

## David S. Hartman, Jr.

### F-105 History

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07-Jun-68

243

The nineteenth F-105 RTU Class 68IR graduated at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 5 Dec 67 with 27 students. Twenty six graduated. The incoming class consisted of 2 Capts and 25 2nd Lts, all recent graduates in the top 10% of the Undergraduate Pilot Training program.

"This class is unique in that it is the first class in which all members are recent graduates of the Undergraduate Pilot Training Program. ... They have no pilot experience other than that received in pilot training. This represented a marked contrast with previous F-105 RTU classes composed of older, more mature and experienced pilots."

To compensate for their inexperience, their course was increased from 92 to 120 flying hours for a total of 78 sorties (RTU course 1111106). On 8 Mar 68, student 2Lt Frank F. Perry III was killed in the crash of F-105D 62-4226 near Raymond KS.

The class deployed for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 16 Apr - 9 May 68 with the 563 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Joe W. Pickett. Capt Wyrewood Gowell was Top Student.

On 30 Apr 1968, while at George AFB, instructor pilot Maj Robert V. "Boris" Baird, ejected successfully from F-105D 61-0083 when it developed a flight control problem after takeoff.

The 10 May 1968 edition of The Wichita Eagle reported on the 563 TFS's return to McConnell after their deployment to George. "The 563rd Tactical Fighter Squadron at McConnell Air Force Base returned to Wichita Thursday after 23 days at George AFB, Calif. where it achieved a record 725 successful practice sorties.

"The student fighter squadrons at McConnell are sent to George for special aerial combat training as a routine but this was the first group of F-105 students to contain all recently commissioned second lieutenants.

"None of them are experienced pilots, but they are a good group," said Maj. Robert B. Baird, flight commander. "I experienced the only mishap during the 23-day exercise." Baird was forced to eject from his craft April 30 when it developed flight control difficulty shortly after takeoff from George.

"McConnell is the training center for pilots in the F-105 Thunderchief fighter-bomber prior to assignment in Southeast Asia. Most students up to now had been experienced pilots who were converting from other aircraft to the 105, Baird said.

"This group of students had logged about 90 hours flying time in the Thunderchief during their training here before going to George where they flew about another 20 hours each," Baird said. "They will be required to complete about 10 additional hours flight time here, but they already have overseas orders for mid-June."

"Most practice flights are over Smokey Hill Bombing and Gunnery Range near Salina, Kan.

"But when it comes time to fire on airborne targets, Kansas lacks sufficient air space," Maj. Baird explained, so the squadron retreats to skies over the southern California desert. There they concentrate efforts on air-to-air combat practice and use of the Sidewinder missile.

"After graduation from flight training, the 26 class members will begin water survival training at Homestead AFB, Fla., before going overseas."

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The students were:

Capt Wyrewood A. "Goose" Gowell	2Lt Eldon W. Joersz
Capt Kenneth G. Lindell	2Lt Charles A. Kennedy
2Lt Salvatore A. Bonacasa	2Lt Peter J. Linsley
2Lt Donald S. Brown II	2Lt Harvey A. Marshall
2Lt Robert E. Bryan	2Lt Phillip A. Miller
2Lt Gary R. Confer	2Lt Frank F. Perry III
2Lt David Thomas Dinan III	2Lt John C. Pluta
2Lt Preston T. "Pres" Duke	2Lt Cecil L. Snell
2Lt Curtis S. "Scott" Hamme	2Lt Ronald D. Stafford
2Lt James N. Hammond	2Lt Marschall D. Tilley
2Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer	2Lt Richard R. Venturi
2Lt Clarence J. "Skip" Holm	2Lt Barry D. Wyttenbach
2Lt David S. Hartman, Jr.	2Lt Robert John Zukowski
2Lt Lynn A. Aikman	

Seven lieutenants -- Confer, Dinan, Hoffmeyer, Hartman, Stafford, Venturi, and Zukowski -- were assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat. Three of them were shot down: Dinan (twice) (KIA the second time), Zukowski (KIA), and Stafford (Rescued).

*23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 67 & Jan - Jun 68, USAF microfilm MO554 frame 2025.*

### 31-Aug-68

4199

Ten pilots from the 34 TFS received medals approved by 7 AF in August 1968 for missions flown earlier. They were:

Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen DFC (10 OLC) SO G-2685 29 Aug 1968 (14 Dec 67)  
Maj James E. James, Jr. DFC 5 (OLC) SO G-2627 24 Aug 1968 (14 Dec 67)  
Capt Arthur G. Duston AM SO G-2606 22 Aug 68, (6 Jul - 28 Jul 68)  
Capt Chester H. Thatcher, Jr. AM SO G-2606 22 Aug 68 (28 Jun - 17 Jul 68)  
Lt Col Earl F. Bancroft AM (10 OLC) SO G-2607 22 Aug 68 (7 Jul - 28 Jul 68)  
Maj Vincent Colasuonno AM SO G-2607 22 Aug 68 (4 Jul - 23 Jul 68)  
1Lt David S. Hartman, Jr. AM SO G-2605 22 Aug 68 (4 Jul - 21 Jul 68)  
1Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer AM SO G-2605 22 Aug 68 (4 Jul - 21 Jul 68)  
Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. AM (19 - 27 OLC) SO G2603 22 Aug 68 (7 Nov 67 - 19 Jul 68)  
Capt William A. Thomas, Jr. AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-2601 22 Aug 68 (2 Feb - 29 May 68)

Capt Thomas departed Korat on 31 August 1968 for his next duty assignment with the 12 TFS, 18 TFW, Kadena AB, Okinawa, where he arrived on 1 September. He was joined in Okinawa by his wife, Mary Jane, and a son and daughter.

*388 TFW history, Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frame 1765 & Capt Bill Thomas, AF Form 11.*