

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

**24-Jan-64**      **21-Feb-64**

151

Under 355 TFW Operation Order 1-64 dated 17 January 1964, the 354 TFS deployed 12 F-105Ds from George AFB CA to Eielson AFB AK for two exercises -- Diamond Lil XI and Polar Siege. The squadron commander was Lt Col Adrian E. Drew. Col William H. Holt, 355 TFW/DCO, was the AFSTRIKE Force Commander for Polar Siege.

The deploying pilots were:

Maj James H. Caldwell	Capt Vernon M. Kulla
Maj Robert M. Krone	Capt Charles Loucks
Maj Robert E. Lambert	Capt George W. Love
Capt John G. Ahearn	Capt Luther W. Manuel
Capt Frank E. Bennett	Capt Philip A. Mortensen
Capt James W. Carlson	Capt Richard P. Pearson
Capt Richard W. Cullen	Capt J. L. Symonds
Capt Donald E. Debolt	Capt Howard K. White

Lt Col Lester D. Lawrence was the 354 TFS maintenance officer.

Pilots flew 13 sorties on 26 and 27 January for the classified exercise, "Diamond Lil XI", and, beginning on 30 January, 151 close air support sorties for a total of 274 flying hours in the joint Army-Air Force cold weather exercise "Polar Siege". "Polar Siege is the first major deployment for the 354th since its activation in late 1962."

Temperatures at Eielson AFB ranged from 37 degrees to minus 43 degrees Fahrenheit. "A Coleman tractor, which was flown to Eielson AFB for towing aircraft around on the flight line, was winterized here with the addition of special lubricants and an increase of antifreeze. ... Cold soaking of the F-105s in Alaska would leave them at a temperature of 30 degrees below zero while they are on the ground. ... Preflight checklists are broken up into 15-minute segments so that crewchiefs can work on the aircraft in shifts rather than longtime exposure to the freezing temperatures which could result in frostbite."

During the deployment, on 7 February 1964, F-105D 62-4345 was lost when the pilot, Capt James W. "Spike" Carlson, experienced flight control problems on a low level attack sortie and collided with a tree. He ejected successfully at an altitude of 900 feet.

The return to George was delayed by a grounding of all F-105s for T.O. 2J-J75-658 that required ten days to remove and inspect oil lines to the number six engine bearing.

*355 TFW History, 1 Jan - 30 Jun 1964, USAF microfilm NO461, frames 0448 - 0449, 0519 - 0538 & Sawadee Weekly, Vol 1 No 11, 14 March 1966, article on Maj Robert M. Krone, 469 TFS Ops Officer & 831 CSG SO TA-96 dated 20 Jan 64.*

**02-May-64**      **18-Sep-64**

153

Eight days after passing their first ORI, and braving bitterly cold winds in early morning on Saturday, 2 May 1964, the 354 TFS, 355 TFW deployed 18 F-105s from George AFB, California, to Incirlik AB, Turkey, to assume a NATO alert commitment. This was the first time F-105s were deployed to Turkey. The deployment, designated "Fox Able 165", launched 28 aircraft from George, staged 24 F-105s to Loring AFB, Maine, and then 22 of them from Moron AB, Spain. Eighteen F-105s departed Moron in 3 cells of 6 aircraft on 5 May and landed at Incirlik 4.5 hours later where they became Detachment 165, TUSLOG (USAFE).

The squadron replaced F-100s of the 356 TFS for it to deploy to Aviano AB, Italy, to replace the 428 TFS (also F-100s) so that it could return to Cannon AFB NM.

The squadron deployed with 25 officers and 2 airmen and was accompanied by a total of 5 support officers, 254 airmen, and two tech reps, one from Republic and the other from Autonetics. Lt Col Adrian E. Drew commanded the squadron. His Operations officer was Lt Col Charles A. Watry.

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

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Maj Raymond L. Klebaum was the maintenance officer for the deployment.

"Lt Col Drew and the 355 TFW Commander, Col Edward A. McGough, flew in the first of three waves of F-105s to leave George. "The second wave was led by Maj Robert E. Lambert and the third by Capt Lowell Shirer." Col William H. Holt, the wing's DCO, and Lt Col Aaron J. Bowman from the 469 TFS, as Fighter Controller, made the trip to Turkey in the TAC C-135 "Talking Bird" aerial command post that accompanied the F-105s.

Maj Robert M. Krone, Capt William D. Stigers, Capt William S. Koenitzer, Capt Gilbert Bruce Holmes, Jr., Capt William Jennings "Bart" Barthelmas, Jr., Capt Charles Loucks, Capt Ralph C. Balcom, and 1Lt Larry J. Wright were some of the pilots on the deployment.

The Operations Officer, Maj Charles Watry recalled, "... I must say that the people in the squadron were mostly hand-picked and there wasn't much they couldn't do."

"On 8 May, operational flying began. Sorties were scheduled for continuation training in the areas of navigation (low level, combat profiles, visual, and radar/Doppler), instruments, KC-135 refueling, air-to-air dart firing and special weapons delivery.

"Initially, only visual special weapons deliveries were practiced, however, radar reflectors were constructed and erected [under direction of one of the squadron pilots] at Konya Bombing Range in June. The modified range was found to be most satisfactory, and subsequent sorties were scheduled to include practice radar deliveries of special weapons.

"Operational flying ceased from 15 May through 27 May, and from 2 June through 9 June due to the grounding of the F-105s. Only limited flying began again on 10 June due to Technical Order Modifications (TOM) required on all F-105 fuel systems. Because of severe limitations placed on the aircraft, it was impossible to accomplish AFM 51-105 continuation training requirements for the remainder of FY 4/64. The aircraft were again grounded on 1 September for compliance with TCTO 916. Only three days were lost due to this grounding and no further restrictions were placed on the aircraft.

"The redeployment of the 354th TFS was scheduled to take place on 9, 10, 11, and 12 August. Flying stand-down was scheduled from 8 August through 12 August to accommodate OPERATION CROSS SWITCH. However, on 7 August, the 354th TFS was extended, indefinitely, and normal employment operations were resumed." Maj Watry, who had replaced Maj Drew as the squadron commander on 24 June, recalled the delay. "... Just two days before we were scheduled to be relieved by the next George AFB F-105 squadron (the 357 TFS), I received a wire in the middle of the night that the Tonkin Gulf incident had occurred and that it would be another 60 days until another squadron (the 421st) could be made combat-ready to relieve us ... . It was a grim duty telling the squadron, especially the enlisted men, that we were destined to spend another two months of hardship living and duty in such a place." (Charles Watry letter dated Feb 13, 1985 to Bauke Jan Douma)

The 354 TFS was due to be replaced by the 357 TFS to return to George starting on 9 August 1964. However, due to the Gulf of Tonkin crisis in SEA that sent the 357th to Yokota AB, Japan, the 354th was extended at Incirlik.

"The [354 TFS] aircraft remained restricted from refueling or carrying fuel in the bomb bay and belly tanks through the remainder of the employment phase.

"Even though this continued to degrade the effectiveness of training sorties, most of the first quarter FY 65 AFM 51-105 continuation training requirements were accomplished. KC-135 refueling was accomplished on 17 and 18 August. Fuel was transferred on these missions since the systems were modified to allow refueling of the internal tanks and the 450-gallon wing tank only. From the last week in August until redeployment, Trailblazer and Close Air Support missions were flown along with required bombing, navigation, and instrument missions. Air-to-ground rocket

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

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sorties were flown for familiarization in the last weeks only."

The 354th was finally replaced on 15 September 1964 by the 421 TFS.

*355 TFW History, 1 Jan - 30 Jun 1964, USAF microfilm NO461, frames 0418 - 0419 & 0455 and 1 July - 31 Dec 64, frames 0675 - 0689.*

**15-Sep-64**      **23-Nov-64**

154

Under "Operation Cross Switch", the 421 TFS, 355 TFW, deployed from McConnell AFB KS to Incirlik AB, Turkey, to replace the 354 TFS for TAC's NATO commitment. The 421st's commander was Maj Charles W. Barnett. The 354 TFS commander was Maj Charles A. Watry. The deployment involved only personnel, with the 18 F-105s and support equipment from the 354 TFS remaining at Incirlik. The four MATS C-135s that brought the 421 TFS personnel returned, after a three-hour turnaround, with the personnel from the 354 TFS.

Since the 421 TFS was not operationally ready to assume a NATO rotation in August 1964 when they were notified of the revised schedule, the squadron accelerated their preparations so they could deploy in September instead of November.

"All 25 pilots were in place at 0700L, 18 September. Briefings were completed, the 354th was relieved, and the 421st assumed the NATO commitment at 1600L on that date. Operational flying began on 21 September with a normal daily schedule of 16 sorties.

"... Four 421st TFS pilots arrived at Incirlik AB in the last week of August to replace four pilots who had to return to CONUS early. The remainder of the 421st TFS deployed to Incirlik via MATS C-135 aircraft on 17, 18, 19, and 20 September 1964.

"... The first three C-135s [with personnel from the 354 TFS] redeployed to George AB, California, via Torrejon AB, Spain, and McGuire AFB, New Jersey. The fourth made an additional stop at McConnell to off load the squadron mobility increment and those personnel who had signed out PCS from George before deploying to Incirlik." Capt Charles Loucks was one of the pilots who left Incirlik.

Maj Watry, the 354th commander, recalled, "... when we finally returned aboard the C-135s, our families were in the process of packing up to leave for Kansas."

*355 TFW History, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1964, USAF microfilm NO461 frame 0687 & Charles A. Watry letter dated Feb 13, 1985 to Bauke Jan Douma.*

**03-Mar-65**      **12-Jun-65**

156

Under "One Buck Ten", personnel of the 354 TFS, 355 TFW, deployed via C-135Bs from McConnell AFB, Kansas, to Kadena AB, Okinawa, to support the 18 TFW in their nuclear alert commitments and combat operations at Korat RTAFB, Thailand. The 354 TFS was commanded by Lt Col Charles A. Watry. Capt Charles Loucks was a 354th pilot on the deployment.

The squadron relieved the 469 TFS, also from the 355 TFW, and continued flying their F-105s. The 469 TFS returned to McConnell.

The 354th deployment was in accordance with CINCAFSTRIKE Operations Plan 32-P and CINCAFSTRIKE Operations Plan 8. "Since the movement of aircraft was not scheduled for this deployment, planning was quite simplified. The squadron had not been to the Far East as a unit, so it was necessary to plan and conduct comprehensive intelligence briefings for the aircrews. The Intelligence section of the 355th Tactical Fighter Wing provided outstanding support for this program. Planning was accelerated by a DEFCON-3 on 7 February 1965 when the squadron was alerted for movement to Southeast Asia as the Charlie Squadron of the 835th Air Division. Mobility was again rehearsed when the Wing received its [second] ORI later in February." (Frame 0760)

"There was no advance party as such, although the Intelligence sections from the 469 TFS remained at Kadena on a 30-day extension, to assist the incoming 354 TFS with any problems it

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

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would encounter."

The deployment began with some confusion. "On 1 March 1965, the 354th was notified by TAC that the deployment had been delayed for an indefinite period of time. As a result of this notification, the squadron began to unpack in order to meet a flying schedule the following day. However, at 2100 hours on the evening of 1 March 1965, they were informed that the move would go as scheduled. Repacking was accomplished, and the first C-135B departed McConnell on 3 March 1965 with all but five of the aircrews and sufficient ground crews to enable an immediate deployment to the FOB [Korat] to relieve the 469 TFS there. The scheduled itinerary was to fly non-stop from McConnell to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, where there would be an 18-hour crew rest, and from there, non-stop to Kadena AB, Okinawa. On the four succeeding days a C-135 departed McConnell, and with the exception of the last aircraft, landed at Kadena two days later. The fifth aircraft had maintenance problems and did not arrive until 10 March. One airman was left at Hickam with a throat infection, but was able to catch the last flight from there to Kadena."

"During their stay at Kadena, the aircrews of the 354th attended a series of briefings on PACAF nuclear procedures and were assigned targets for study and certification. After continuing target study, they were certified by a Target Review Board. ... Fourteen pilots certified on targets, and two assumed Quick Strike Alert at 1630. ... Operational flying began on 8 March with eight sorties scheduled per day.

"The squadron was tasked with two aircraft and pilots on Quick Strike. The remainder of the pilots were tasked with 12 Follow-On Targets. This meant that 12 of the 14 CR pilots were restricted to the base or a distance not more than 30 minutes from the Operations building. This would have been a significant problem if extended past the two weeks period for which it was scheduled." (Frame 0761)

"Four aircrews were not combat ready when they had departed McConnell. They lacked a Standardization/Evaluation flight and refueling qualifications. During the local flying at Kadena, they received the check flights, but tankers were not available for refueling qualifications. (Frames 0754 - 0755)

"On 11 March, the squadron dropped four of their Follow-On targets at 1600 hours. ... Six pilots departed on the 13th for the FOB. All nuclear commitments were dropped on 18 March 1965. No scorable range was available and no tankers were available for any training. Dart firing was initiated; however, weather conditions at the time precluded any qualifications. Most of the training sorties were local-area orientation flights." (Frame 0761)

By 19 Mar 1965, the entire 354 TFS had moved to Korat to fly Rolling Thunder bombing raids over North Vietnam.

*355 TFW History, 1 Jan - 30 Jun 65, USAF microfilm NO461, frames 0753 - 0761.*

### 26-May-65

813

In Rolling Thunder mission number RT-16A-2, Capt Charles Loucks, 354 TFS, flying from Korat RTAFB, Thailand, bombed the Hoai An ammunition dump (JCS 47.11) in North Vietnam. He flew F-105D 61-0057. The target was at coordinates 20-25-48N 105-32-50E.

Eight F-105s from the 44 TFS, 18 TFW, on TDY at Korat, also bombed the ammunition depot. The pilots logged 21:05 hours. (44 TFS history, 1 Jan 65 - 30 Jun 67, pp 37 and Appendix III, Exhibit 5)

*National Archives records of F-105 gun and strike camera films, Control Number NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-38279F*

### 12-Jun-65

742

Personnel of the 354 TFS were relieved from temporary duty at Korat RTAFB, Thailand, by the 357 TFS from the 355 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The 354th commander was Lt Col Charles A. Watry who had flown 48 combat missions during his TDY. Capt Charles Loucks was a 354 TFS pilot on the redeployment.

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

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The 357 TFS was commanded by Lt Col George C. McCleary who had led the squadron during its first deployment between August and December 1964 to Yokota AB, Japan.

During their three months of combat at Korat, the 354 TFS had flown 1274 sorties out of the 1488 scheduled. They flew 2360.4 hours of combat and combat support flying time out of a total of 2766.3 flying hours. Squadron pilots flew 632 Rolling Thunder missions over North Vietnam, and 102 Barrel Roll and Steel Tiger missions into Laos. Among the targets struck were 13 bridges damaged and 9 destroyed; 18 trucks destroyed and 7 others damaged; 10 barracks and supply areas damaged and 7 destroyed; seven radar sites damaged, and one POL storage area destroyed. (Frames 0758 - 0759)

While at Korat, the 354 TFS lost five aircraft and two pilots and many aircraft were damaged in combat. "Throughout the deployment, aircraft losses were suffered on several occasions due to enemy action. One was hit by flak and had to be transferred to Taiwan for repairs. Five were shot down. Of these five, two were aircraft and pilots lost to MiG attack on 4 April 1965. Another was lost to ground fire but the pilot was recovered from the sea with minor injuries by an HU-16. The fifth aircraft was hit near Vinh, but the pilot flew to the sea for bailout, where he was picked up by an HU-16. He was only slightly injured. One other aircraft was hit by flak, causing the aircraft to pitch up violently. Subsequent damages from this necessitated shipping it to a depot for final determination of its air-worthiness. There were 21 other aircraft hit by flak or small-arms fire, with all repairs being made on station." (Frame 0756)

The five F-105D losses in the 354 TFS during this combat deployment at Korat were:

- 04 April 1965 - 59-1754 - Capt Frank E. Bennett - Shot down by MiG-17. KIA.
- 04 April 1965 - 59-1764 - Capt James A. Magnusson, Jr. - Shot down by MiG-17. KIA.
- 05 April 1965 - 59-1718 - Maj Robert E. Lambert - Rescued by HU-16
- 23 May 1965 - 61-0054 - Maj Robert F. Herman - Rescued by HU-16
- 08 June 1965 - 62-4290 - Capt Harold W. Rademacher - Rescued by HH-43B helicopter.

"The redeployment of the 354th Tactical Fighter Squadron to McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, was a personnel rotation only, and deviated considerably from the schedule that was agreed upon by TAC and MATS. In general, it appeared that the MATS crews were not aware of the schedule published by TAC. Due to the critical lack of facilities at the FOB, and the importance of air operations there, detailed phasing and planning of the cross switch was a necessity. When the first aircraft was one day late at the FOB, the smooth transition of air and ground crews was interrupted, thereby degrading the efficiency of the operation. The fifth and final aircraft was delayed three days by a higher priority move. With no warning, another aircraft was diverted into the FOB and was unnecessarily delayed because the personnel were not expecting it. The move back to McConnell was completed by 18 June 1965." (Frames 0757 - 0758)

After replacing the 354 TFS, the 357 TFS remained at Korat for June and July 1965. During this time it's pilots were involved in the first SAM site attack on 27 July 1965.

The 357th then moved to Kadena AB, Okinawa, in August. Some of its pilots returned to Korat until November 1965. In addition to the commander, Lt Col McCleary, the 357th squadron roster during this period included the following pilots:

Maj Jack Graham Farr - Operations Officer	Capt William S. Koenitzer
Maj Robert W. Wilson	Capt William Thomas May
Capt Richard K. Ely	Capt John F. Manning
Capt Glen H. Hales	Capt Gilbert Bruce Holmes, Jr.
Capt John C. Gordon	Capt Harold "Buff" Rademacher
Capt Herbert T. Standing	Capt George M. "Squeeks" Weeks
Capt Richard W. Cullen	Capt Donald E. Langwell
Capt Robert T. Saffel	Capt John O. Colton

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

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Capt William Jennings "Bart" Barthelmas, Jr.      Capt Stanton G. Lockley  
Capt William T. Ramage                                      Capt Larry C. "Muff" Mahaffey

Capt Gordon had arrived "... as advance party for the deployment in late May '65."

Capt Willie May arrived at Korat on 11 June 1965.

*355 TFW History, 1 Jan - 30 Jun 1965, USAF microfilm NO461, frame 0737 and 0756 - 0759 & squadron photo with names & Charles A. Watry letter dated 13 Feb 85 to Bauke Jan Douma.*

### 20-Nov-65

5288

The 354 TFS began its move from McConnell AFB, Kansas, to join the 355 TFW at Takhli RTAFB, Thailand. It was in place at Takhli on 1 December 1965. "The 355th OMS, FMS, MMS, Headquarters Squadron Section and the 354 TFS were officially activated at Takhli AB on December 7, 1965."

Also today, Capt John C. Gordon, after having been assigned to the 469 TFS at Korat on 15 November 1965, was assigned PCS to the 354 TFS at Takhli. He had flown combat missions with the 357 TFS during their TDY to Korat.

Capt Charles Loucks moved with the 354 TFS to Takhli.

*355 TFW history, 1 July - 31 December 1965, USAF microfilm NO461, frame 0828 & Roster "469th Pilots Input/Output Schedule" as of 31 May 66 provided by Bob Krone, 10 Sept 2010.*

### 30-Jun-66

2143

The 355 TFW history included a roster of F-105 pilot arrivals and departures in the 354 TFS during June 1966.

#### Arrivals

Lt Col Douglas E. Whatley - Was Ops Officer of the 357 TFS and became 354 TFS commander  
1Lt Thomas M. McNish  
1Lt James M. Kroyer

#### Departures

Capt John G. Ahearn  
1Lt William E. Ardern  
Maj John C. Holley - Shot down and rescued on 8 June 1966. Returned home due to broken leg.  
Maj Cecil B. Juanarena  
Capt Charles Loucks  
Maj John P. O'Gorman  
Lt Col Charles A. Watry - Departing 354 TFS commander

*355 TFW History, Jan - Jun 66, USAF microfilm NO461, frame 1385.*

### 01-Jul-66

2357

(Approximate date) "McConnell AFB names nine F-105 '100-mission pilots'. "Air Force officials at McConnell AFB, Kansas, recently honored nine F-105 Thunderchief pilots newly returned from Southeast Asia where each pilot flew a minimum of 100 combat missions over Communist North Vietnam. They have returned to McConnell where they are instructing the men who will follow them into the Vietnam air war. Each has received the Distinguished Flying Cross and other decorations and has now been awarded a special 100-mission shoulder patch."

The pilots were:

Maj Phillip O. Bradley	Capt Gilbert Bruce Holmes, Jr.
Capt Arthur L. Brattkus	Capt William S. Konitzer
Capt Robert L. Chastain	Capt Charles Loucks
Maj Fred T. Coleman	Capt Joseph R. Steen
Capt Jack L. Graber	

# Charles Loucks

## F-105 History

*Thunderchief Worldwide Report, Vol I, No 11, July 1966.*

**31-Dec-66**

678

One year after the start of their RTU mission, the 23 TFW at McConnell AFB KS, had trained a total of 105 pilots to fly the F-105. The wing had 30 F-105 instructor pilots who had completed at least 100 missions in South East Asia. The 560 TFS and 561 TFS each had 7 pilots, the 562 TFS had 12, and the 563 TFS had 4. Five additional 100-mission pilots were attached to the 23 TFW. 1Lt Leonard C. Ekman, assigned to the 561 TFS, had completed 185 missions in SEA, the most of any Air Force pilot.

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 560 TFS were:

Maj Eleas Casillas	Capt Jack L. Graber
Maj Robert E. Phillips	Capt William S. Koenitzer
Capt Marion M. Angel	1Lt William E. Arden
Capt Rex L. Dull	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 561 TFS were:

Maj Fred T. Coleman	Capt Robert Kieth Hannah, Jr.
Maj John C. Shay	1Lt Roger A. Ayres
Capt Ralph J. Beardsley	1 Lt Leonard C. "Lucky" Ekman
Capt Roderick G. Beckett	

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 562 TFS were:

Lt Col James A. Young	Capt Wayne D. Hauth
Maj Phillip O. Bradley	Capt Robert L. "Bob the Wedge" Keller
Maj Robert D. Pielin	Capt Douglas G. Lauck (SEFE)
Capt Arthur L. Brattkus	Capt Robin K. Nierste
Capt Teddy Gay	Capt William S. Secker, Jr.
Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson	Capt Joseph R. Steen

The 100-mission instructor pilots in the 563 TFS were:

Maj Kenneth G. Frank  
Capt Robert V. "Boris" Baird  
Capt James I. Miholick  
1Lt John C. Russell

23 TFW attached 100-mission pilots were:

Capt Clarence E. Cox  
Capt John R. Layman  
Capt Charles Loucks  
Capt Clifford H. "Ted" Rees, Jr.  
Capt Robert L. Chastain

*23 TFW History, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1966, USAF microfilm MO554.*

**17-Nov-99**

7364

Maj (Ret) Charles Loucks died. "My father was Charles Loucks, who retired out of Seymour Johnson in December 1976. Due to medical reasons he never flew after retirement; however, I could always tell that a piece of his heart -- flying -- was torn away. Unfortunately, he was killed in a single-car accident in November 1999. It is ironic that he can fly 150 mission over North Vietnam without a scratch, and end up losing his life driving a car."

Maj Loucks had accumulated 1004.1 hours in the F-105 by the time he last flew it in April 1968.

*Allan Loucks, 34 TFS web site guest book entry 13 Jun 2011 & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.*