105-53-43E, struck earlier on 31 August, was struck again on 15 September when BDA photos showed the bridge was unserviceable.

The Lang Lau bypass bridge (BE 616-03606) at 21-33-03N and 105-53-57E had been struck on 31 August when KA 71 film showed the bridge remained serviceable. It was struck again on 15 September when BDA film showed the bridge was still serviceable but the approaches had been cut.

The Hung Vi railroad yard (BD 616-M9173) at 21-27-50N and 106-13-05E, struck on 2 September when pilots reported the yard was interdicted, was struck again on 15 September but there was no BDA.

The Quang Hien railroad causeway (BE 616-G0749) at 21-25-47N and 106-17-57E was struck for the second time in September but BDA showed it still serviceable.

In a publicity release that included photographs and captions, the Air Force announced "Explosions Cover Bridges North of Hanoi".

"A maze of bomb smoke covers the Lang Lau railroad bridge, following an F-105 Thunderchief strike on the bridge September 15. The 355 TFW pilots destroyed the structure, 36 miles north of Hanoi. Bombs can also be seen impacting on a nearby highway bridge, which was heavily damaged." The Takhli Times published this same photo and caption in its issue of Friday, Sept 29, 1967.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 7th mission into North Vietnam today. It was his first mission into Route Pack 6 and his target was a railroad bridge. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 15 Sep 67.)

*PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 28 August - 17 September 1967 & photographs VA002788 & VA002784, Douglas Pike Photograph Collection, The Vietnam Archive Texas Tech University.*

**16-Sep-67**

3407

Air Force pilots bombed two targets on the Kep-Thai Nguyen rail line (RR 9) in RP-6A.

The Mo Trang railroad yard (BE 616-M2142) at 21-31-03N and 106-07-15E, struck earlier on 2 September, was again struck on 16 September when pilots reported interdicting the yard. It was attacked again on 17 September.

The Mo Trang railroad bridge (BE 616-G0522) at 21-30-30N and 106-07-50E, also struck earlier on 2 September, was struck again on 16 September with ordnance impacting the bridge.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 8th combat mission today against a railroad yard north of Hanoi. It was his 2nd mission into Pack 6.

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*PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 28 August - 17 September 1967 & Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 16 Sep 67.*

**17-Sep-67**

3409

Air Force planes bombed two targets on the Hanoi-Thai Nguyen rail line (RR 5) in RP-6A.

The Ha Gia railroad siding (BE 616-01693) at 21-18-50N and 105-52-35E, struck on 1 September, was struck again on 17 September when strike photos showed ordnance near the center of the yard.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, was one of the pilots attacking the Ha Gia siding 16 NM north of Hanoi. It was his 9th combat mission and his 3rd into Pack 6.

The Ha Gia railroad bridge (BE 616-00223) at 21-19-36N and 105-52-40E, previously struck on 15 September, was struck again on 17 September with the pilots reporting their bombs hitting the center of the bridge.

*PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 28 August - 17 September 1967 & Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 17 Sep 67.*

**18-Sep-67**

3412

Due to generally poor weather during the 13-day period 18 to 30 September, Air Force strike sorties managed to penetrate the northern areas of North Vietnam on only 5 days.

On 18 September, three scattered cloud layers in RP-5 and RP-6 prevented strike flights from acquiring primary targets; however, these missions were successful against alternate targets.

During the period 18 - 30 September, Air Force and Navy planes flew a total of 2,696 Rolling Thunder sorties over North Vietnam, 2,120 of which (79%) were USAF missions.

On 18 September, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 10th combat mission against the railroad at Kep. It was his 4th mission into RP-6. His post-mission cigar band described the mission in one word - "Rough!".

Also on this day, 1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 15th combat mission into North Vietnam. "Don't remember details."

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

**21-Sep-67**

6563

In a published order, Maj George G. Clausen, 34 TFS commander, designated 29 squadron pilots as Combat Ready in the F-105. The same pilots were listed in a separate order as qualified to be Flight/Element Leaders in F-105s. The pilots were:

Maj Almer L. Barner, Jr.	Capt Douglas A. Beyer
Maj Charles E. Bishop	Capt Robert M. Crane
Maj William M. Blakeslee	Capt Hugh W. Davis
Maj George G. Clausen	Capt Nicholas J. Donelson
Maj James E. Daniel, Jr.	Capt Robert M. Elliot
Maj David C. Dickson, Jr.	Capt George W. Hamlin IV
Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr.	Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe
Maj Roderick G. Giffin	Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver
Maj David D. Igelman	Capt Irving R. LeVine
Maj William J. L. King	Capt Robert L. Martin
Maj Kenneth W. Mays	Capt Robert B. Middleton

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Maj Donald E. Odell            Capt Sam P. Morgan  
Maj Dwight E. Sullivan        Capt Harry G. Paddon III  
Maj James L. Taylor            1Lt Lee E. Hollingsworth  
Maj Raymond W. Vissotzky

*34 TFS Special Orders 45 and 46 dated 21 September 1967 provided by Larry Hoppe, May 2010.*

### 27-Sep-67

5837

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 11th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was Hoa Lac airfield west of Hanoi. It was his 5th RP-6 mission in the last five days.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Sep 67.*

### 28-Sep-67

3417

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

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

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

### 29-Sep-67

4759

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 13 TFS did not fly today.

"Fri - Weather cancelled from mission near Hanoi."

However, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. a strike pilot from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, did fly today for his 13th combat mission. His target was in Mu Gia Pass in RP-1, the second day in a row he flew in this southern region of North Vietnam.

*Bob Dorrrough's Combat Diary & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 29 Sep 67.*

### 30-Sep-67

1431

Eleven F-105s from the 388 TFW bombed the Dap Cau railroad bridge (JCS 16) (BE 616-0023) on the Northeast Rail Line (RR 2) at coordinates 21-12-15N and 106-05-42E in RP-6A, North Vietnam. Strike photos showed bombs hitting the bridge and electrical transmission lines falling in the water near the bridge. However, photography from 26 September revealed a span removed at that location, which may have minimized damage to the bridge. The bridge was bombed again on 3 October.

One of the pilots on this strike may have been Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner from the 34 TFS. On 20 May 1968, under 7 Air Force SO G-1508, he was awarded a Silver Star for a mission he flew on 30 September 1967.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., also from the 34 TFS, flew another mission into the southern region of North Vietnam. On his 14th combat mission his target was a river bridge south of Mu Gia Pass. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 30 Sep 67.)

*PACAF briefing to CINCPAC for the period 18 - 30 September 1967 & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & 34 TFS history, USAF microfilm NO584, frame 1393.*

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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02-Oct-67

849

Strikes by F-105s from the 388 TFW damaged a highway bridge 80 miles west-north-west of Vinh, North Vietnam.

Also, today, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 15th combat mission, his sixth into Pack 6, against a target 8 nautical miles NE of Hanoi.

When he completed the PACAF Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Phillipines, Capt Jacob C. Shuler traveled to Bangkok, Thailand, on 1 October 1967. He spent the night in Room A-7 of the Chao Phya hotel in Bangkok then arrived at Korat where he was assigned to the 34 TFS. (Jake Shuler e-mail 17 May 2010 and hotel receipt.)

*Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967, pg 3 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar box dated 2 Oct 67.*

03-Oct-67

850

F-105s from the 388 TFW "heavily damaged the Dap Cau railroad and highway bridge (JCS 16), 20 miles northeast of Hanoi. Pilots also damaged at least three anti-aircraft sites near the bridge." The Rolling Thunder mission was RT56A-153 and the coordinates of the target were 21-12-15N 106-05-42E.

The 388 TFW also struck the Dap Cau bypass bridge one mile south of JCS 16 where one F-105D was lost and its pilot, Maj Robert W. Barnett from the 469 TFS, was captured.

1Lt Earl J. Henderson was a 469 TFS pilot in Bob Barnett's flight. It was his 19th combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Dap Cau Railroad Bridge 15 miles NNE of Hanoi  
"Armament: 6x750 .01.

"Never made it to target. Lead aircraft hit by SAM one minute prior to target. Jettisoned everything and turned toward water with him. He bailed out about 1 mile inland. During RESCAP, two MiG-21s made two passes on me. Chased them for 30 miles, fired out of range, no hits."

Lt Henderson received the Silver Star for this mission. "... Lieutenant Henderson was a member of a flight of F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned to attack a target deep in hostile territory. When the lead aircraft in his flight was shot down, he circled the area, giving cover for his downed flight leader. During the rescue operation, he dodged a surface-to-air missile and evaded two attacks by MiG aircraft. Then by maneuvering his aircraft, he gained the advantage and successfully chased the MiGs out of the area and thus prevented their interference in the rescue operation. ..."

Pilots from the 34 TFS participating in the Dap Cau bridge strike were Maj Dwight E. Sullivan, Maj Kenneth W. Mays, Capt Robert B. Middleton flying F-105D 62-4283, Capt Robert M. Crane flying F-105D 62-4359, and Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying his 16th combat mission and his 7th in Route Pack 6. Dickson struck a target 8 nautical miles NE of Hanoi. He noted on the band of his post-mission cigar, "Rough. B. Barnett down". Dickson had known Barnett during their assignment to Perrin AFB, TX. (Nat'l Archive records & 20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 3 Oct 67.)

Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS was awarded an Distinguished Flying Cross (5 OLC) for extraordinary achievement for a mission he flew this day. "... Maj Britt led a flight on a flak suppression mission in support of a major strike on a high priority military target. Major Britt

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overcame four SA-2 missiles and heavy hostile fire to personally destroy an active firing site. ..." (Citation to Accompany the Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (Fifth Oak Leaf Cluster) (Posthumous) to Aquilla F. Britt provided by his son Bryan Britt.)

Lt Col Richard F. B. Gimmi, Jr. and Capt Steven W. Long, Jr., both also from the 469 TFS, flew a mission against a nearby target at 21-09N and 106-46E. Gimmi flew F-105F 63-8268 and Capt Long flew F-105D 62-4387 on this Rolling Thunder RT56A-153 mission. (Nat'l Archives camera records)

*Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967, pg 3 & National Archives gun camera records, Archive Control No. NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-42649B & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & Earl Henderson, combat diary and award citation.*

**04-Oct-67**

851

From Korat, "F-105 Thunderchief pilots from the 388 TFW participated in strikes against four railyards, (the Ha Gia) railroad and highway bridge, and (the Lang Son bypass) railroad bridge on the main Hanoi to Red China supply line. Twenty-five pieces of rolling stock were destroyed or damaged at a trans-shipment point near the Kep railroad yards. Bombs impacted directly on the Ha Gia railroad and highway bridge, 20 miles north of Hanoi and destroyed the structure.

"Participating in the Ha Gia strike were Lt Col Harry W. Schurr [commander of the 469 TFS] and double MiG-killer 1Lt David B. Waldrop [from the 34 TFS]."

Also from the 34 TFS, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flew his 17th combat mission, his 8th in RP-6, against the Ha Gia railroad bridge. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 4 Oct 67.)

Lt Col Richard F. B. Gimmi, Jr., director of the 388 TFW command post but flying with the 469 TFS flew his 100th mission in F-105D 62-4242, which he had named "My Bitt", his nickname for his wife Marie. He remained at Korat and flew another 15 missions to complete the 1-year tour required by his wing staff position. (Dick Gimmi, phone message, 10 Nov 09)

Capt Irving E. LeVine from the 34 TFS received a Distinguished Flying Cross for the mission he flew this day. "Captain Irving E. LeVine distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement in aerial flight as an F-105 Pilot over North Vietnam on 4 October 1967. On that date, Capt LeVine attacked a vital military target in a heavily defended area in North Vietnam. Despite numerous surface-to-air missiles, intense antiaircraft fire, and hostile aircraft, Captain LeVine pressed the attack and dropped his ordnance directly on the target. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain LeVine reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Citation provided by Irv Levine in letter received 16 April 2010.)

Maj Rudolph E. Fiedor from the 388 TFW, flying F-105D 61-0124 through anti-aircraft fire and flak, struck the Lang Son railroad yard at coordinates 21-49-28N, 106-46-40E. In a letter to MiG Sweep, Maj Fiedor's son, Eric Fiedor, described his father's last mission. "Around his 40th mission near the China border his plane was hit and only an angel, as he told me, saved him. His spinal cord was splintered and (it) was his last flight. He was a big man from Pennsylvania/graduate of ROTC at Mississippi State University/fought in the Korean war/ trained Japanese pilots/ and retired in 1972."

From the 355 TFW out of Takhli, Capt James S. Aldrich from the 333 TFS, flying F-105D 62-4367, struck the Kep railroad yard at coordinates 21-24-57N 106-17-46E. His strike camera film showed his bombs impacting on the target and flak bursts. Pilots from the 357 TFS also bombed the Kep railroad yard. The 4 October strike force noted severe damage from the prior strike flights. The railroad yard appeared unserviceable. Approximately 25 pieces of rolling stock in the shipment yard were destroyed as well as the yard itself being damaged. Later flights noted impacts at the NE and



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SW choke points.

*Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967, pg 3 & National Archives strike and gun camera film records, Archive Control No. NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-42718A & MiG Sweep, Issue 119, Fall 2002, pg 19.*

**07-Oct-67**

1303

The 388 TFW struck the Kep railroad yard and the Cu Van POL storage area in North Vietnam.

The Kep Railroad yards were targets BE 616-01371, BE 616-01931, and BE 616-01932 (ART 1270) on the Northeast rail line (RR 2) at coordinates 21-24-48N and 106-17-36E in RP-6A.

Maj Wayne E. Fullam, "Pistol 01" from the 469 TFS was shot down on the Kep rail yard strike. He was KIA. Also downed on the Kep mission was the Wild Weasel crew of Capt Joseph C. Howard and EWO Capt George L. Shamblee, "Warhawk 01" from the 44 TFS. Both were rescued but had broken legs.

The Cu Van POL storage area was target BE 616-01747 at coordinates 21-37-40N and 105-43-47E.

The wing's F-105s hit the Cu Van POL complex "... leaving it in flames with smoke billowing more than 5,000 feet in the air." Maj Donald W. Revers from the 34 TFS was mission commander. A 388 TFW press release described the mission. "'Today was a relatively easy mission. I feel that we really did a good job on this one. I feel the force did a tremendous job.' This is how the mission commander, Major Donald W. Revers, 34th TFS, described the attack against the Cu Van petroleum products storage area in North Vietnam by F-105 Thunderchiefs of the 388 TFW.

"He went on to say, 'Upon egress into the target, we had numerous MiG warnings, which posed no immediate threat to the strike force. The weather was a prime factor today. On ingress into the target, we were on top of an overcast until about four minutes of the target. After breaking through the undercast, the visibility was down to a couple of miles. Consequently target acquisition was very poor. I didn't notice too much antiaircraft activity as I rolled into the target. As my bombs exploded on the target I noticed numerous secondary explosions and fireballs coming out of the target area. As I egressed from the target area, I had a chance to look back and noticed black, billowing smoke coming out of the petroleum area. The column was raising to about 1000 feet and there were numerous fire balls in the area. This is the first time this target has been hit. On egress from the target, we had little SAM activity. We observed one launching and explode quite a ways from the target area. It did not affect the force in general.'

"Major George G. Clausen, commander of the 34th TFS, was also on the mission against the petroleum storage area. 'On our way up today, we were quite a bit hampered by weather. The visibility was rather poor and most of our route was undercast. However, we were able to acquire the target and roll into it. We were the lead flight in and the bombs observed as we pulled off looked like they had several secondary explosions and had done quite a bit of damage. The other flights following us confirmed this and reported other numerous secondary explosions. I think all-in-all today we had a real good mission. The defenses were actually very light today. This is something that has been unusual in the past. Normally we have been met by intense antiaircraft fire. However, today was a relatively easy mission. We saw numerous fireballs and dense black and grey smoke pouring out of the target after coming off. We also noted some possibility in the distance of some SAMs being launched. However, they were not launched against our force. They were observed bursting some distance away. The smoke was probably as high as 1500 feet above the target area. It's difficult to say how large the fireballs were especially at the speed coming off the target and looking back. However, I'd say the fireballs were 3 - 400 feet in diameter. I feel that this is one that we've really done a good job on.' " (388 TFW pilot interviews, undated draft, via e-mail from Don Revers, 30 March 2010)

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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Maj Revers was awarded the Silver Star. "Major Donald W. Revers distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force over North Vietnam on 7 October 1967. On that date, Major Revers was the force commander of twenty-four aircraft ordered to strike a heavily defended storage facility located seven miles northwest of Thai Nguyen. In spite of hostile aircraft, severe weather conditions, and intense anti-aircraft fire, Major Revers led his force through a highly successful attack and destroyed the storage facility. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Major Revers has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Award Citation via e-mail 30 March 2010.)

Another pilot on the Cu Van strike was Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS. It was his 18th combat mission and 9th mission into Route Pack 6. His target was 16 nautical miles from Hanoi. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band undated but with "CU Wan" note.)

"Congratulations were received by the 388 TFW from Gen. William Momyer [7 Air Force Commander] for a highly successful strike ... on the Cu Van POL products storage area in North Vietnam. 'I wish to add my own note of congratulations for the outstanding success in the execution of this mission,' wrote General Momyer. 'The professional manner in which the mission was carried out reflects outstandingly on the skill of all involved. Pass my 'well done' to all.' "

Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS was awarded an Air Medal (19 OLC) for meritorious achievement for a mission he flew on this day. "... Major Britt led a flight of four aircraft assigned to strike a high priority military target. Major Britt placed his bombs directly on the target area, causing an immediate secondary explosion and fire. ... " (Citation to Accompany the Award of the Air Medal (Nineteenth Oak Leaf Cluster) (Posthumous) to Aquilla F. Britt provided by his son Bryan Britt.)

Five days after arriving at Korat and joining the 34 TFS, Capt Jacob C. Shuler flew his first combat mission in F-105D 62-4269. He was number 2 in the two-ship "Cleveland" flight led by Capt Vernon D. Ellis, Capt Shuler's RTU classmate, who flew 61-0132. They took off at 15:25 against the target at location 17-42N and 105-46E in RP-1. "Flew to Channel 77 and turned toward target, which was the Mu Gia Pass just across border from Laos. Many BANDIT calls on guard channel from up North and hear that someone is down. Advised by Cricket that target is IFR and turned over to Bromo for a join up with Waco Flight for a Combat Sky Spot. We had just joined up at release point and all of us dropped 6 x 750#, two with 24-hr TDs. Return to field is routine and I finally caught up with the A/C. Before entering traffic, Vern has me practice some pod formation and 'roll-ins' as #2. Learned a lot! Pattern smooth and felt good. Problems [with] APR 25 malfunction and excess moisture from air conditioner. Found out later that Joe Howard (my UPT Classmate, Class 64-D, Webb AFB), leading Iron Hand flight, was hit by MiG-21s (6) and punched out over water near Da Nang. He was hit over 'the Wart'. The gaggle pressed on in and the mission commander Maj Fullam is hit by 85 over target and punched out over Little Thud Ridge. Two other birds are on ground at Da Nang with battle damage. They were part of Iron Hand flight." The mission lasted 1.7 hours. The flight's spare was Capt Robert M. Crane in 60-0512. (Jake Shuler's combat mission spreadsheet and "Mission #1 Narrative" via e-mail 28 July 2010.)

Also today, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., flying with the 34 TFS, flew his first combat mission as "Hartford 02". He dropped bombs in the Barrel Roll region of Northern Laos. "Troop artillery concentration. 100% in target area." He then flew a weather recce into RP-3.

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1756 & 388 TFW history Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583 frame 1697 & Rufus Dye, Mission History log.*

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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**08-Oct-67**

4767

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 44 TFS, 388 TFW, flew their 63rd mission over North Vietnam.

"Sun - #63. Flew the morning gaggle on Thai Nguyen bridge & rail strike (JCS 18.33). Many MiGs, but no close calls. A weather deck at 8 - 9,000' was just right for them. They would get a GCI vector to our 6 o'clock, then pop up though the clouds. Luckily, we saw them every time, and they would duck back below. Put down one site with Shrikes. Was with Lt Col McInerney. An outstanding pilot."

Also striking the Thai Nguyen railroad bridge was Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS. It was his 19th combat mission to North Vietnam and his 10th to Pack 6.

*Bob Dorrrough's Combat Diary & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 8 Oct 67*

**09-Oct-67**

1435

The 388 TFW struck the Ha Gia highway bridge (JCS 18.36) (BE 616-0074) at coordinates 21-19-40N and 105-52-28E in RP-6A, North Vietnam.

In an afternoon attack against the Quang Hien RR Causeway, Maj James Arlen Clements from the 469 TFS was shot down by a MiG-21 and captured. He spent the rest of the war as a POW.

Also today, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 20th mission into North Vietnam and his 11th into Pack 6. He was in an Iron Hand flight supporting a strike on the Kep causeway. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 9 Oct 67.)

Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for a mission he flew this day. "... Major Britt was a member of a flight of four F-105s assigned to strike a high priority military target. Major Britt distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while flying through missile-firing MiGs and heavy flak to place his bombs on the assigned target. ..."

Lt Col Richard F.B. Gimmi, Jr., the Director of the 388 TFW Tactical Unit Operations Center (TUOC or Command Post), flew a mission against a causeway west of Hanoi for which he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (2nd OLC). "Lieutenant Colonel Richard F. B. Gimmi, Jr. distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 Thunderchief pilot over North Vietnam on 9 October 1967. On that date, Colonel Gimmi was a member of a flight of four F-105s assigned to strike a vital railroad causeway deep inside North Vietnam. Colonel Gimmi distinguished himself by heroism while flying through missile firing MiGs and heavy flak to place his bombs on his assigned target. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Colonel Gimmi reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Gimmi Distinguished Flying Cross (2nd OLC) award citation in "Airman. The Life of Richard F. B. Gimmi", by Russell M. Gimmi, iUniverse, Inc., pg 313.)

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & Citation to Accompany the Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross (Sixth Oak Leaf Cluster) (Posthumous) to Aquilla F. Britt provided by his son Bryan Britt..*

**11-Oct-67**

5838

In a noon takeoff, the 34 TFS commander, Maj George G. Clausen flying F-105D 59-1760, led the two-ship "Dallas" flight. "Dallas 02" was Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying his 3rd combat mission in 62-4269. "Took off at 1200 on a mission that was to take us up to CH 97 and above in order to check out a new CSS system. All we had was three tanks and two AIM-9s. Refueled at OA and I really did poorly. Would you believe 4 disconnects? I was flying with Maj Clausen. When we got to CH 97, we could not get radio contact with Wager so we were "PANTS" and RTBed after receiving Route 7

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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starting at the Fishes Mouth. On the way back we practiced some pod formations and roll ins. We split up and got GCI/GCAs. No sterling performance by me. I had experienced difficulty in RTU mastering refueling with the centerline tank configuration and it had been at least seven months since I had refueled with one. ... Thankfully it was a short lived problem. Logged 2+20." Maj William L. King, Jr. was the flight's spare in 61-0206.

The "new CSS system" (Combat Sky Spot) was the TSQ-81 radar station being installed in a mountain top in Laos, named Lima Site 85, the same location as the Channel 97 TACAN transmitter. The radar station's call sign was "Wager Control". It was not yet operational. The missions they were to control were called "Commando Club".

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also from the 34 TFS attacked a target at Dong Hoi in RP-1, North Vietnam. It was his 21st combat mission.

*Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet and "Mission #3 Narrative" via e-mail 28 July 2010 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 11 Oct 67.*

#### 12-Oct-67

5839

For his 22nd combat mission, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, attacked a truck park on his second visit in two days to Dong Hoi in RP-1, North Vietnam.

Also today, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. flew his 4th combat mission as "Larado 02". He was scheduled to a target in the Barrel Roll region of Laos. "Divert to Udorn due WX."

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 12 Oct 67 & Rufus Dye Mission History log..*

#### 13-Oct-67

1436

On this Friday the 13th, the 388 TFW struck Kep Airfield (JCS 9.1) (616-8438) at coordinates 21-23-37N and 106-16-05E in RP-6A, North Vietnam. They also attacked the Dap Cau highway bridge.

A draft news release from the 388 TFW described the mission against Kep. "Things went pretty good. It was just one of those lucky days.' This was the assessment of a 388 TFW strike against the Kep MiG airfield, North Vietnam, given by Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe, 34 TFS. Capt Hoppe was the mission commander for the October 13 attack." It was his 75th counter and he flew for 3.6 hours. "He went on to describe the mission. 'The target was a runway. It was difficult to find it going in because it was all overcast. For a minute, I thought I was going to have to abort the run and take the force out, but just as we got to the target, it was just on the edge of the clouds. The cloud buildup made it difficult to find the target but it made it hard for those 85-mm gunners to find us. They didn't start firing until we rolled in. There was quite a bit of flak coming down the slide. You could see the ringing off on the ground and the flak coming up. It was going off pretty much around us. The bombs looked good. They were hitting on the runway. When we got together again coming off, the flak subsided considerably. I didn't see any secondaries but I did see bombs hitting on the runway. There were a few MiG calls but we were kind of ready for them this time and they didn't bother us at all.'

"Capt Steven W. Long, Jr., 469 TFS, also participated in the Kep strike. He said, 'We were coming in over a cloud bank and the target was partially hidden. We were the second flight in. We were going against nearby flak sites. However, they were under the cloud banks themselves and by the time we were diving, the 85s were going off so bad that we dropped on the airfield itself rather than going across and getting any lower. I didn't see any bombs going off myself, but the two bomber flights had good runs.'

"Flight leader, Capt Hal P. Henning, 469 TFS, described the mission. 'My particular target was the

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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runway itself. As I rolled in, I saw the flight ahead of me already bombed and I could see their bombs going off on the runway. There was quite a lot of flak and we got out fast after bombing. I don't know, but looking back it appeared that my flight's bombs had also hit on the runway. There were a few MiG calls but none of them seemed to be in our area.'

"Another flight leader, Maj Floyd E. 'Skeet' Heinzig, 34 TFS, led his flight against gun sites near Kep Airfield. 'It was a very good mission', the major said, 'we flew it exactly as fragged. On the way in, the weather was pretty bad over the coast line of North Vietnam, pretty solid undercast. However, when we got to within one minute of the target, the airfield was wide open. We wound up with just about a perfect roll-in. I got one each 85-mm site with secondaries coming out of it. I didn't get an opportunity to see the bombs hitting on the runway. It looks like all the bombs on the gun emplacements did a real fine job.' Describing the secondary explosions, the major went on to say, 'Coming out of the 85 sites, there were plumes of orange flames trailing grey smoke coming above it. The site had definitely been firing before that by the distinctive black rings on the ground. After the fireballs and smoke coming out of it, I didn't see any more firing from that site. I didn't have any opportunity to look for any MiGs on the field as my target was to the north of the airfield.'

"Other pilots participating in the Kep strike were Maj Dalton L. 'Lefty' Leftwich, Fort Walton Beach, Fla.; Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver, Albuquerque, NM; and Capt Douglas A. Beyer, Seguin, Tex, all of the 34 TFS. Also, Lt Col William C. Decker, Accord, Tex; Major Leslie J. Hauer, Detroit, Mich; Capt Peter B. Lane, Manasquan, NJ; Capt Robert A. Zang, Verona, Mo; Capt Russell E. Temperley, Newton Centre, Mass; and 1Lt Earl J. Henderson, Houston, Tex. [all from the 469 TFS]" (Draft News Release - 388 TFW - provided by Larry Hoppe, May 2010.)

For 1Lt Earl J. Henderson, the attack on Kep Airfield was his 28th combat mission.

"Target: Kep airfield.  
"Armament: 6x750 .025

"Kep Airfield on Friday 13th. YGBSM! Overcast layer almost all the way. Split-S roll-in, 60-degree dive angle really hairy. Had pipper right on runway. Flak was really light for Kep. Tore panel loose on outboard pylon during flight."

Also today, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 23rd combat mission into North Vietnam, his 12th to Route Pack 6. His target was the Bac Ninh railroad bridge and he encountered AAA.

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1756 & 355 TFW history, microfilm NO463 frames 1566 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 13 Oct 67 & Earl Henderson, combat diary & Larry Hoppe AF Form 5.*

#### 14-Oct-67

1437

The "Xom Trai and Hoa Loan boatyards, 28 and 32 miles west-northwest of Hanoi, were bombed for the first time by USAF F-4 and F-105 aircraft."

F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Hoa Loan boat yard.

On his 24th combat mission, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS attacked the Vinh Tho boat yard, his 13th mission to Route Pack 6.

Also from the 34 TFS, Capt David L. Burney flying F-105D 60-0464 led "Laredo" flight, a two-ship armed reconnaissance into the lower route packs in North Vietnam. Capt Jacob C. Shuler was "Laredo 02" flying 61-0161 on his 4th combat mission. Their target locations were:

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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Primary: 20-19N and 104-01E  
Secondary: 19-19N and 103-29E  
Tertiary: 17-01N and 106-58E

"Took off at 0700 with Dave Burney in the lead again, his 99th mission. Envied him all the way. Refueled on OA 70. One disconnect. Dave said I was pushing him. Will try his technique next time. We were diverted from our primary target due to weather by Cricket and sent to the mouth of fish to contact Firefly 13 and 14. They had just hit a truck park and gotten one secondary explosion. We rolled in and Dave got a road cut. I accidentally cut the stab-aug off on the way down the slide and pickled. During the recovery, I experienced a slight porpoise but no problems. The FAC said I got one secondary explosion and one secondary road cut. To be honest, my bombs landed short of where I aimed. Russ Temperley had joined up with us [Capt Russell Edwin Temperley, 469 TFS]. He had been an unused airborne spare for the gaggle. RTB was normal. Many flights returning from strike and rushed GCI/GCA. I could not get radio contact with GCA final and completed a TACAN approach. During penetration, I exhibited some poor instrument techniques."

*Chronology of Seventh Air Force 1 July 1967 - 30 June 1968, pg 5 & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1756 & Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet and "Mission #4 Narrative" via e-mail 2 July 10.*

### 18-Oct-67

5840

At 12:50, the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, launched the two-ship "Cleveland" flight against a target in Mu Gia Pass at coordinates 17-26N and 105-44E in RP-1, North Vietnam. The flight lineup was:

- #1 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying F-105D 61-0194 on his 25th combat mission.
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 60-0445 on his 5th combat mission.

"... This was a non-refueler so we knew that we would be skosh on fuel. We went direct to CH 77 and Cricket turned us over to Nail 65. He was in an O-1 and said he had a creek crossing that he wanted us to hit. I picked him up first but then flew directly over him. We swung back to the right and David picked him up and told him to fire the W.P. I spotted the W. P. marker and said so. Dave thought I had acquired the target and said to go ahead and roll in on it. The FAC said to aim about 100 meters to the east and that is about where I hit. ... The FAC told Dave to hit further east but he was already committed and hit slightly west so we didn't do much good. RTB was uneventful."

Their mission lasted 1.7 hours.

*Jake Shuler mission spreadsheet and "Mission #5 Narrative" via e-mail 28 July 2010 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 18 Oct 67.*

### 19-Oct-67

5841

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 26th combat mission. He dropped his bombs on Route 6 in the Barrel Roll region of northern Laos. He must have crossed the border into North Vietnam since this mission was a "counter".

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 19 Oct 67.*

### 26-Oct-67

3444

Air Force planes bombed three targets along the Northwest Rail Line (RR 1) in RP-6A.

They hit a rail segment at 21-34N and 105-00E. "Pilots estimated 10 rail interdictions and approximately 2,000 feet of rail destroyed."

They struck the Ga Am Thuong railroad yard (BE 616-G0316) at 21-33-35N and 105-00-33E. Pilots

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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estimated two rail cuts and 300 feet of track interdicted.

And they bombed the Ga Am Thuong railroad yard (BE 616-G0316) at 21-33-35N and 105-00-33E. "Pilots estimated two rail cuts and estimated 300 feet of track interdicted.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 27th mission to North Vietnam, his 14th to Route Pack 6. He was in an Iron Hand flight supporting attacks northwest of Hanoi.

*Rolling Thunder Status and Analysis Report to CINCPAC for the period 16 - 31 October 1967 & Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 26 Oct 67.*

#### 27-Oct-67

3448

U.S. planes dropped MK-36 destructor mines on both sides of the Paul Doumer bridge (JCS 12) to further harass repair crews. "An Asian business man who visited Hanoi recently has reported that 2 spans of the bridge are down. He stated that ferries carrying 20 cars and 40 to 50 passengers are in operation. The crossing time is 45 minutes; however, the source was forced to wait 3 hours in order to cross the river."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 28th mission, his 15th to Pack 6. He struck a railroad bridge in downtown Hanoi.

*Rolling Thunder Status and Analysis Report to CINCPAC for the period 16 - 31 October 1967 & Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Oct 67.*

#### 28-Oct-67

179

For the second day in a row, F-105s struck the Hanoi railroad and highway bridge, in RP-6A, North Vietnam. As they did on Friday, "F-105s of the 355 TFW teamed (again on Saturday) with F-105s of the 388 TFW in a combined effort to insure success on the Canal des Rapides Bridge (JCS 13) near Hanoi, North Vietnam. The 388th went ahead of the 355th by mere seconds, its entire force laden with flak suppression ordnance (CBUs). This cleared the way for an unhampered bomb run by the 355th." (355 TFW Outstanding Achievements.)

North Vietnamese SAM sites countered the attack by barrage firing more than 10 SAMs "... using track-on-jam tactics." ("The -ology War: Technology and Ideology in the Vietnamese Defense of Hanoi", 1967, Merle L. Pribbenow II, in The Journal of Military History, Jan 2003, pg 194.)

Post-strike coverage on 28 October disclosed that one span was destroyed, one span dropped into the canal, and a third span was damaged. F-105s from the 355 TFW had destroyed the bypass bridge on 22 August and it still was unserviceable. (Rolling Thunder Status and Analysis Report to CINCPAC for the period 16 - 31 October 1967.)

Beginning at 0050Z, four flights of 355 TFW F-105Ds attacked the bridge. Fifteen planes, four F-105Ds in each of "Shark", "Marlin, and "Wolf" flights, and three F-105Ds in "Cheetah" flight, dropped a total of 30 M-118s on the bridge.

The flights saw impacts near the center of the bridge and also on the southwest end of the bridge with black smoke coming from some of the impacts.

The F-105s encountered heavy AAA and numerous SAMs. However, the pilots acknowledged that excellent CBU flak site coverage provided by the 388 TFW decreased AAA response noticeably from yesterday's strike on the same target. The majority of flak came from south of Hanoi and the Gia Lam airfield. The first flight on the target noticed no flak until pull-off and egress where they encountered moderate, accurate 37/57-mm AAA.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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The following flights received heavy, accurate barrage, predominately 85-mm from roll-in through pull-off, and primarily moderate to heavy 37/57-mm bursting at aircraft altitudes of 7,000 to 8,000 feet on egress south of Hanoi. The last flight on the target started receiving 85-mm AAA five nautical miles on ingress to the target but it did not become intense until roll-in. The flak continued through pull-off. Numerous 37-mm AAA sites fired along the east-west road.

Seven SAMs were launched during the flights' ingress from 20-44N and 106-20E to the target while the F-105s were at 10,000 to 12,000 feet altitude and heading 344 degrees. Pilots could not see the SAMs until they were within 2,000 to 3,000 feet of them due to heavy haze in the area. The flights saw one SAM from L-17 (VN 003) pass approximately 2,000 feet below them. Thirty seconds later, the force saw two SAMs from the vicinity of L-27 (VN 159) or L-5 (VN 19) and four from the area of L-9 (VN 14). The SAMs from L-27 or L-5 passed 2,000 feet below the force. The four from L-9 passed through the force. Three of these SAMs were seen to detonate in the vicinity of 20-45N and 105-56E, at 14,000 to 17,000 feet. Detonations were one mile behind the flights. On egress, at least two SAMs were seen launching from L-5 (VN 19). These two SAMs detonated at approximately 300 feet in the vicinity of 21-07N and 105-52E. All missiles appeared to be unguided.

At 0050Z, while pulling off the target at 6,000 feet, heading 060 degrees, 550 knots, 37/57-mm AAA hit "Shark Lead", the force commander, Lt Col Thomas H. Kirk, Jr., the 357 TFS Commander flying F-105D 61-0169. The AAA punched a three by four foot hole in the aft fuselage and the engine became engulfed in flame. The hit blew off part of the panel behind the cockpit. The cockpit was smoking when the pilot ejected at approximately 20-50N and 105-47E. The aircraft impacted at approximately 20-50N and 105-46E. The pilot had a good chute and beeper but no voice contact made. (355 TFW JOPREP JIFFY DOI ??? OPREP-4/1?? in USAF microfilm NO463, frame 1393.)

Lt Col Kirk became a POW and was awarded the Air Force Cross. Maj James E. Light, 357 TFS operations officer, replaced Lt Col Kirk as commander of the 357 TFS.

Other 357 TFS pilots flying against the bridge who received the Silver Star were Capt Francis T. Torikai, Capt George A. Miklos, Lt Col Obadiah A. Dugan (1 OLC), and Maj Robert T. Cavanagh.

An F-105D pilot also from the 357 TFS at Takhli was Capt Ronald A. Venturini, Shark 4, flying 61-0109. His gun camera footage showed strafing of the bridge at coordinates 21-04-35N 105-54-43E.

F-105D pilots from the 469 TFS at Korat hitting the same target coordinates were Maj Robert M. Clark in 61-0055 and Navy exchange officer Lt James Karg flying 60-0458. Other 469 TFS pilots who struck the bridge at coordinates 21-04-55N 105-54-46E were Capt Steven W. Long, Jr. in 62-4283, Maj Eugene D. Main flying 62-4359, Capt Hal P. Henning in 59-1750, and Maj Roger P. Scheer in 61-0219.

Maj Dalton L. Leftwich from the 34 TFS at Korat flew F-105D 62-4248.

Three other F-105D pilots from the 34 TFS in "Crossbow" flight also struck the bridge. The flight took off at 0605 and the mission lasted 3 hours 5 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Capt Sam P. Morgan in 62-4270
- #2 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. in 59-1760, on his 29th combat mission
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong in 60-0488
- #4 - Maj Larry R. Klinestiver who aborted on tanker for fuel problems.

This was Maj Armstrong's 14th combat mission into North Vietnam. "This was the hairiest of them all so far. The target was the railroad bridge over the Canal des Rapides [JCS 13], downtown Hanoi.

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## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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Korat was to put 16 birds in to drop CBUs for flak suppression and Takhli was to come in and put 3000# bombs on the bridge. We approached Hanoi from due south, 35 bombs. We started getting SAMs fired at us from the time that we were 4 minutes out until we had dropped and back to the same point. Our flight of three had to evade 7 missiles ourselves. The last four were fired at us in volley and came over and ahead of us by less than 500'. The 85-mm, & 37/57-mm coming up from the target was heavy. The film showed that we put our CBUs on the target. L/C Kirk [Lt Col Thomas Henry Kirk, POW], the Takhli mission commander, was shot down coming off the target & bailed out right in the area. My mouth was dry from all of the action until we were clear of North Vietnam. Nobody else got knocked down." (Maj Spence M. Armstrong, combat mission log for period 5 Oct 67 - 14 Apr 68, pp 5 - 6.)

"Our wing and Takhli were both going to hit the Canal Des Rapides railroad bridge just outside of Hanoi. We were to go in first again and again carry CBU's for defense suppression and Takhli carried 3,000# bombs to knock down the bridge supports which were so hard to hit. We all flew the land route then turned Eastward to come up the East side of the Red River. On the way in our flight of three (one guy had aborted and there was not a spare available) ducked 7 SA-2s. The last one passed in front of me close enough that I thought I could see its flight control fins move.

"... We carried jamming pods which transmitted on the same frequency as the SA-2 tracking radars. We could put enough static on their scopes that they couldn't pick out the returns from our aircraft. We had some faith in the pods but sometimes one couldn't be sure so we tried to keep them in sight to see if they were guiding on us. If there were no clouds, we could easily see the swirl of dust as the SA-2 lifted off. Shortly afterwards the booster would fall off and the SA-2 would then be propelled only by a small sustainer motor which emitted a nice flame. If you could see that the missile had a profile, then it wasn't a danger to you. However, if it looked like a 'burning bowling ball' then it was wise to 'take it down'. This called for a firm forward push on the stick, pulling some negative g's, with the wings level. Keeping the wings level was important because the pods radiated in a conical downward pattern and banking would uncover their radar scopes. If the missile was guiding on you it would turn downward and you could then do a rapid pull up and outmaneuver it because of the speed it was traveling it couldn't adjust in time. If it wasn't, you eased up on the stick and let your aircraft climb back to the original altitude.

"So by the time I had done this 7 times, most of them I didn't personally see because my area of responsibility was to the East, I was exhausted. When the time came to roll in on our target, my mouth tasted like it was filled with cotton. The Takhli guys hit the bridge but their mission commander, Lt. Col. Tom Kirk, was shot down and captured.

"Besides the abort in our flight, there were several others to the result that there were other three ship flights between us and Takhli which was close behind. Before we got into the target area, I noticed a lone F-105D trying to join up with us and then visiting other three ship flights when we didn't look familiar. When we got back to Korat and had the mass debriefing, which we held after every Pack VIA mission, I asked if anyone else had noticed this lone F-105D? A voice spoke up: 'It was me. I was taking a leak and I lost my flight'. This was Francois 'Frenchy' Walsh [Maj Francis "Frank" P. Walsh, 44 TFS, flying an F-105D as #2 in a 4-ship Iron Hand flight]. He had been a C-141 pilot and was barely adequate in the F-105. He was born in France of a French mother and an American father. He came to America, as he liked to say, to avoid being drafted by the French and sent to Vietnam. Everybody got a laugh out of this since Frenchy was quite a character if not a good pilot. He would frequently lose the rest of his flight and have to egress by himself. He was lucky he wasn't picked off by an alert MiG." (Lt Gen Sam Armstrong, chapter titled, "Southeast Asia October 1967 - May 1968" in unpublished memoir, pp 11 - 12.)

355 TFW Report on Outstanding Achievements, 1 Mar 67 - 29 Feb 68, in USAF microfilm NO462 & National Archives camera records, control #s NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-42649B & NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-42718A

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# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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**29-Oct-67**

5842

The four pilots from the 34 TFS in "Crossbow" flight struck the Kinh No Motor Vehicle Repair Facility (BE 616-03241) at location 21-09N and 105-51E in RP-6A, North Vietnam. The flight took off at 09:30 and the mission lasted 2.9 hours. The flight lineup was:

#1 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying F-105D 61-0194 on his 30th combat mission, his 17th to Pack 6. "S.H."

#2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 61-0162 on his 11th combat mission

#3 - Capt Sam P. Morgan flying 61-0208

#4 - Maj Donald W. Revers flying 59-1760

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 29 Oct 67 & Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet.*

**31-Oct-67**

5843

"Vegas" flight from the 34 TFS launched at 07:40. The lineup for the 2.6-hour flight was:

#1 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying F-105D 61-0194

#2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 62-4361 on his 13th mission.

#3 - 1Lt David B. Waldrop III flying 61-0208

#4 - Capt Irving E. LeVine flying 62-4221

Spare - Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner, Jr. in 58-1159

"Flak 21-10N and 102-48E. Orbit 20-10N and 104-15E."

Also from the 34 TFS, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., flew his 31st combat mission. His bombs closed a cave and produced a secondary explosion.

*Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 31 Oct 67.*

**02-Nov-67**

5844

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 32nd combat mission, his 18th to Route Pack 6. His target was in Hanoi.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 2 Nov 67.*

**04-Nov-67**

4571

"On 4 November, a strike by eight F-105s on a troop concentration southwest of Ban Ban [in the Barrel Roll region of northern Laos] resulted in one secondary explosion with smoke to 500 feet. Strike photography also indicated approximately 200 KBA [Killed By Air]."

"Hatchet" flight from the 34 TFS took off at 06:55. The lineup was:

#1 - Maj Kenneth W. Mays flying F-105D 62-4387

#2 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying 60-0488

#3 - Maj Raymond Walter Vissotzky

#4 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 62-4221 on his 15th combat mission.

Spare - Maj David D. Igelman

"Diverted by Cricket UG 31142134 Firefly 11, 12." 19-11N and 103-24E.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., also from the 34 TFS, flew his 33rd combat mission. He struck a target in northeast Laos. "250+". Since this was a "counter" he must have crossed into North Vietnam.

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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*7 Air Force Weekly Air Intelligence Summary (WAIS), 67-46 dated 11 Nov 67, for week of 3 - 9 Nov 1967, pg 7 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 4 Nov 67 & Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet.*

### 05-Nov-67

5845

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 34th combat mission, his 19th to Route Pack 6. His target was in downtown Hanoi.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 5 Nov 67.*

### 07-Nov-67

1443

Air Force planes struck other targets along the Hanoi-Thai Nguyen Rail Line (RR 5).

The Tung Tu railroad siding (BE 616-M1892) at 21-29-30N and 105-52-59E. "Pilots reported numerous rail interdictions." "Three rail cuts were noted in KA-71 photography of the Tung Tu Railroad Siding after 388 TFW crews dropped 24 M117s." (7 Air Force Weekly Air Intelligence Summary (WAIS), 67-46 dated 11 Nov 67, for week of 3 - 9 Nov 1967, pg 4.)

The Thang Quang railroad siding (BE 616-M1836) at 21-24-34N and 105-52-51E. Pilots reported their ordnance hit the center of the yard resulting in multiple rail cuts. "A second Korat-based strike force delivered 36 M117s and 10 CBU-24s against the Thang Quang Railroad Siding N. Heavy smoke and dust precluded pilot assessment, however, multiple rail cuts were reflected on strike camera photography." (7 Air Force Weekly Air Intelligence Summary (WAIS), 67-46 dated 11 Nov 67, for week of 3 - 9 Nov 1967, pg 4.)

The 388 TFW bombed the Cot Nganh railroad siding and the Thai Nguyen railroad siding south.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS attacked the Lang Son railroad yard in Route Pack 6. It was his 35th combat mission and 20th to RP-6.

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1757 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 7 Nov 67.*

### 20-Nov-67

3107

In the afternoon, beginning at 0900Z, four flights of four F-105Ds from the 388 TFW, ("Locust", "Dallas", "Bass", and "Scuba") and four more from the 355 TFW ("Wildcat", "Bison", "Kingfish", and "Marlin") struck two bridges in RP-6A, North Vietnam. (7 AF TWX 242110Z Nov 67, in PACAF DO Read File 16 - 30 Nov 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 898727.)

The Korat strike force encountered MiGs and one F-105 from Korat ("Dallas 3" Capt William W. Butler from the 469 TFS) was downed by an air-to-air missile from a MiG-21 during ingress to the Lang Lau bridge. "Bill's flight was in the left rear of the strike force. ...". (Earl Henderson, e-mail, 13 July 2007.)

Four F-105s in "Ozark" flight provided Iron Hand support to Korat's strike force.

Maj James D. Murray, Jr. from the 469 TFS was the Korat Mission Commander. (Earl Henderson, e-mail 16 July 2007)

1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew as number 2 in Murray's flight. It was his 42nd combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Thai Nguyen rail bridge.  
"Armament: 6x750#.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"6 - 8,000' overcast all along ingress. Sixty miles into NVN we were attacked by several flights of MiG-21s. Bill Butler got it right away by missile. Ejected OK. We broke right and two missiles just missed us. We jettisoned everything and began egress. Passed Bill in chute on way out. No chance for rescue. Morale at lowest!" (Earl Henderson, combat diary and e-mail, 13 July 2007, & Red Baron II Event 63, pp 90 - 101)

After not having flown since 7 November, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 36th combat mission, his 20th to RP-6. His target was in downtown Hanoi. "YGBSM".

Takhli's strike force was 15 minutes behind the four F-105 strike flights from Korat. Takhli's primary target was the Lang Lau railroad bridge (BE 616-00524 ART 1524) at coordinates 21-33-07N and 105-53-40E. The Lang Lau railroad bridge was the third of only three railroad targets in North Vietnam that the Air Force hit between 16 - 30 November. Four F-105Fs in "Otter" flight provided Wild Weasel support to Takhli's strike flights. Capt Eric C. Lunde from the 354 TFS was "Otter 2".

Takhli pilots dropped a total of 71 M-117s and four M-118s on this bridge. One M-117 wouldn't release and was carried back to Takhli. Pilots estimated their bombs cut the approaches and damaged or destroyed the bridge's structure. They encountered delayed, moderate to heavy barrages of 37/57-mm AAA between 4,000 to 10,000 feet and light, mostly inaccurate, 85-mm to 16,000 feet. "Pilots reported all ordnance on target but BDA photography was not forthcoming due to weather."

A cloud hanging just southwest of the railroad bridge prevented "Wildcat 3" and "Wildcat 4" from acquiring their primary target so they dropped their four M-118s on the adjacent Lang Lau highway bridge (BE 616-00869 ART 1571) at coordinates 21-34-20N and 105-52-50E. Smoke prevented BDA but pilots reported they possibly cut one approach. This was the fourth time since 4 October that pilots from Takhli's 357 TFS had struck this bridge.

*Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 16 - 30 November 1967 & 355 TFW JOPREP JIFFY DOI 5617 OPREP-4/100 in USAF microfilm NO463, frames 1409 and 1584 - 1585 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 20 Nov 67.*

#### 21-Nov-67

5846

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 37th combat mission and his 22nd to RP-6. His flight encountered MiGs.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 21 Nov 67.*

#### 22-Nov-67

4790

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. from the 44 TFS, 388 TFW, and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers flew their 77th combat mission over North Vietnam.

"Wed - Mission #77 was an air abort from Pack 6 due to weather. We wound up radar bombing in Pack 1. The weather was solid from the ground up to 13,000'."

After this mission, Bob and Bud went on their third R&R, this time to Formosa and Hong Kong. They returned to Korat on 29 November 1967.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 38th combat mission and his 23rd to RP-6. The weather diverted him to bombing in Mu Gia Pass in RP-1.

*Bob Dorrrough's Combat diary & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 22 Nov 67..*

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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27-Nov-67

1447

"The Kep Ha Army Barracks (JCS 39.29), located 32 nautical miles north of Haiphong, on Highway Route 13, ... was struck by crews from the 388 TFW and the 355 TFW. ... This target consists of 16 major areas with a multitude of barracks, storage buildings and support facilities. It can supply vehicle support for the enemy logistics network and can act as a major training center. One notable possibility is the use of this area as a billeting and training area for the vast AAA defense network around Haiphong. The continuing attacks on this target have caused some loss of troops, a loss of vehicles and the destruction of valuable supplies. (pg 3)

"The Kep Ha Army Barracks were struck by 388 TFW pilots from Korat with seventy-two 750-pound bombs (M117s). Strike crews claimed damage or destruction of an unspecified number of structures." (pg 4)

Maj Kenneth W. Mays from the 34 TFS was probably on this strike. "Hugh Davis [Capt Hugh W. Davis] was my number 3 and we had hit Kep Ha military barracks as they kept shooting at us from there. We went in under a cloud deck to the target as the weather was marginal, but after going that distance and risking people and acft to get to the target we pressed on. Excellent bombs on the target as most acft carried CBU's (have photos of the barracks burning).

"On the way out from the target and just as we got feet- wet we started to climb. As we broke out of the clouds, we had a near mid-air collision with two MiG 21's. We were canopy to bottom of their acft for awhile. They went burner and cleared the area. Again no missiles on the acft. Hugh and I had a big laugh when we returned."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also from the 34 TFS, flew his 39th mission against the Kep Ha barracks. It was his 24th mission into RP-6. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Nov 67.)

"F-105s from Takhli's 355 TFW delivered 54 M117s and 10 CBU-24s in a second attack, but no BDA was reported." (7 Air Force Weekly Air Intelligence Summary (WAIS), 67-49 dated 2 Dec 67, for week of 24 - 30 Nov 1967, pp 3 - 4.)

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1757 & Col Ken Mays, USAF (Ret), unpublished memoir, "Tour At Korat -- July 67 to Feb 68", dated 15 Dec 2003.*

28-Nov-67

5847

The 388 TFW's flight lineup for today's mission was:

"Ozark" Iron Hand  
"Scuba" refueled from Red Anchor 40  
"Locust" refueled from Red Anchor 43  
"Bass" refueled from Red Anchor 41  
"Gator" refueled from Red Anchor 44

"Ozark" was Korat's Wild Weasel flight supporting the strike. They launched at 14:15 and their mission lasted 3.3 hours. Their lineup was:

#1 - Capt Rowland F. "Frank" Smith, Jr. and EWO 1Lt David H. Williams from the 44 TFS flying F-105F 63-8347  
#2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler, 34 TFS, flying F-105D 61-0086 on his 24th counter  
#3 - Maj Robert S. Beale and EWO Capt Paul John Mongillo, 44 TFS, flying F-105F 63-8285  
#4 - Capt Harry Guy Paddon, 34 TFS, flying F-105D 59-1750

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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Spare - Maj Stanley Henry Horne, 469 TFS, in F-105D 62-4248

Jake Shuler recalled, "This was my third Iron Hand mission and tenth to RP-6. ... The Strike Force target coordinates were 21-30N and 106-08E are somewhat puzzling since they fall halfway between Kep Air Field and Thai Ngyen, an industrial complex. I do not recall any specific details of the mission itself. This was the second time flying the wing of the Smith/Williams crew. This time I didn't get separated."

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., also from the 34 TFS, flew his 18th mission as "Locust 01" against a target in RP-6A. "Divert due weather/released safe due fuel/MiGs observed." (Rufus Dye Mission History log.)

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, was one of today's strike pilots. He flew his 40th combat mission and his 25th to RP-6. His target was at Bac Ninh.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 28 Nov 67 & Jake Shuler combat missic spreadsheet, mission card, and e-mail 11 Jan 2011.*

### 29-Nov-67

5848

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 41st combat mission and his 26th to RP-6. His target was JCS 12, the Paul Doumer bridge in downtown Hanoi, but, as happened to the Takhli flights to the same target, weather aborted the mission after he flew into North Vietnam.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 29 Nov 67.*

### 30-Nov-67

4846

At 0705, four pilots from the 34 TFS of "Pistol" flight took off from Korat on a mission to bomb a target in Mu Gia Pass in RP-1 North Vietnam. The mission lasted 2 hours 45 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj William J. King
- #2 - Capt Robert M. Crane
- #3 - Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen
- #4 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 61-0132.

The mission was Maj Armstrong's 29th. "Weather was bad in VIA [RP-6A] again so we went to 1st alternate target. We dropped on Mu Gia Pass via Sky Spot through clouds. No assessment of BDA."

After this mission, Maj Armstrong went on R&R and attended the 2nd quarterly River Rats Conference at Takhli and Bangkok.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also from the 34th flew his 42nd mission into North Vietnam today where he attacked trucks, probably in Mu Gia Pass, too.

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 12 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 30 Nov 67.*

### 03-Dec-67

5849

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 43rd combat mission into North Vietnam. He dropped his bombs in the area of the "Fishes Mouth" in RP-3.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 3 Dec 67.*

### 05-Dec-67

5850

"Gator" flight from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, took off from Korat at 13:45 for a mission into RP-1 and Laos where they worked with FAC Nail 47. The lineup was:

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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- #1 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying 58-1157
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 60-0449 on his 27th combat mission.
- #3 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying 60-0530 on his 44th combat mission
- #4 - Col James L. Stewart, 388 TFW Assistant DO, flying 60-0528.

They attacked trucks in Laos and returned home after 2.3 hours.

*Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet and mission card via e-mail 11 Jan 2011& Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09  
letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 5 Dec 67.*

### 06-Dec-67

5851

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 45rd combat mission into North Vietnam. He dropped his bombs in the area of the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-3.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 6 Dec 67.*

### 11-Dec-67

4852

At 14:25, four 388 TFW pilots of "Scuba" flight from the 34 TFS took off from Korat on a mission to bomb a target in Laos. The mission lasted 2 hours 5 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Capt Sam P. Morgan
- #2 - Capt Carl William Lasiter (POW 4 Feb 68)
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 58-1152
- #4 - Capt Lawrence G. Hoppe flying his 98th mission. He logged 2.1 hours.

It was Maj Armstrong's 33rd combat mission. "This was another Laos mission. We went to an F-100 FAC who was operating in an area just south of Mu Gia Pass. The area to the east of this particular location was completely covered with clouds. Our target was a rock and gravel ford across a river. Carl hit right in the center and the other three of us hit just on the west bank. There was quite a tailwind at release altitude. We weather reced all of the way over to the coast afterwards."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., also from the 34 TFS, was in another flight from Korat that attacked targets in southern Laos. It was his 46th combat mission and he struck guns and POL supplies.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew his 19th mission as "Gator 04" against a target in southern Laos. "Ban Senkua ford. 100%/heavy damage/light 37 mm." He also flew armed recce in RP-1. "No significant sightings." (Rufus Dye Mission History log.)

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pp 13 - 14 & Larry Hoppe AF Form 5 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09  
letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 11 Dec 67.*

### 12-Dec-67

5852

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 47th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was near Yen Bai in RP-5.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 12 Dec 67.*

### 19-Dec-67

3134

On Tuesday afternoon F-105s from the 355 TFW and 388 TFW and F-4s from Ubon and Udorn struck targets in North Vietnam. "This afternoon sixty-four aircraft, in two forces, were fraggged on three targets in Route Package 6A. ... Only one of the three fraggged targets was successfully struck. Of sixty-four aircraft fraggged as two forces, only one force, the one from Takhli, made it to the target.

"This afternoon's effort was supported by six EB-66 aircraft that provided ECM from orbits over the Laos/NVN border and the Gulf of Tonkin, four and two aircraft respectively.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"ALPHA force, composed of four F-105D strike flights ... from Korat, two F-4D strike flights ... from Ubon, an Iron Hand flight (... two F-105Ds and two F-105Fs) also from Korat, and two F-4D MIGCAP flights [call signs "Nash" and "Calico"] from Ubon were fragged on the Viet Tri and Tien Cuong Railroad Yards; they never made it to their targets. Call signs of Korat's strike flights were: "Scuba", "Locust", "Blivet", and "Gator". (Jake Shuler's mission card)

"ALPHA force included four F-105D strike flights from Korat fragged to strike the Viet Tri Railroad Yard (21-18N and 105-26E) and two F-4D strike flights from Ubon fragged to strike the Tien Cuong Railroad Yard (21-22N and 105-18E); never made it to their targets. ALPHA force, in its entirety, including an Iron Hand flight (two F-105Fs and two F-105Ds) also from Korat, and two F-4D MIGCAP flights from Ubon, were attacked by six MiG-21s and four to eight MiG-17s.

"Gator" was the fourth 388 TFW F-105 strike flights fragged against Viet Tri. The pilots, all from the 34 TFS, were:

- # 1 - Maj Donald W. Hodge flying F-105D 60-0462
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 61-0132 on his 30th combat mission
- #3 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying 59-1743 on his 48th combat mission, his 27th into RP-6
- #4 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying 61-0086

The flight took off 13:50 and refueled from Red Anchor 44 at 14:40 for a TOT of 15:33. Jake Shuler recalled, "Aside from the chewing out we all received from Bob Smith upon return (for allowing a few MiG's to cause the ALPHA Strike Force to jettison stores and abort the mission), the thing I remember most is the departure of my two wing tanks. As we lined up on our final heading to the target, MiG calls increased in number as did radio chatter causing confusion, at least for me, as to the actual threat to the strike force. When the call came from the Strike Force Commander to abort the mission, Don Hodge, Gator Lead, started accelerating, as did the other flights. By the time Don called for us to jettison stores, we must have been doing close to 600 Kts. I punched the Jettison External Stores button and in my peripheral vision saw the tanks nose dive about 20-degrees and descend about 10' relative to my aircraft, then immediately nose up and do a 180-degree flip barely skimming over the top of my wing tips. I made a mental note never to do that again." (Jake Shuler combat mission card and "Mission #30 Narrative" via e-mails 28 July 2010 and 11 Jan 2011.)

"The force was intercepted by six MiG-21s and four to eight MiG-17s, probably vectored out of Phuc Yen and Gia Lam Airfields, respectively. ...

"BRAVO force, composed of four F-105D strike flights from Takhli, [Wildcat, Bison, Kingfish, and Marlin] ... an Iron Hand flight (... four F-105Fs) [Otter] also from Takhli, and two F-4D MIGCAP flights ... from Udorn fragged on the Dai Loi Railroad Bridge, followed behind ALPHA force. ... The Iron Hand and MIGCAP flights with the BRAVO force engaged MiGs, as the BRAVO strike aircraft continued to their target. ...

"The flights of ALPHA force, then BRAVO force at a later time, departed their respective bases and headed north to the overland refueling tracks, rendezvoused with their tankers, and refueled. From drop-off, ALPHA force set course to the northeast directly toward their targets; BRAVO force continued north to Channel 97. Passing Channel 97, BRAVO force turned to 060 degrees, toward 21-07N and 105-10E. In the 'elbow' of the Black River, south and west of these last coordinates, ALPHA force, followed by elements of BRAVO force, were engaged by MiGs and, hence, egressed the reverse of ingress. The BRAVO strike aircraft and their Iron Hand were the only ones to continue as planned, subsequently egressing via Thud Ridge, Yen Bai, Channel 97, and after post-strike refueling, home.



## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"The force was later attacked by an estimated six MiG-21s and four to eight MiG-17s. All of the ALPHA strike flights jettisoned stores and, generally, commenced egress. Of ALPHA's many engagements, only [Nash 01] ... met with success ... a one-half MiG-17 kill. Following ALPHA force, elements of BRAVO force, which included [Otter] (Iron Hand) ... [and two of the MIGCAP] flights, engaged the same MiGs." "Nash 01" was an F-4D from Ubon flown by Maj Joseph D. Moore and 1Lt George H. McKinney, Jr. from the 435 TFS.

"As for BRAVO force, its Iron Hand flight (four F-105Fs from Takhli) and its two F-4D MIGCAP flights from Udorn had MiG encounters. However, the four F-105D strike flights from Takhli made it to the target, the Dai Loi Railroad Bridge (21-15N and 105-14E)" (Red Baron report)

The four strike flights of four F-105Ds from the 355 TFW, "Wildcat", "Bison", "Kingfish", and "Marlin", dropped a total of 90 MK-117s and six MK-82s on the Dai Loi railroad bypass bridge (ART 1600) at coordinates 21-15-33N and 105-41-35E in RP-6A, North Vietnam. It was their second alternate target that had been previously struck on 8 and 18 October and on 8 November. Pilots from the 357 TFS flew in all four strikes.

All ordnance impacted in the target area. Heavy haze made BDA difficult but flights estimated moderate to heavy damage to the bridge. "Bison" flight saw a large secondary explosion resulting in fragments trailing white smoke being thrown approximately 200 feet into the air. The last flight to strike the target saw light automatic weapons fire in the target area.

At 0838Z, while at 21-15N and 105-41E, "Marlin 3" saw two SAMs detonate 30 seconds apart approximately 1/2 mile from the flight. The first detonation was behind and below the flight, while the second was at the flight's altitude of 13,000 feet. The pilots couldn't determine the site that fired the missile. At 0842Z, while at 21-25N and 105-30E, on a heading of 320 degrees, "Marlin 3" saw a third SAM detonation approximately 4 nautical miles away at his 7 o'clock position. The SAM burst at 12,000 feet altitude but no aircraft appeared to be in the burst area. (355 TFW JOPREP)

The 355 TFW Wild Weasel "Otter" flight, led by Maj Robert R. Huntley and EWO Capt Ralph W. Stearman from the 354 TFS with other flight members from the 333 TFS and 357 TFS, encountered MiG-17s in supporting this strike. Takhli's Wild Weasels claimed three MiG kills. One kill was credited to Capt Phillip M. Drew and EWO Maj William H. Wheeler, "Otter 03", from the 357 TFS. Maj William M. Dalton and EWO Maj James M. Graham, "Otter 02" from the 333 TFS, 355 TFW, received 1/2 credit for shooting down another MiG-17. This was the other half of the MiG kill credited to the F-4D crew of "Nash 01". However, after two year's investigation, Seventh Air Force's Enemy Aircraft Claims Evaluation Board disallowed the MiG-17 claimed by Huntley and Stearman, "Otter 01".

*Red Baron II Event 79 (extracts) pp 266 - 300 & 355 TFW JOPREP JIFFY DOI 5802 OPREP-4/059 in USAF microfilm NO463, frames 1420 and 1585 & 20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar ban dated 19 Dec 67.*

**20-Dec-67**

4854

At 0705, four pilots from the 34 TFS of "Seabird" flight took off from Korat on a mission to bomb a target in northern Laos. The mission lasted 2 hours 40 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 59-1759
- #2 - Col James L. Stewart, 388 TFW Assistant DO
- #3 - Maj James E. Daniel, Jr., 34 TFS Ops Officer
- #4 - Capt Irving E. LeVine

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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It was Maj Armstrong's 40th combat mission. "This was planned as a primary Barrel Roll mission for a change. We refueled and went straight to the area which was about 10 miles south of Sam Neua. The FAC put some smoke on suspected troop concentration and we put our bombs right on the area. We had swung up through the spur of North Vietnam that sticks out at 19 ½ N so we had a counter. Otherwise a very uneventful counter."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. was another 34 TFS pilot who flew a mission into an area of North Vietnam just above the DMZ. He was in an Iron Hand flight on his 49th mission.

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 17 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 20 Dec 67.*

**21-Dec-67**

4855

Four pilots from the 34 TFS of "Scuba" flight took off from Korat at 14:30 on a mission to bomb a target in northern Laos. They refueled from Red Anchor 40. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 59-1759
- #2 - Capt Lawrence R. Klinestiver flying F-105D 62-4248
- #3 - Lt Col Robert W. Smith, 34 TFS Commander flying F-105D 60-0462
- #4 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying F-105D 62-4270 on his 32nd mission.
- Spare - Maj Kenneth W. Mays in 60-0449

It was Maj Armstrong's 41st combat mission. "This was to be my first flight as Mission Commander of the strike force. The weather was bad up in Pack VI so we went as individual flights instead up into northern Laos to work with a FAC. We had to wait for about 20 minutes orbiting the target, just penetrating Pack IV for a counter. We finally hit a road segment. All four of us put our bombs squarely on the target. Other than that, an uneventful mission." The flight lasted 2.7 hours.

Jake Shuler described how he remembered the mission. "Due to bad weather over the primary target, we were directed to work with FACs, Firefly 17 & 18, target 120 degrees 20 NM from Channel 97. We may have also worked with Raven FACs 40 & 41 with a time on target of 1510 hours, both targets in northern Laos."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. in another flight with the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 50th combat mission, this one into Laos and Route Pack 2. He struck some trucks.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 3" against a truck park in the Barrel Roll region of Laos. "100%/ 1 large secondary." It was his 22nd combat mission.

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 17 & Jake Shuler's mission card and e-mail 11 Jan 2011 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 21 Dec 67 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

**22-Dec-67**

4856

The four pilots in "Cookie" flight were from the 34 TFS. The four-ship took off at 7:05 for a TOT of 08:00. They refueled from Brown Anchor 72. The lineup was:

- #1 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying F-105D 59-1759 on his 51st combat mission
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 60-0530 on his 33rd mission
- #3 - Maj James E. Daniel, Jr. flying 60-0462
- #4 - Col James L. Stewart, the 388 TFW DO, flying 62-4270.

The flight met FAC Nail 49 and was over the target from 08:10 to 08:20. Target coordinates were 16-46N and 106-09E. The mission lasted for 2.1 hours. (Jake Shuler combat mission card and e-mail

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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11 Jan 2011)

On his 42nd combat mission, Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong from the 34 TFS led a two-ship flight that carried Bullpup missiles into southern Laos. Flying F-105D 61-0219, he led "Machette" flight that took off at 07:25 and returned after flying for 2 hours 15 minutes. His wingman, "Machette 2", was Capt Douglas A. Beyer.

"This was a scheduled GAM 83C (Bullpup) missile mission into southern Laos. My airborne guidance system didn't check out after I was airborne so I didn't fire my missiles but brought them back instead. Doug Beyer fired 2 and I chased him on his passes. He thought he over controlled them because they got away and didn't hit very close to the intended target. Afterwards, I strafed a road that the FAC marked for me but couldn't see the results. We were in Pack I for a counter as a result of our attack heading on the target."

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Bass 2" against the Ban Phougnong truck park in the Barrel Roll region of Laos. "Commando Club. No BDA - Weather." It was his 23rd combat mission. (Rufus Dye Mission History log.)

Capt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, was another Korat pilot who bombed a target in Laos. It was his 54th combat mission. "Target: Road cut in southern Laos. Armament: 6x750. Led two-ship airborne spare flight. Right before drop off from main strike force, we broke into flight of F-4Cs that looked like attacking MiGs. Then drug bombs 200 miles south. Got road cut. No flak. Long, boring mission. Sneaked into pack V for counter."

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 17 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 22 Dec 67 & Earl Henderson, combat diary.*

### 25-Dec-67

2772

"Christmas day was celebrated with many 354 TFS flights [from the 355 TFW, Takhli] striking targets in Laos. Laos was not included in the one-day truce that covered North and South Vietnam."

At the 388 TFW, Korat, the 44 TFS Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrough, Jr. and his EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers flew a combat mission into Laos. "Monday - Merry Christmas to Ho Chi. Hit his supply route in early A.M. in Laos. Our flight carried 24 x 750-pound bombs. Sure lit up the sky. Unfortunately this was a non-counter."

Another pilot from Korat, Capt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, also flew a non-counting mission into Laos.

"Merry Christmas!

"Flew non-counter in far southern Laos. Took off at 3:00 AM. Still very dark when we landed. Combat Skyspot mission. Bombs lit up sky."

"Pancho" flight from the 34 TFS at Korat launched at 10:05 on a two-hour non-counting mission against a target at location 15-51N and 106-47E. Their lineup was:

#1 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying F-105D 59-1759

#2 - Capt Irving E. LeVine flying 60-0435

#3 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying 60-0425

#4 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 61-0132 on his first non-counting combat mission. He had 35 counters to date.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"The reason this was a non-counter was that we were not allowed to bomb NVN on Christmas Day. I believe this was my first and only time working with a Covey FAC, in this case Covey 239 flying an O-2A .... Covey FACs with 2xx call signs flew primarily in Zone 2 of southern Laos designated 'Tigerhound'. We made contact on UHF frequency 338.8 after flying towards coordinates 15-50.5N and 106-46E. After making visual contact, Dave (Dickson) started a counterclockwise orbit around Covey 239 who was well below us. He explained that our target was a camouflaged 37MM gun emplacement that had been giving him fits. He fired a white phosphorus rocket then called the target's location relative to the white smoke. Dave dropped his bombs (I'm pretty sure we were carrying 500 pounders) and Covey 239 called the target relative to the bomb impact. Successively, Irv (LeVine) and Clyde (Falls) dropped their bombs and after each drop Covey 239 called the relative location of the target to the bomb impact points. So, by the time I rolled in I had a pretty good idea of where the target was, the advantage of being #4 in the formation. Well I was fortunate enough to get a direct hit, probably the only reason I remember this mission in such detail. I'm sure I would have gotten a lot of ribbing if I hadn't come closer than the other three." (Jake Shuler's combat mission spreadsheet & e-mail 11 Jan 2011)

The 34th also launched the five-ship "Gator" flight into Laos. The flight took off at 11:45 and returned after flying for 2 hours 15 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4387
- #2 - Maj Wintford L. Bazzell, 469 TFS
- #3 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer
- #4 - Capt Vernon D. Ellis
- #5 - Capt Edward L. Jones

This was the first non-counting combat mission that Maj Armstrong had flown since his arrival at Korat in October. "Christmas present. Even though there was a 24-hour truce in effect, we launched a number of strikes against infiltration routes in Laos. We had a 5th man as he was originally in another flight and had to change aircraft. Our target was in Laos, about the same latitude as Hue, South Vietnam, and about 5 miles inside Laos. The weather was supposed to be overcast there so we were set up for a Combat Sky Spot. We dropped via Sky Spot but as we released we looked down and saw our bombs hit very close to the target." (Maj Sam Armstrong's 100-mission combat log.)

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Ozark 3" against a road segment in southern Laos. "100%. Two road cuts. One possible secondary." It was his 25th combat mission.

*355 TFW history, Oct 67 - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO463, frame 1573 & Bob Dorrough's combat diary & Earl Henderson, combat diary & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

#### 26-Dec-67

5853

"Locust" flight from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, attacked targets at Quang Khe in RP-1 at location 17-43N and 106-26E north east of Dong Hoi. The flight took off at 13:50 for a TOT of 15:38. Their mission lasted 2.5 hours. Their lineup was:

- #1 - Maj William M. Blakeslee flying F-105D 60-0530
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 61-0092 on his 36th counter
- #3 - Capt Carl William Lasiter flying 58-1157
- #4 - Maj Donald W. Hodge flying 60-0428

The flight encountered three firing AA gun sites.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 52nd combat mission into North

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## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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Vietnam. His target was the Ron Ferry complex near Dong Hoi in RP-1.

On his 26th mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 2" against gun bunkers in RP-1. "100%. Two bunkers destroyed."

Capt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, also hit a target in RP-1. It was his 55th combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Truck park in pack I.  
"Armament: 6x750

"Combat Skyspot mission. After drop, we looked for moving equipment on road. Nothing. Came home."

*Jake Shuler's combat mission spreadsheet & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 26 Dec 67 & Earl Henderson, combat diary & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

#### 27-Dec-67

5854

"Simmer" flight from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, attacked barges at the Ron Ferry complex near Dong Hoi in RP-1 at location 17-37N and 106-17E. The flight took off at 06:40 and their mission lasted 2.3 hours. Their lineup was:

#1 - Maj William M. Blakeslee flying F-105D 60-0464  
#2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 60-0152 on his 37th counter  
#3 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying 60-0505 on his 53rd counter  
#4 - Maj Donald W. Hodge flying 61-0220  
Spare: Lt Col James B. Ross in 58-1157

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 3" against a truck park in RP-1. "100%. Numerous road cuts. One large secondary. Two trucks. Moderate 37/57 mm." It was his 27th combat mission.

*Jake Shuler's combat mission spreadsheet & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Dec 67 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

#### 28-Dec-67

4857

The 34 TFS at Korat launched the four-ship "Scuba" flight into North Vietnam. The flight took off at 1430 and returned after flying for 2 hours 45 minutes. The flight line up was:

#1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0505  
#2 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying mission #54  
#3 - Lt Col Robert W. Smith, 34 TFS Commander  
#4 - Capt Irving E. LeVine

This was Maj Armstrong's 43rd combat mission. "I was supposed to be Mission Commander again today but the weather continued to be bad so everybody went to their first alternate target. Ours was a Commando Club on a target 25 miles west of Channel 97. We had approval before hand to swing up into North Vietnam after bomb drop to see if we could draw some MiGs and keep them off the second flight 30 minutes behind us going to Hoa Lac. We trolled up to about 20 miles NE of Phu Tho and no MiGs came up. We had two missiles fired at us on the way back down south. They didn't look like SAM bursts, they were grayish-white. No MiGs were known to come up and no missiles were fired on the flight going to Hoa Lac. We finally gave up and came home."

Maj Dickson's comment on his after-mission cigar band was "MiG hunt. Only SAMs."

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 18 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on*

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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*cigar band dated 28 Dec 67.*

**29-Dec-67**

5855

"Crossbow" flight from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, at Korat launched at 07:30 on a two-hour mission against a target at 19-36N and 103-40E, near Dong Hoi in RP-1. Their lineup was:

- #1 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying F-105D 62-4361 on his 55th combat mission
- #2 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying 60-0152 on his 38th combat mission.
- #3 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr. flying 60-0530
- #4 - Capt Irving E. LeVine flying 61-0072

In reading his mission card many years later, Jake Shuler commented, "On this mission, according to the Mission Data Card, our assigned target was just east of Ban Ban in northern Laos, coordinates 19-36N and 103-40E. Other notations indicate that we may have been diverted to a target at coordinates 16-53N and 106-01-30E, 113 degrees, 90 NM from Channel 89. This target is about 60 NM southwest of Dong Hoi in southern Laos."

*Jake Shuler's combat mission card and e-mail 11 Jan 2011 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 29 Dec 67.*

**30-Dec-67**

5856

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 56th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was Mu Gia Pass in RP-1.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 30 Dec 67.*

**31-Dec-67**

4858

The 34 TFS at Korat launched the four-ship "Gator" flight against a target in Laos. The flight took off at 1430 and returned after flying for 2 hours 20 minutes. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 58-1157
- #2 - Capt Robert Malcolm Elliot, KIA 14 Feb 68
- #3 - Capt Sam P. Morgan
- #4 - Maj William M. Blakeslee

It was Maj Armstrong's 44th combat mission. "This was a Commando Club mission on a target 20 miles east of San Neua. The weather was undercast. We carefully selected our I.P. to be in the 'Fish's Mouth' so that we would automatically get a 'counter'. The weather was completely undercast so we couldn't see where the bombs hit. No post-strike refueling since we still had gobs of fuel. We did some air work on the way home. Very uneventful."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flew in another 34 TFS flight that bombed trucks and troops near the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-3. It was his 57th mission into North Vietnam.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Simmer 3" against a road segment in the Steel Tiger region of Laos. "100%. Road cut and land slide" It was his 28th combat mission.

Maj David D. Igelman from the 34th flew a mission for which he received the DFC (1st OLC).

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 18 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 31 Dec 67 & Rufus Dyem Mission History log.*

**03-Jan-68**

2229

Although strike activity in the RP-6A area was confined to the period on 3 through 5 January, "... significant results were achieved against the rail network during those three days."

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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"Beginning in January 1968, MiG pilots were less prone to flee toward China. Instead, they became more aggressive and frequently returned for a second pass against American strike aircraft. The number of their kills increased and the MiG threat became more significant. U.S. forces therefore scheduled more MIGCAP missions and, at the same time, reduced the size of strike forces to provide better force protection." (Aces)

"On January 3, two large Air Force raids, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, hit North Vietnamese railroad yards." (Clashes)

The first MiG confrontation of the new year took place on the morning of 3 January. (Aces)

A major strike effort was fraged this morning to strike targets in the Hanoi area. The aircraft were divided into two forces [ALPHA and BRAVO].

"ALPHA force was scheduled to strike the Kinh No Railroad Classification Yard, 21-09N and 105-51E. The mission was subsequently cancelled due to adverse weather and the force was diverted to an alternate target the Dong Dau Railroad Bridge at 21-06N and 105-54E. (TOT: 0845 - 0853H.)

The force consisted of four F-105 strike flights from Korat with call signs "Hatchet", Simmer", Pistol", and "Crossbow". Two F-4D flights from Udorn provided MIGCAP and two flights of F-105 from Korat flew IRON HAND anti-SAM missions. This force was attacked by MiG-21s on its approach to the target.

"Cactus" was one of Korat's Iron Hand flights supporting the morning strike against the Kinh No rail yard. The flight took off at 05:50; their mission lasted 3.4 hours. The lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Michael S. Muskat and EWO Capt Kyle Stouder from the 44 TFS flying F-105F 63-8306
  - #2 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr., 34 TFS, flying F-105D 58-1152 on his 58th mission, his 29th into RP-6.
  - #3 - Capt Harry N. Gainer and EWO Capt John A. Stetson from the 44 TFS flying F-105F 63-8353
  - #4 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler, 34 TFS, flying F-105D 60-0449 on his 5th IH and 41st combat mission
- Spare: Capt Harry Guy Paddon III from the 34 TFS in F-105D 58-1157. (NOTE: This plane was downed in today's afternoon mission and its pilot, Col James E. Bean, the 388 TFW DO, became a POW.) (Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet, mission card, and e-mail 11 Jan 2011 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 3 Jan 68.)

"Hatchet" flight from the 34 TFS was one of Korat's four strike flights in the ALPHA force. The flight left Korat at 0600. Its line up was:

- #1 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer
- #2 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 61-0072.
- #3 - Col James L. Stewart, 388 TFW Assistant DO
- #4 - Maj Billy R. Givens (killed in accident 25 Apr 68)

This was Maj Armstrong's 46th combat mission. "The target was Kinh No railroad yard 6 miles north of Hanoi. We went in via the land route with the sun in our face. There were no clouds in the delta but the visibility was very poor with the haze and sun. We should never have continued in. We started getting MiG calls shortly after crossing the border. They closed to 15 miles and the F-4s went after them. As we came into the delta along the Red River, the MiGs stayed on our tail and the SAMs and flak stayed down. One MiG-17 came up along side Simmer and fired a missile at Pistol 3 but miraculously missed. Two MiG-21s fired 4 missiles at Crossbow flight. The flak (mainly 85-mm)

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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got real heavy on the way out 'til Hoa Lac. Everybody had to jettison bombs as the MiGs plus weather caused us to not get to the target. Nobody got hit luckily." Their mission lasted for 2 hours 50 minutes. (Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 19.)

In his memoirs, Lt Gen Armstrong described this mission in more detail. "The next morning, 3 January, was barely clear enough over Pack VIA for Saigon to order us to go primary target which was the Kinh No railroad yard 6 miles North of Hanoi. This time I was flying #2 in the CBU flight. We flew the land route and were going to be making a right hand roll-in so my flight was north of the lead flight and I was on my lead's right wing looking to the north for MiGs. There were several MiG calls so we accelerated and raced them to the SA-2 ring as was our normal tactic hoping that the MiGs would break off short of the SA-2 ring for their own safety. Much to our surprise, they held the SA-2's and flak down this day and let the MiGs follow us right up to roll-in. A MiG-17 pulled up on my right side and fired a missile at Pistol #3. Simmer lead, Lt. Col. Red Evans [Lt Col Robert A. Evans, the 44 TFS commander], spotted the missile launch and called: 'Simmer #3 break right!' Obviously Pistol #3 didn't do anything. The next call from Red was: 'It's okay, he missed you'. Since this all took place on my blind side the first thing I saw was our #4 man, Billy Givens, roll over the top of us. He said he took a shot at the MiG but he certainly didn't hit him.

"Then two MiG-21's fired 4 missiles at our trailing flight, Crossbow, but fortunately nobody got hit. By this time the flak started coming up and the mission commander couldn't find the target due to these distractions and the morning sun glinting off the rice paddies. So we were all ordered to jettison our bombs safe and get out of there. We didn't lose any aircraft but were shook up over the audacity of the MiG pilots.

"In the mission debrief, Red Evans asked Vern Ellis [Capt Vernon D. Ellis] who was Pistol #3 that mission why he didn't break when he called him. Vern naturally replied that nobody called him to break. I verified that this was the case and played the transmissions back to Red from my tape recorder. Red then acknowledged that he had screwed up big time and that Vern was lucky the missile missed because the rest of us had let him down." (Lt Gen USAF (Ret) Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, unpublished manuscript, chapter titled "Southeast Asia October 1967 - May 1968", pp 25 - 26).

"BRAVO force was fragged against the Trung Quang Railroad Yard at 21-06N and 105-56E (TOT: 0850 - 0853H) [on the Northeast Rail Line (RR 2)]. The force consisted of three strike flights (twelve F-4Ds) from Ubon, ... one F-4D flak suppression flight from Ubon; two F-4D MIGCAP flights ... from Ubon and two F-105 IRON HAND flights from Takhli." (Red Baron II, Event 82, pp 316 - 331)

The BRAVO force was attacked by MiG-17s during withdrawal. One strike F-4D and one MIGCAP F-4D from the 8 TFW at Ubon each shot down a MiG-17. The crew of the strike F-4D was Lt Col Clayton K. Squier and 1Lt Michael D. Muldoon from the 435 TFS. They shot an AIM-4 to down the MiG-17. The crew of the MIGCAP F-4D was Maj Bernard J. Bogoslofski and Capt Richard L. Husky from the 433 TFS who fired a 20-mm gun pod to hit their MiG-17. (Aces)

One of the IRON HAND flights from Takhli on the BRAVO force included the Wild Weasel crew of Capt Malcolm D. Winter and EWO Maj William H. Wheeler from the 354 TFS. They flew F-105F 63-8301 as "Barracuda 4". It was Maj Winter's 78th combat mission. "Supported 8th TFW on RR yard. 5462; about 10 miles from Hanoi on NE RR. ... 4+00, 4 refuelings."

"Post strike photography obtained on 5 January revealed that 5 of the 7 tracks were interdicted and 3 pieces of rolling stock were destroyed or damaged." (Briefing)

*"Aces and Aerial Victories", pgs 74 - 75 & "Clashes", pg 143 & Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 15 January 1968 & combat mission log of Mal Winter transcribed by his son, Mike Winter.*

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# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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**04-Jan-68**

2321

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, from Korat RTAFB, Thailand, flew F-105D 61-0206 on his first combat mission over North Vietnam. It was a Sky Spot mission to RP-1 and the sortie length was 2 hours 10 minutes.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS also flew into RP-1 as well as southern Laos for his 59th mission.

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrrough, Jr. and his EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 44 TFS flew their 91st mission over North Vietnam. "Thursday - Flew #91 on a "Buff" support, with one "D" and another Weasel crew as #3. They were getting checked out on this mission. There was no SAM or AAA activity, so we bombed an underwater truck bridge."

*Bill Harris, letter 19 March 2001 & Bob Dorrrough's combat diary & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 4 Jan 68.*

**05-Jan-68**

3840

F-105s from the 388 TFW, struck the Yen Bai airfield on a Commando Club mission.

Additional F-105s struck the Thai Nguyen Railyard (JCS 21.11).

Twelve other F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Lang Son railroad bridge bypass. Strike pilots dropped 72 M-117s on the 400' x 10' bridge. Post-strike BDA revealed one pier destroyed and one pier probably damaged. The approaches to the bridge remained serviceable. Flak suppression aircraft dropped 13 CBU-24s and four CBU-29s on firing flak sites. Pilots estimated four AAA sites destroyed or severely damaged.

A successful visual attack was also made on the Kep airfield (JCS 9.1) at location 21-23-37N and 106-16-05E in RP-6A. Korat's flights attacking the airfield were: "Pistol", "Hatchet", "Simmer", and "Crossbow". "Bobbin" was the Iron Hand flight. (Jake Shuler's mission data card.)

The strike force commander was Capt Sam P. Morgan from the 34 TFS flying as "Pistol 01".

"While attempting to suppress air defenses along the ingress route, Iron Hand F-105s launched four AGM-45s at a SAM site near Hanoi. Pilots estimated they destroyed a Fansong radar and a van. At the airfield, Iron Hand aircraft expended two CBU-24s and reported heavy damage to an AAA site. They observed two secondaries near the site. The follow-on strike force, consisting of three flights of F-105Ds, struck the airfield and reported several interdictions on the southwest and center sections of the runway. The crews expended 72 750-pound bombs over the target area. One F-105 was downed by AAA fire as it was pulling off the target. Post-strike BDA revealed the runway was cratered in these areas, rendering it unserviceable and non-operational." (388 TFW history.)

Capt William E. Jones from the 469 TFS, flying as "Crossbow 03", was shot down by AAA on the mission.

Capt Robert W. Ferrel from the 44 TFS was "Bobbin 02" in the Iron Hand flight. "... I was wingman on the Iron Hand flight going to Kep airfield. Bill Jones was knocked down on that mission and we heard his beacon but never heard from him again. That strike was from the Gulf and he went down north of Haiphong. Our Iron Hand flight successfully destroyed a SAM site while evading MiGs and we were awarded a Silver Star." Ferrel had to land at Da Nang when his refueling door failed to open and he couldn't post-strike refuel. (Bob Ferrel, e-mails 14 & 15 July 2009.)

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"Simmer" was Korat's third flight striking Kep Airfield. The flight from the 34 TFS left Korat at 06:00. The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4248
- #2 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer
- #3 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying mission # 60
- #4 - Capt Carl William Lasiter (POW 4 Feb 68)

This was Maj Armstrong's 48th combat mission. "We had a last minute target change and went to Kep A.F. We went in the water route and had no threat from the MiGs. The visibility was good and we had no problem picking up the field on approach. They started filling the air with 85-mm bursts right in our flight path about 15 miles before we rolled in. We had to climb above the flak and consequently were high at roll-in and fast at release. I saw three strings of bombs hit as I rolled in; one on either side of the runway and one in the middle of the runway. The AAA was still heavy pulling off the target. Several aircraft took hits. Crossbow #3 [Capt William Eugene Jones, 469 TFS, KIA] was hit on pull off and had locked the slab when he lost #1 & 2 flight control pressure. He flew it for about 30 seconds that way and finally had to get out when it went into a steep spiral. He got out safely and landed on the west end of Little 'Thud' Ridge. I think rescap was possible but it was poorly handled and was finally called off." The mission lasted for 3 hours 35 minutes. (Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 20.)

Lt Gen Armstrong elaborated on this mission in his memoirs. "Kep was primarily at this time a MiG-17 base and had been hit before, but not recently. I was leading Simmer, the #3 flight and Sam Morgan was the mission commander. We came in from the east and started picking up 85-mm flak well before roll-in. As the 85-mm shells exploded in an orange burst before becoming the black smoke that gave flak its name many years before, Sam began a shallow climb. Consequently we stayed just above the burst until roll-in. We got some good hits on the airfield with our 750# bombs but the flak was very intense all the way. Several aircraft got hit. Bill Jones of the 469th, flying that morning as Crossbow #3, took a pretty bad hit and lost his #1 and #2 flight control hydraulic pressure and had to bail out close to the point where Bob Barnett [on 3 October 1967 also from the 469 TFS] landed some months earlier. I thought that rescue could have been possible but it was not attempted for some reason ... " (Lt Gen USAF (Ret) Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, unpublished manuscript, chapter titled "Southeast Asia October 1967 - May 1968", pg 26.)

"Crossbow" was Korat's fourth flight in the attack on Kep Airfield. It's lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Robert F. Grubb from the 469 TFS flying F-105D 60-0464
- #2 - Maj David D. Igelman from the 34 TFS flying 61-0206
- #3 - Capt William E. Jones from the 469 TFS flying 61-0068
- #4 - Capt Jacob C. Shuler from the 34 TFS flying 60-0511 on his 42nd mission.

The flight left Korat at 05:50 and refueled from Brown Anchor 24 at 07:00 at 16,000 feet for a TOT of 07:48.

Forty-two and a half years later, Jake Shuler recalled details of the mission. "On the morning of 5 January 1968, Dave Igelman and I were scheduled to fly with the 469th TFS, a first for me. I was pleased to see that Bob Grubb was to lead our flight. Bob had been a B-52 co-pilot with my brother [Buck Shuler] at Carswell AFB, TX. Then both were transferred to Dyess AFB, TX where they upgraded to Aircraft Commanders. Dave was to fly as Crossbow 2 and I was to fly as Crossbow 4 on Bill Jones' wing. I had never met Bill before but instantly found him to be easy going and very likeable. The Strike Force Commander was Sam Morgan, Pistol 1. The second flight was Hatchet Flight and Sam Armstrong was leading Simmer Flight, the third flight. Our flight, Crossbow, was the

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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fourth flight of four.

"The Wing mission briefing revealed that we would be going to the primary target, Kep Airfield. Intelligence had briefed us to expect heavy AAA which turned out to be an understatement

"The Kep runway headings are 070 degrees & 250 degrees. The Strike Force final heading to the target was 283 degrees which gave us a 33-degree angle with Runway 25. Sam Morgan skillfully positioned the Strike Force just north of Kep so with a 20-degree left turn during roll-in, we would only have about a 13-degree angle with the runway. A small angle enhanced the likelihood of getting more of your string of bombs on the runway.

"Sam Morgan rolled Pistol Flight in closely followed by Hatchet Flight. Moments later, Sam Armstrong rolled in with Simmer Flight and then it was Crossbow Flight's turn. Bob and Dave rolled in immediately followed by Bill. I rolled inverted with Bill but instinctively saw that we were going to have less than a 60-degree dive angle so I held my pull for a moment. I do not know the reason for the shallow dive angle, perhaps the fact that Crossbow Flight was the back right flight and we were rolling in to the left. A shallow dive angle increases the time from roll-in to bomb release thus providing the AAA gunners more time to track you. Plus the fact that Bill and I were the 15th & 16th aircraft down the chute didn't increase our odds of remaining unscathed.

"When I rolled out in the dive, I had to sit up straight and lean forward to keep Bill in sight just below and to the left of my nose. As soon as I saw him pick up his bombs and begin his pull up and hard left turn, I took my eyes off him and put my sight mid-way down the runway, my assigned aiming point. I picked up my bombs at 7,500' and started my pull up and hard left turn to follow Bill. I did not see Bill get hit but heard his call just prior to my weapons release. I initiated my pull up and turn to our egress heading of 100 degrees, varying my backpressure in an attempt to spoil AAA tracking. I did not pick Bill up visually during the turn because, unbeknownst to me, he had rolled wings level when hit and was headed approximately 134 degrees. (The direction from Kep Airfield to where Bill ejected, 106-28N and 21-12E, was a distance of 16 NM.) I had turned past him. Bob called and asked if I had Crossbow 3 in sight and I said 'negative.' To this very day, I question whether I was the wingman I should have been.

"Bob and Dave were ahead of Bill but got a visual on him after making a 360-degree turn ending up behind him. I do recall Bill's transmission indicating that he had locked the slab but had lost oil pressure. Very shortly thereafter Bob was telling Bill to 'get out'. By this time I had turned back to the right and, although I did not see the ejection, I immediately heard his beeper and picked him up in his chute. Moments later I saw the fireball when his aircraft impacted the ground. The time between Bill calling being hit and his ejection was a blur to me then and is certainly not clear in my memory now. Assuming Bill averaged a groundspeed of 550 KTS and traveled 16 NMs, the elapsed time would have been approximately 1 minute 40 seconds. As Sam Armstrong mentioned in his combat log, Bill flew the aircraft on slab lock for about 30 seconds, so he was apparently nursing the aircraft for just over a minute before engaging the slab lock configuration.

"I began circling Bill at a safe distance so as not to draw AAA in his vicinity. Due to that distance, I could not tell what kind of shape he was in. Bob tried several times to raise him on his survival radio without success. On one circle going through a northwest direction, I picked up two aircraft approaching almost head on. I leveled my wings in preparation for a head-on attack and was greatly relieved to find that they were two Thuds and not MiGs. I think [they were] an Iron Hand element. Eventually, I rejoined with Bob and Dave and we remained in the area for about 15 minutes then went to the tanker to top off and wait for a possible rescue effort, which, regrettably never materialized.

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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"The flight back to Korat was somber. In honor of Bill, I flew initial in the number 4 position."

*388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frames 0459 and 0495 - 0497 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 A 09 letter giving annotation on Dave Dickson's cigar band dated 5 Jan 68 & Jake Shuler, "42nd Mission Narrative via e-mail, 28 July 2010.*

**06-Jan-68**

2883

Three days after the 388 TFW DO, Col James Ellis Bean, was shot down by a MiG-21, and a year after the first successful MiG sweep in Operation Bolo on 2 January 1967, General Momyer at 7th Air Force attempted another MiG sweep.

Forty-two F-105s and "... 16 F-4Ds were fragged for MiG sweeps in the Kep, Phuc Yen, Mo Trang, and Tung Tu areas. As part of the same mission, 12 Navy aircraft were fragged to hit coastal defense targets in the Thanh Hoa area. In support of this mission, six ... EB-66s (from the 355 TFW) provided electronic jamming support with four aircraft in the North West Laos orbit areas ... and two in the North East Gulf of Tonkin orbit area."

"On 6 January, the entire strike force of F-105s (from the 388 TFW), each aircraft armed with four AIM-9Bs went on an unsuccessful 'MiG sweep' in RP-6A. None of the flights sighted MiGs." (388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frame 0497.)

"Instead of F-4s pretending to be F-105s as in Bolo, Momyer's new sweep featured thirty-four F-105s stripped of their bombs and ready to dogfight. Most of them crossed Thud Ridge at fourteen thousand feet and turned east as if intending to strike Kep airfield or the railroad bridge at Mo Trang, fifteen miles west of Kep on the line to Thai Nguyen. Not surprisingly, their ruse was soon discovered, when two pairs of MiG-21s attacked from the rear. Typical of North Vietnamese tactics since August, it was a hit-and-run attack out of the late afternoon sun. The MiGs and the strike force traded heat-seeking missiles without doing any damage, and the MiG pilots escaped to tell their controllers that the F-105s were not carrying bombs. The best opportunity for destroying an enemy aircraft that afternoon came a few minutes later, when an F-105 pilot noticed an Il-14 Crate transport several thousand feet below, headed for Hanoi. While the F-105 pilot was getting his force commander's permission to attack this gray cargo plane with a red star, it dove into the nearest cloud; the F-105 got off one burst of gunfire and missed."

General Momyer justified this unsuccessful MiG sweep by telling General Ryan, "... while he had no illusions about another Bolo, there was nothing better to do with his aircraft during the northeast monsoon."

"Momyer also indicated that he had resorted to a fighter sweep only after trying other means for defeating the MiGs. He had sent F-4 escorts ahead of the strike force by as much as a quarter of an hour; he had added a flight of them at forty thousand feet, far above the strike force; he had sent two flights below enemy radar to pop up and surprise the MiGs; he had combined a close escort with a roving flight. But the fundamental problem remained that Seventh Air Force was 'operating with less than real time information, while the enemy has this information available to him.'"

Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, the 34 TFS operations officer, was the 388 TFW mission commander for this mission. He led "Waco" flight from the 34 TFS. The flight took off at 1355. Its line up was:

- #1 - Maj Armstrong flying F-105D 61-0162 on his 49th combat mission.
- #2 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer
- #3 - Capt Sam P. Morgan
- #4 - Capt Vernon D. Ellis

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also from the 34 TFS flew in another 388 TFW flight on this MiG-sweep mission, his 61st over North Vietnam. (20 Apr 09 letter from Carolyn Dickson giving annotation on cigar band dated 6 Jan 68.)

In his combat log, Maj Armstrong told how the mission was planned and flown. "I was the Mission Commander for this strike which was flown as a MiG sweep. We had no bombs each aircraft had 2 tanks and 2 AIM-9s. Two flights of F-4s were to precede us by 5 minutes and go to Phuc Yen and Kep and get the MiGs. Takhli was to come in on roughly the same route with the same configuration 5 minutes behind. Actually the F-4s and Takhli were right along beside us. We got a call that a Blue Bandit was closing on us first at 30 miles, then 18 miles, and finally 7 miles. Then we did the break maneuver I had briefed and the MiG broke off and we couldn't see him and radar lost him. All 4 flights then went to the designated orbit areas to look for MiGs. Nobody got a shot at any unfortunately and we turned around and came home. We did prove that we could defeat a MiG attack as a strike force and still get to the target." The flight landed after flying for 3 hours 10 minutes. (Maj Armstrong's combat mission log, pg 21.)

Lt Gen Armstrong expanded on the description of the mission in his memoirs. "As the mission commander for the afternoon mission on the 6th, I was surprised when I arrived at the command post early that morning to plan what I thought was to be a standard Pack VIA mission. Instead I learned that it was to be a MiG Sweep much like the previous one. Two flights of F-4C's were to proceed first up the water route and harass the Kep and Phuc Yen Airfields. Then the Korat force would fly up the land route, followed by the Takhli force and finally a full force of F-4C's from Ubon. The frag order also specified that the lead and #3 flights in the F-105 forces would not carry bombs or jamming pods. The #2 and #4 flights would carry a full load of 750# bombs. All F-105D's would carry a pair of Sidewinder heat seeking missiles on each wing. There were to be no Weasels in this plan. If we were not successful in luring MiGs up, then we were to bomb the Thai Nyugen. Incidentally, the weather was forecast to be totally undercast all over Pack VIA.

"The frag order didn't make any sense to me. I complained to the chief of the command post. First, with no jamming pods, we would look very different to their radar sites. Secondly, there seemed to be no reason to carry two pods of Sidewinders at the expense of those jamming pods. Two missiles each was plenty since we still had the Gatling gun. Thirdly, by requiring the #2 and #4 flights to carry bombs, they would be unnecessarily weighted down and couldn't keep up with the rest of us much less engage the MiG's with any chance of success. The reply was that we needed to carry bombs just in case we got to the target without being intercepted. I declared that I wouldn't take the strike force into the SA-2 ring since it was undercast and we had no Weasels, pods or any Sky Spot for bombing.

"I thought that my argument was solid but it fell on faint-hearted ears. The command post chief did agree to check with 7th again with my concerns. He came back shortly with the answer that the frag order was to be flown as originally written. I told him that I wasn't going to take the strike force into the SA-2 ring no matter what they said and they could court martial me now or later. Just about then I was called to the secure phone to talk to the Takhli mission commander. Those secure phones were really poor so the conversation was difficult. I did recognize the voice on the other end as Col. Giraud, the Takhli wing commander. His concerns were exactly the same as mine. He said he was going to order his maintenance folks to load his aircraft just the way I had wanted. But since we were 5 minutes ahead of them, we'd have already blown the mission by the time they entered the area. I said that we had asked 7th for a change and been denied. He said he was used to 'telling' 7th what he was going to do, not ask them! He told me to hand the phone to our senior officer, Col. Stewart who had only been the D.O. since Col. Bean was shot down three days earlier. I heard Col. Stewart's end of the conversation which was largely: 'yes sir, yes sir'. He hung up and told the chief of the

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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command post to have maintenance load the aircraft just the way I wanted. And they did in short order.

"I planned and briefed the force on what we would do. We would proceed up the land route into Pack VIA anticipating that we would be intercepted by MiG-21's from Phuc Yen. Their practice was to take-off and climb out to about 25,000 feet on a course opposite to ours. The lead aircraft would key his Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) once to give their ground radar controllers their precise position. Then they would squawk their IFF one more time to get a turn in vector. When they squawked their IFF, our radar aircraft over the Gulf could also see them. Incidentally, we squawked all of the time because with our jamming pods, we lit up the radars anyhow. My plan was to wait until our radar guys called the MiG's position from its second squawk and then we would go into a 360-degree hard turn. My flight and the #3 flight would turn left and the other to the right. If we timed it just right, we would come back to our original heading just as the first MiG-21 popped up from the undercast looking for us -- only we'd be behind him in a position to fire instead of vice-versa. Usually there was a second MiG-21 about 3 miles in trail. My plan was that the last two flights would be ready for him.

"It worked just like I briefed. The radar aircraft warned me when the MiGs were 30 miles, 18 miles and finally at 7 miles. This was one more call than I expected. At the 7 mile call, I called the break. When we all came back to the original Northerly heading, there were no MiG's in sight. They had obviously been warned once we started our maneuver and stayed below the clouds and headed North for a safe recovery. Takhli was closer than 5 minutes behind us as were also the F-4C's. So we had a whole bunch of Air Force aircraft flying around in the same area with armed missiles and itchy trigger fingers! People were calling out bogies all over the place and thinking they might be MiG's only to discover that it was only some of our own. I soon decided that the MiGs were laying low and the situation was becoming hazardous from 'friendly fire'. So I called for my 4 flights to head home.

"The MiG Sweep was unsuccessful but we did discover that we could negate a MiG attack in the future, keep our bombs, and proceed on to the target. The trick was the turn which upset their attack geometry."

*355 TFW history Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO463, frame 1651 & "To Hanoi and Back", pgs 96 and 97 & Lt Gen USAF (Ret) Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, unpublished manuscript, chapter titled "Southeast Asia October 1967 - May 1968", pp 27 - 28.*

#### 07-Jan-68

5857

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 62nd combat mission into North Vietnam. He dropped his bombs in the area of the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-3.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 7 Jan 68.*

#### 09-Jan-68

5858

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 63rd combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was near Dong Hoi in RP-1.

*Carolyn Dickson 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 9 Jan 68.*

#### 11-Jan-68

4694

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 62-4242 on his 6th combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was a Sky Spot mission to RP-1, North Vietnam, that had been diverted from a target in RP-6A due to weather. Sortie length was 2 hours 30 minutes.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 64th combat mission, this one into RP-1 just above the DMZ.

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 4" against a SAM site in RP-1. "No BDA due to weather. Combat Sky Spot." It was his 30th combat mission.

*Bill Harris, letter 19 March 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 11 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

**13-Jan-68**

4864

"Crossbow" flight from the 34 TFS flew a FAC-controlled mission into southern Laos. The flight took off at 0725. Its line up was:

- #1 - Capt Harry Guy Paddon III
- #2 - Capt Vernon D. Ellis
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4361
- #4 - Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner, Jr.

It was Maj Armstrong's 53rd combat mission. "This was also a Cricket-assigned mission in southern Laos. Our FAC put us in on a suspected storage area and we bombed it with no noticeable results. We then came back and strafed the area and again saw no secondaries. We then went over and flew across the Package (I) to the coast but it was almost completely overcast and we couldn't see anything. Made a formation GCA landing. Otherwise it was very uneventful." The mission lasted for 2 hours 25 minutes.

Fellow 34 TFS pilot Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also flew a mission into Route Package 1. His targets on his 65th mission were trucks near Dong Hoi.

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 22 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 13 Jan 68.*

**19-Jan-68**

5859

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 66th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was near the town of Yen Bai in RP-5.

Also striking a target in RP-5 was Capt Earl J. Henderson from the 469 TFS, 388 TFW. It was his 69th combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Railroad yard 65 miles NW of Hanoi.  
"Armament: 6x750.

"Led flight on target in pack 5. MiGs were up but they didn't engage. Had good bombs despite no sight. Extremely heavy 37-mm. Quick rejoin and egress."

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 19 Jan 68 & Earl Henderson, combat di.*

**20-Jan-68**

5860

On the first day of the North Vietnamese attack against the Marine Corps base at Khe Sanh near the DMZ, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 67th combat mission into northern Laos and the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-4.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 20 Jan 68.*

**21-Jan-68**

4869

"Pistol" flight from the 34 TFS bombed a target in RP 1 using Sky Spot radar. The flight took off from Korat at 0700. Its line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4361
- #2 - Maj William M. Blakeslee

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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#3 - Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen

#4 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. flying his 68th combat mission.

It was Maj Armstrong's 59th combat mission. "This was another practice brief for me as Mission Commander but we went over to Pack I as the weather was bad up in Pack VI. We did a Combat Sky Spot on a target south of Mu Gia Pass but couldn't see our bombs impact due to clouds." Their mission lasted for 2 hours 15 minutes.

On his cigar band, Maj Dickson recorded the mission as against Dong Hoi in RP-1.

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 24 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 21 Jan 68.*

#### 22-Jan-68

2274

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 60-0462 on his 15th combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was a two-ship mission to RP-1, North Vietnam. The F-105 pilots fired AGM-12C missiles and flew armed reconnaissance. They encountered heavy 37-mm AAA. Sortie length was 2 hours 50 minutes.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 69th mission into North Vietnam. He flew into Mu Gia Pass and to Dong Hoi in RP-1.

Under Combat Skyspot, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Locust 1" against a road segment in RP-1. "Nui Ca Ay Interd." It was his 32nd combat mission.

*Bill Harris, letter, 19 March 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 22 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log*

#### 23-Jan-68

4924

Capt Lamont H. "Monty" Pharmer from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his first combat mission into North Vietnam. "It was a four-ship flight into one of the lower Pacs as was the practice for the first 5 missions. The target was on the coastal area where a small river came inland. We were trying to hit an area that supposedly had some cargo boats tied up along the edge. I never saw any boats but hit the area that I was supposed to. There was some light AAA. I remember thinking, at last, I'm finally flying a combat mission in the F-105 and even if this is the only one I ever make I'll always be able to say that I did it. I also remember trying to look back while 'jinking' to see if my six 750# bombs hit where they were supposed to. I was surprised to see the amount of explosion that the four of us made. The entire area was obliterated."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. also from the 34 TFS flew his 70th mission into North Vietnam. He flew into Mu Gia Pass and attacked Ron Ferry near Dong Hoi in RP-1.

*Monty Pharmer, E-mails, 18 and 22 Sept 2006 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 23 Jan 68.*

#### 24-Jan-68

5861

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 71st combat mission into northern Laos and RP-3 in North Vietnam.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 2" against a storage area in the Barrel Roll region of Laos. "75%". He then flew armed recce into RP-3. "No significant sightings." It was his 34th combat mission.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 24 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*



# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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**25-Jan-68**

5862

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 72nd combat mission against a target near Dong Hoi in RP-1 in North Vietnam.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 25 Jan 68.*

**27-Jan-68**

2276

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 60-0462 on his 19th combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was a FAC-controlled mission in RP-1, North Vietnam. Sortie length was 2 hours 40 minutes.

Capt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, flew his 76th combat mission into Laos.

"Target: Cave storage area in Laos.

"Armament: 6x750.

"Worked with FAC after running all over country. Three-hour mission where it should have been only two hours. Three out of the four of us hit cave and closed it off. No defensive reactions."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew another mission in RP-1 attacking a target near Dong Hoi. It was his 73rd mission into North Vietnam.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Cutler 2" against the Ron Ferry complex in RP-1. BDA was "None due weather. CN." It was his 35th combat mission.

*Bill Harris, letter, 19 March 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

**28-Jan-68**

4333

Maj Kenneth W. Mays and Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, were pilots from Korat on today's strike against the Thanh Hoa bridge (JCS 14). It was Maj Dickson's 74th mission into North Vietnam.

Maj Mays described the attack. "On Jan 28th 1968, I flew my last big mission up North. The target was the Thanh Hoa Bridge. The weather had been lousy, so the target was scheduled for the AM and then for the PM depending on the weather. If it went in the AM the 469 TFS would lead the mission and in the PM the 34th would lead the mission. The mission was weather cancelled in the morning so the 34th lead the mission in the afternoon.

"I was selected for Mission Commander and planned the mission together with a very dear friend of mine and class mate from Texas A&M, Steve Long of the 469th [Capt Steven W. Long, Jr. from the 469 TFS]. Steve was to be the Mission Commander if the mission went in the morning.

As mission commander of Korat's F-105s that attacked the bridge, Maj Mays led "Scuba" flight. His flight's lineup was:

#1 - Maj Kenneth W. Mays

#2 - Maj Donald W. Hodge

#3 - Maj James E. Daniel, Jr. - 34th Ops Officer and Deputy Mission Commander

#4 - Maj David C. Dickson

Maj Donald W. Rever, also from the 34th led another flight from Korat.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"Again 7th AF had the mission planned for us and had us headed straight from the refueling track to the target. During the mission planning, we came up with what we thought was better mission execution. Permission was received from our squadron commanders and the DO to ignore the 7th AF suggested route. We planned the mission like we were headed for a target near Hanoi. When we hit the river that runs under the Than Hoa bridge we turned down the river and headed toward the bridge. ... The mission was executed as planned. Good bombs were put on the target; however the most significant target was a secondary target. As I rolled in, I saw train cars marshaled in a railyard waiting to cross on a ferry. I called these out to flights behind me and good bombs were put on them. Takhli also hit the rail cars. With the diversion down the river we had no MiG threat and very little flak. In fact on our way in to the target, MiGs launched and headed to the northwest thinking we were headed to Hanoi.

"Steve still gives me a hard time about stealing his mission. There are some things one has to laugh about. On this mission, Jim Daniel was the Deputy Mission Commander. When I called to go hot about the time we hit the Fishes Mouth, Jim accidentally hit his jettison button and dropped his stores before we got to the target. I told him he could go back, but he said he was coming along for the ride. He did not want to miss the fun and continued on to the target --- clean."

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 3" against the Thanh Hoa bridge in RP-4. It was his 36th combat mission. (Rufus Dye Mission History log.)

*Col Ken Mays, USAF (Ret), unpublished memoir, "Tour At Korat -- July 67 to Feb 68", dated 15 Dec 2003 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 28 Jan 68 & Ken Mays e-mails 27 & 28 Nov and 3 Dec 2010.*

#### 29-Jan-68

5863

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 75th combat mission against a target in downtown Hanoi (which was probably weathered out) and in Mu Gia Pass in RP-1 in North Vietnam. This mission was his 32nd mission into RP-6 and his first into this region since the MiG sweep attempt on 6 January 1968.

On his 37th mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 3" against a highway segment in RP-6. "100%. Road cut."

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 29 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

#### 30-Jan-68

5864

On the day the North Vietnamese began their 1968 Tet Offensive, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 76th combat mission. His target was the Quang Khe ferry in RP-1.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Bobbin 3" against a fraggged target in Northern Laos. He ended up on an ineffectual mission in RP-1. "Target not available. Jettisoned ordnance due to fuel." It was his 38th combat mission.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 30 Jan 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

#### 01-Feb-68

5865

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 77th combat mission. His target was the Ron ferry in RP-1.

Capt William A. Thomas, Jr., also from the 34 TFS, received the Air Medal for "Meritorious Achievement While Participating in Aerial Flight" for the period 22 January - 1 February 1968. The award certificate was approved on 21 February 1968 and was signed by General William A. Momyer,

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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Commander of Hq 7th Air Force, and Harold Brown, Secretary of the Air Force.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 1 Feb 68.*

### 02-Feb-68

2307

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 61-0132 on his 22nd combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was a FAC-controlled mission in RP-1, North Vietnam, followed by armed reconnaissance. Sortie length was 3 hours 20 minutes.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS struck a target in RP-1. On his 78th mission he also went into Laos.

On his 40th combat mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Ozark 4" in an Iron Hand flight in RP-1. "No signals" He also dropped using radar on the Nui Ca Ay interdiction point in RP-1.

*Bill Harris, letter 19 March 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 2 Feb 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

### 03-Feb-68

5866

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 79th combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was in the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-4 but he became involved in a RESCAP for an F-102A pilot who was shot down by a missile fired by a MiG-21. The pilot, 1Lt Wallace Luttrell Wiggins from the 509 TFS out of Udorn, was KIA.

On his 41st combat mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Hatchet 3" against a truck park in southern Laos. "100%. 37-mm site silenced. Light 37-mm." He then flew armed recce in RP-1. "No significant sightings."

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 3 Feb 68 & "Vietnam Air Losses" by Chi Hobson, pg 135 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

### 04-Feb-68

5867

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 80th combat mission to Dong Hoi in RP-1.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 4 Feb 68.*

### 06-Feb-68

5868

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 81st combat mission against Route 7 in RP-3.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 6 Feb 68.*

### 08-Feb-68

5869

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 82nd combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was in the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-4.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 8 Feb 68.*

### 11-Feb-68

2280

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 60-0462 on his 27th combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was an Iron Hand mission to RP-5, North Vietnam. Sortie length was 3 hours 10 minutes.

Pilots from the 388 TFW struck Yen Bai airfield using Commando Club radar signals.

Capt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 85th combat mission into Laos and North Vietnam.

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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"Target: Radar target in northern Laos.

"Armament: 6x750.

"Airborne spare for Commando Club drop in pack V. Trailed strike force as extra MiG cap. No MiGs airborne. Turned around and radar dropped on alternate target."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS was in an F-105 flight from Korat that struck Kep airfield (JCS 9.1). It was his 83rd mission and his 33rd and last mission into Route Pack 6, North Vietnam.

*Bill Harris, letter, 19 March 2001 & 388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frame 0461 & Carol Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 11 Feb 68 & Earl Henderson, combat diary.*

**12-Feb-68**

5870

In a repeat of his 6 February 1968 mission, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 84th combat mission against Route 7 in RP-3.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 12 Feb 68.*

**18-Feb-68**

5871

In a repeat of his 6 and 12 February missions, Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 85th combat mission against Route 7 in RP-3.

Capt Joseph S. Sechler, also from the 34th, flew his third mission over North Vietnam. His flight lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Billy R. Givens
- #2 - Maj William P. Shunney
- #3 - Maj Donald W. Hodge
- #4 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler

Capt Sechler logged 2:25 flying hours.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 18 Feb 68 & Joe Sechler flight log via e-mail 28 Apr 10.*

**19-Feb-68**

3848

F-105s from the 388 TFW struck Phuc Yen (JCS 6) airfield using radar signals from Commando Club. "The Iron Hand flight providing support for the strike fired one Shrike at a Fansong signal located approximately one mile from Phuc Yen. Aircrews estimated some damage to the radar, which ceased to operate 70 seconds after launch."

Another 388 TFW flight, also under Commando Club control, dropped 24 MK-117s on Yen Bai airfield in RP-5. There was no BDA due to weather. Four pilots from the 34 TFS in "Scuba" flight flew this mission. The flight took off at 1355. Their line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 59-1760
- #2 - Capt Ben J. Fuhrman
- #3 - Capt Harry Guy Paddon III
- #4 - Maj Melvin L. Irwin

It was Maj Armstrong's 70th combat mission. "This was a first alternate radar drop on Yen Bay. There were no MiG calls on the way up or back. We had some 85-mm bursts out of Yen Bay as usual but it wasn't too close. All in all it was a pretty uneventful mission." Their mission lasted 3 hours. (Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 28.)

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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Former West Point football star, Lt Col Felix A. "Doc" Blanchard, flew his first combat mission 5 days after arriving at Korat on 14 February 1968. He was assigned as the 388 TFW Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 86th combat mission against Route 7 in RP-3 -- his target area for his last two missions.

Using the Commando Club radar, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Gator 3" against the Ban Nakay truck park in Northern Laos. He then flew armed recce in RP-3. "No significant sightings." It was his 44th combat mission.

*388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frames 0462, 0504 and 0511 - 0512 & Sam Armstrong' mission log & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 19 Feb 68 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

### 20-Feb-68

5872

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 87th combat mission against a target near Dien Bien Phu, in RP-5, North Vietnam.

Capt Joseph S. Sechler, also from the 34th, flew his fourth mission over North Vietnam. His flight lineup was:

- #1 - Maj William M. Blakeslee
- #2 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler
- #3 - Maj James Hardin Metz
- #4 - Capt Anthony F. Germann

Capt Sechler logged 3:00 flying hours.

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Bass 4" to bomb Vinh airfield in RP-3. "... Fired at SAM ring." It was his 45th combat mission.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 20 Feb 68 & Joe Sechler flight log via e-mail 28 Apr 10 & Rufus Dye Mission History log.*

### 22-Feb-68

2294

Capt Bill Harris, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 60-5375 on his 31st combat mission from Korat RTAFB, Thailand. It was a Sky Spot mission in RP-5, North Vietnam. Sortie length was 2 hours.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 60-0497 on his 89th combat mission to a target in RP-3, North Vietnam.

*Bill Harris, letter 19 March 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 22 Feb 68.*

### 24-Feb-68

4883

"Pistol" flight from the 34 TFS took off from Korat at 0610 to bomb a causeway in RP-1. Their lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4361
- #2 - Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner, Jr.
- #3 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #4 - Capt John E. Hartman

# David C. Dickson, Jr.

## F-105 History

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This was Maj Armstrong's 74th combat mission. "The original # 2 man, Bill Thomas [Capt William A. Thomas, Jr.] aborted on the ground so Buddy Barner took his place. There had been a thunderstorm the night before and there was extensive cloudiness and light rain at take-off time. We had to make individual climbs to get on top of the weather. We Sky Spotted a causeway over near Dong Hoi. Coming home, we ran into cloud tops up to 22,000 feet and made a weather penetration into the field." They flew for 2 hours 45 minutes.

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS also flew a mission to Dong Hoi in RP-1. It was his 90th combat sortie into North Vietnam.

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 29 Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar bar dated 24 Feb 68.*

**27-Feb-68**

5874

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 91st combat mission. He struck five trucks in Mu Gia Pass, in RP-1, North Vietnam.

Another flight of 34th pilots also flew a mission over North Vietnam. The lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Donald W. Hodge
- #2 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler flying his eighth mission
- #3 - Maj Melvin L. Irwin
- #4 - Maj Douglas A. Roysdon

Capt Sechler logged 2:35 flying hours.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 27 Feb 68.*

**01-Mar-68**

4886

The two pilots in "Goose" flight from the 34 TFS cut a road in Laos after not finding a target in RP-1 due to weather. The flight took off at 0610 and flew for 2 hours 25 minutes. Their line up was:

- #1 - Capt John E. Hartman
- #2 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0458

This was Maj Armstrong's 77th combat mission. "We were the airborne spares and I let Ed Hartman lead the flight to get some experience. We headed toward Mu Gia Pass and found the weather real bad over there. We went up to 21,000 feet and couldn't stay on top so we went on down to west of Khe Sanh and worked with a FAC and made some road cuts in Laos. We had to work beneath a low ceiling and consequently had several dud bombs."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 92nd mission to a target near Dong Hoi, RP-1, North Vietnam.

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 30 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 1 Mar 68.*

**03-Mar-68**

5875

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 93rd combat mission into North Vietnam. His target was again in the "Fish's Mouth" in RP-4.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 3 Mar 68.*

**05-Mar-68**

5876

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 94th combat mission against Route 7 in RP-3.

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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"Pistol" flight from the 34th flew a mission over North Vietnam. The lineup was:

- #1 - Bob Moore
- #2 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler flying his 13th mission
- #3 - Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen
- #4 - Capt John S. Murphy

Capt Sechler logged 2:20 flying hours.

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 5 Mar 68 & Joe Sechler, e-mail 28 Apr 1*

**09-Mar-68**

4892

The four pilots in "Scuba" flight from the 34 TFS did a radar bomb drop in Laos. They took off at 1425 and returned after 2 hours 15 minutes. Their line up was:

- #1 - Capt William A. Thomas, Jr.
- #2 - Maj Ivor K. Goodrich
- #3 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #4 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 61-0219

This was Maj Armstrong's 83rd combat mission. "This was a pretty uneventful radar drop up in Laos. There was a big thunderstorm between the target and Thailand that we had to skirt. We made a recce of the 'Fish's Mouth' but it was pretty well clobbered so we came on home."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 95th mission against a target near Quang Tri in RP-1, North Vietnam.

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pp 31 - 32 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 9 Mar 68.*

**11-Mar-68**

4903

The four pilots in "Pistol" flight from the 34 TFS were diverted to a target in Laos as a result of the North Vietnamese attack on Lima Site 85. They took off at 0715 and returned after 2 hours 55 minutes. Their line up was:

- #1 - Maj Ivor K. Goodrich
- #2 - Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 58-1152
- #4 - Maj Douglas A. Roysdon

This was Maj Armstrong's 85th combat mission. "We were diverted up to Lima 85 up by the North TACAN station. The bad guys were trying to storm the hill. The hill was sticking up through the clouds but we couldn't detect any enemy action. The A-1Es were working over the enemy but they wouldn't let us in on the action. Instead they put us in on an enemy gun emplacement about 10 miles away."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 96th combat mission today. (The printing on his cigar band for this and his last four missions was too faded to determine his target.)

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 32 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 11 Mar 68.*

**13-Mar-68**

186

The 469 TFS, 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, reached a total of 30,000 combat flying hours in

## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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SEA. Four pilots flew the mission that reached this mark: Lt. Col William Decker, Squadron Commander; Maj Charles C. Vasiliadis; Capt Peter K. Foley; and Capt William O. Harris III.

Bill Harris recalled, "... On the 30,000 combat hour flight for (the) 469th, I flew #4 in a flight of D's armed with 6/750's, 20-mm, and jammers. I flew in tail #60-0458. ... It was my #42 mission, a Commando Club mission in Barrell Roll, followed by a Recce of Rt.-7. My comments (in my notes) were good mission ("Shit Hot") the mission was ... 10 trucks spotted and strafed." [NOTE: This may have been a Sky Spot mission but wasn't a Commando Club mission since Lima Site 85, the location of the Commando Club radar, in Laos had been overrun by North Vietnamese soldiers two days before.]

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 97th combat mission today.

*388 TFW History, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO584 & Bill Harris, e-mail, 15 Mar 2001 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 13 Mar 68.*

**14-Mar-68**

5877

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 98th combat mission today. (The printing on his post-mission cigar band was too faded to read his target.)

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 14 Mar 68.*

**16-Mar-68**

5878

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 99th combat mission today. (The printing on his post-mission cigar band was too faded to read his target.)

*Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 16 Mar 68.*

**17-Mar-68**

4905

Two pilots from the 34 TFS who were airborne spares for the morning launch flew a mission as "Goose" flight into Laos. They took off at 0720 and flew for 2 hours 50 minutes. The line up was:

#1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0428

#2 - Capt Gary G. Durkee

This was Maj Armstrong's 88th mission. "Gary Durkee and I were the airborne spares today. I put myself on as a spare because I didn't think they would take-off and it wasn't my day to fly. But they did send us off as a flight of two. We were carrying 6 CBUs apiece. We worked with an O-1 FAC in middle Laos and got one good secondary fire out of our drops. After that we went over to recce Pack I and didn't see anything although the weather was clear."

Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew his 100th combat mission today. (The printing on his post-mission cigar band was too faded to read his target.)

*Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 33 & Carolyn Dickson, 20 Apr 09 letter giving annotation on cigar band dated 17 Mar 68.*

**31-Mar-68**

5165

Five F-105 pilots assigned to the 34 TFS in the 388 TFW at Korat completed flying 100 missions during March 1968. Since Capt Robert D. Pielin flew his 100th mission in July 1966, the first pilot in the 34th to do so, these five were the 76th through the 80th pilots from the 34th to achieve this goal.

#76 - Maj Clyde L. Falls, Jr.

#77 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer - 12 March 1968

#78 - Maj David C. Dickson, Jr. - 17 March 1968

#79 - Maj William M. Blakeslee



## David C. Dickson, Jr.

### F-105 History

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# 80 - Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner, Jr.

After arriving home on 23 March 1968, Maj Dickson's assignment returned him to the Air Defense Command this time to Tyndal AFB where he flew F-106s. He remained there until he retired as a major in 1970.

Maj Falls was also assigned to the Air Defense Command as an F-106 pilot. He belonged to the 318 FIS, McChord AFB, WA. He died in the crash of F-106A 59-0148 on 22 April 1969 near Mt. Rainier, WA.

Capt Beyer was reassigned to Wurtsmith AFB MI as a KC-135 aircraft commander. (Doug Beyer, e-mail 27 Apr 10)

*34 TFS web site accessed on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Carolyn Dickson telephone interview, 23 Apr 09 & F-106 Delta Dart Forum at <http://forum.f-106deltadart.com/>*

#### 30-Jun-68

2592

(Approximate date). "Thirty-six Thunderchief pilots honored -- for the completion of 100 missions in the F-105 fighter-bomber over North Vietnam. Thirty-six pilots were honored with recognition certificates this month during a ceremony at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. The recipients were: Lt Cols Reddock and Carl W. McKenzie; Maj. Barner, Leftwich, J. G. McGukin, J. H. Bobel, Jr., W. Fredlund, David C. Dickson, Jr., H. Wilson, W. Bazzell, J. Hildebrand, Alonzo L. Ferguson, J. Light, John R. Whaley, A. Lenski, R. S. Beale, Irwin, Donahue, Huntley, R. C. Fontaine, Maj Malcolm D. Winter, Robinson, and Mitchell; and Capt. W. F. Bryant, T. G. Cline, P. H. Walker, W. Grieger, H. G. Paddon, C. Jewett, R. Venturini, J. Wright, Earl J. Henderson, V. Ellis, D. Tucker, Beyer, and Dentino."

*Thunderchief Worldwide Report Vol III No 10 June 1968.*

#### 13-Jul-94

5818

David Carter Dickson, Jr. died of a heart attack in Elkin, NC. "David was born 18 July 1931 and died of a massive heart attack (actually in the hospital doorway) on 13 July 1994. At the time, he was the manager of the municipal airport in Elkin, NC."

His obituary provided more details of his life. "Maj Dickson was born July 18, 1931, in Ashe County, N.C. to David Carter and Mabel Weaver Dickson. He graduated from Jonesville High School in 1949. In 1950, he entered the Air Force Aviation Cadet Corps, where he received his commission and became a jet fighter pilot. During a distinguished twenty-year career, he received many decorations including the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"During the Vietnam War, Major Dickson completed more than 100 combat flying missions over Southeast Asia between 1967 and 1968. After serving his country in many assignments in the United States, Europe, and Africa, he returned with his family in 1970 to Elkin. At that time, he became chief corporate pilot for Chatham Manufacturing Company. He was also the owner and operator of Elkin Air Service for more than twenty years."

*E-mail, 14 Apr 09 from David Dickson's cousin, Charlie Weaver, from Winston-Salem, NC.*