

Carl W. McKenzie

F-105 History

31-Dec-64

1642

Key personnel in the 53 TFS, 36 TFW, Bitburg AB, Germany, as of December 1964 were:

Lt Col Robert M. White - Commander
Maj John M. Rowan - Operations Officer
Maj James Helms Kasler - Assistant Operations Officer
Maj Ewald G. Kruggel - "A" Flight Commander
Capt John R. Keeton - "B" Flight Commander
Capt Gobel Dale James - "C" Flight Commander
Capt Peter B. Christianson - "D" Flight Commander

Capt Robert N. "Bob" Johnston - 53 TFS C Flight Pilot
Capt Larry William Biediger - 53 TFS B Flight Pilot
Capt Charles W. McConnell - 53 TFS A Flight Pilot. Joined squadron in October 1964

Capt Carl W. McKenzie was a 53 TFS pilot who rotated to the ZI since 1 July 64.

ROSTER OF SQUADRON PERSONNEL 53 TFS Dec 1964, from Goble James via John Revak & Charles McConnell letter to Bauke Jan Douma, 7 Feb 89.

17-Jan-67

1090

F-105 pilots of the 421 TFS and 34 TFS, 388 TFW, struck the Thai Nguyen Railroad classification yard (JCS 21.11) at 21-33-33N and 105-51-05E. Returning pilots reported, "... 8 - 10 large sections exploded and numerous smaller explosions. CBU impacts were on flak sites northwest of target. Whole area covered with black and brown smoke. Of 14 rail lines, 1 is serviceable and 1 possibly serviceable, 12 pieces of rolling stock derailed and damaged. Repair and service area heavily damaged. Fairly accurate 37/57/85-mm also heavy barrage. Heaviest flak from northwest of the target. Saw MIGs inbound but they could not get behind the flights."

"Three of the strike flights were flown by members of the 34 TFS. The Force Commander was Maj Carl W. McKenzie [the squadron's Operations Officer] ... and the Deputy Commander was Maj William E. Augsburger Flight assignment was as follows:

"Dallas" - Maj McKenzie, Capt William W. Kennedy, Maj Augsburger, Capt Jackie R. Youngblood.

"Blackjack" - Maj Leo F. Callahan, Maj Earl Johnston, Maj Robert G. Miner, Capt John W. Swanson, Jr.

"Flapper" - Maj Homer T. Terry, 1Lt Gary G. Catren, Capt Alan J. Fick.

"Flak in the target area was described as light to moderate 37/57-MM. Bomb damage was extensive as supported by bomb damage assessment photos."

Homer Terry described the mission. "We ... received orders from the White House to take out the railroad marshalling yard adjacent to the steel mill by a maximum effort of forces from Korat and Takhli; 16 aircraft each from Korat and Takhli. Korat was in first and I was leading the fourth flight. We rolled into our dive bomb runs and were off target in very quick order. I had a problem! When I pushed my bomb release button, my bombs did not release. As I started to pull off target, I ejected my entire rack. No one ever asked about the collateral damage that was inflicted on the roundhouse.

"Takhli followed close behind us. Neither base suffered an aircraft loss. Photo recon showed the marshalling yard was obliterated, but about ten days later recon photos showed the North Viets had laid several tracks back into place and the steel mill had not yet suffered any great loss of production from the actions we had taken." (Homer Terry memoir, "Destroying The Steel making Capability of

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NVN #2", via e-mail 27 March 2010.)

As Flapper Lead, Maj Terry was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for this mission. "Major Homer Terry distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 pilot in Southeast Asia on 17 January 1967. On that date, while attacking a high priority target, despite concentrated and accurate ground fire, continuous missile warnings and MiG warnings, he delivered his ordnance with unerring accuracy causing extensive damage to the target. ... "

Maj Raymond D. Anderson from the 421 TFS was awarded a Silver Star for gallantry for flying on this mission. (7AF SO G-374 14 Mar 1967)

The F-105F Wild Weasel crew of Capt Jerry N. Hoblit and EWO Capt Thomas W. Wilson, Jr. from the 357 TFS at Takhli, were each awarded a Silver Star for supporting a mission near Hanoi on this date. They decoyed SAM sites to protect the force, bombed one site, and suppressed two others with anti-radiation missiles. (E-Mail, Tom Wilson to Ron Thurlow, 7 Jul 2003.)

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frame 1218 & Homer Terry, letter to Ron Thurlow, undated.

19-Mar-67

1133

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

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

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

"After we recovered, the head shed would not let us fly the planned mission [in the afternoon], so we helped John Rowan and gave him all our stuff. They flew it later that day and it was a success. They went to give Rowan a silver star and he refused, saying it was an AF Cross mission; they relented and he got it. All in all, an unusual day. I think Chairsell was afraid of losing both the commander and ops officer of the 34th if he let us take the mission." (Jack Phillips, e-mail 21 Mar 2011.)

Also in the morning, a flight of four F-105s from the 355 TFW, at Takhli "... took off for a practice mission in Laos." "Gainful" flight consisted of Lt Col Danny Salmon lead, Maj Randy Plumb number 2, Maj Kenneth H. Bell, the Stan Eval Officer number 3, and Maj Ted Tolman number 4. "The plan was to penetrate the clouds over a target in Laos where a FAC could observe our radar bomb delivery and report the accuracy of the weapons. We would drop 500-pound retarded Snakeye bombs using a

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simple radar technique called 'lay-down bombing'. ... Once in the air, we got to our rendezvous point with the FAC only to learn that he was too busy to handle us. Colonel Salmon decided to divert to Route Pack One and find a target on our own. ..."

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

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

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

28-Mar-67

101

The 34 TFS, 388 TFW, flew their 10,000th combat hour since their arrival at Korat RTAFB in June 1966. A flight of five F-105s flown by 34 TFS pilots struck multiple targets in the Dong Hoi area. Pilots were:

Squadron Commander - Lt Col Alan G. Nelson;
Flight Commander - Maj Homer T. Terry;
Operations Officer - Maj Carl W. McKenzie;
Flight Commander - Maj William C. Eagle;
Flight Commander - Maj Robert W. Johnson.

History of the 388 TFW, Jan - Mar 1967, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1227.

30-Apr-67

3823

The 34 TFS history for the month of April 1967 reported that squadron pilots had been recently conducting harassing strikes against enemy aircraft on the ground. "Ordnance selected consists of CBU-24s and M-117 (750#) GPB with instantaneous fuzing. Cratering of runways is not the object, but rather the destruction of aircraft through use of fragmentation weapons. Results have been most satisfactory, but no official BDA has been received. Pilot reports, supported by KA-71 strike film, have shown excellent coverage of the selected targets."

The squadron history described recent tactics of North Vietnamese MiG pilots. "Enemy fighter tactics have changed from parallel run-ins and random attacks against strike flights to an enveloping or pincer type operation. As strike flights ingress to target area, enemy flights have been observed at low and high altitude traveling in the opposite directions. Few attempts to attack strike flights at this point have been initiated. When flights are beginning to egress the target area at low altitude and are required to 'jink' constantly due to flak, they usually encounter MiG-17s between 3,000 and 6,000 feet AGL. These aircraft will not hesitate to attack if they possess or can achieve the tactical advantage, but appear to act primarily as decoys. If flights of F-105s engage MiG-17s at low altitudes, it has been observed that MiG-21s will join the fight, descending from higher altitudes, and conduct slashing attacks. A few F-105s have been lost to this MiG-21 tactic recently. However, it should also be noted that several MiG-17s have been downed by F-105s while egressing. If engaging the enemy decoys one must always be aware of the possibility of being attacked by MiG-21s. Fighter sweeps and development of new defensive support (F-4C) tactics are being conducted in an effort to nullify the enemy's actions."

Squadron pilots flew 392 combat sorties during April 1967 -- 308 of them in North Vietnam and 84 in Laos.

The squadron's combat crew strength "... stood at twenty-one (21) line pilots including the commander,

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executive officer and operations officer. Four attached pilots, wing staff members, were also available for combat. Emphasis on continual replacement of combat crews, as they complete their tours, is almost non-existent. Four months previous the squadron appeared to be overloaded with pilots. But as pilots completed their tours no new inputs were received. Presently the squadron is comprised of a group of extremely well qualified combat pilots. Before the end of the next reporting period, two flight commanders and one element leader will complete their tour. The remaining pilots will possess forty-five to sixty-five combat missions at this time. Within two months this entire block of pilots will be at or very near completion of their combat tour. Presently, new inputs of sufficient number are no where in sight and if this personnel policy is allowed to continue this squadron will suffer a serious setback. In order to maintain a high degree of combat efficiency and effectiveness the input must at least match the outgo. During this entire campaign squadron strength has been one of either feast or famine."

Lt Col Alan G. Nelson was the squadron commander, Maj Earl Johnston the Executive Officer, and Maj Carl W. McKenzie the Operations Officer.

"Original pilots of the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron have completed their tours. The squadron is presently composed of RTU pilots, with no previous F-105 experience, and experienced F-105 pilots from units in Germany. Pilots from RTU schools have received sufficient training, and in-unit training consists primarily of area familiarization and introduction to preferred combat tactics. Squadron policy dictates the first five combat missions will be flown in low threat areas. Purpose being to afford the new pilot an opportunity to practice against small targets, and generally prepare himself for assuming the duty of primary strike pilot in a high-threat area. Assuming a pilot experienced no difficulty during his first five missions, he is then available for any and all strike schedules. Flight scheduling is maintained as much as possible. Normal progression through the roles of wing man, element lead, and flight lead is desired and practiced. The end result is a pilot who knows and understands the problems of each position and can effectively perform in any role."

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, Vol II, 34 TFS history, 1 Apr - 30 Apr 67, microfilm NO584, frames 0066- 0067.

02-May-67

1470

There were 5 USAF strikes against the Northeast Railroad (RR 2) on 2 May. Four F-105s damaged the Vu Chua railroad bridge south (BE 616-01150) at 21-26-35N and 106-21-28E by dropping 24 750-pound bombs.

Four more F-105s dropped their 24 750-pound bombs on the Vu Chua railroad yard south (BE 616-01833) at 21-26-15N and 106-20-35E. Pilots reported seeing 26 railcars in the yard. "Korat pilots dropped 750-pound bombs on the main Vu Chua complex, 43 miles northeast of Hanoi. Bomb damage assessment was hampered by heavy clouds in the area. Pilots pulled up into low clouds before they could observe the impact of their ordnance."

Eight F-105s, in two strikes, dropped 48 750-pound bombs on the rail line in the vicinity of 21-33N and 106-30E, approximately ½ mile south of the Cau Nung railroad bridge (BE 616-00707).

Also, pilots of four F-105s reported cutting rails at 21-26N and 106-19E after dropping their 24 750-pound bombs.

"The large Yen Bai railroad yards, 76 miles northwest of Hanoi, were struck by other 388 TFW pilots."

"Rattler" flight from the 34 TFS struck Kep railroad yards. "The strike was composed of the following pilots: Lead - Maj James N. McClelland, #2 - Capt John W. Swanson, Jr., #3 - Maj Carl W. McKenzie, #4 - 1Lt Donald O. Austin. The purpose of the strike was to cut the rail lines. Ordnance selected for this strike was 6 x 750-pound bombs per aircraft. Heavy thunderstorm activity was encountered during ingress - egress and during the pre - post strike air refueling. The immediate target area was obscured by clouds and so the flight commander elected to attack the rail lines four miles northeast of the yard,

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which was visible. 'Rattler' flight cut the railroad in three places with very accurate bombing. This was accomplished in the face of extremely heavy AAA fire and SAM launches." (34 TFS history, 1 - 30 May 67, USAF microfilm NO584, frames 0072 - 0073.)

Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for the period 24 Apr - 7 May 1967 & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1478 and 1479.

20-May-67

1325

The 388 TFW dropped 3,000-pound bombs on the Kinh No motor vehicle repair yard (ART 5286), nine miles north of Hanoi in RP-6A, North Vietnam. "Bright orange fires sent heavy black smoke billowing high over the target where at least 10 buildings were destroyed. 'We struck the main truck repair facility and all bombs hit on target,' reported one pilot. 'The fireballs we saw appeared to be either from a gas or chemical storage area.'"

Maj Richard E. Moser from the 44 TFS led the attack against the vehicle yard. He was awarded the Silver Star. "Major Moser was mission commander of a force of F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned the mission of destroying the Kinh-No Motor Vehicle repair complex, a vital link to the infiltration of supplies for the hostile forces in South Vietnam. With obvious disregard for a withering barrage of antiaircraft fire and surface to air missiles, Major Moser led the force through a successful mission which resulted in near total destruction of the target." (Moser award citation, provided by his son, Rick Moser)

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 60th mission over NVN. "Pack 6; Kinh No motor vehicle repair complex." (Jack Phillips Mission Summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11.)

"Maj Carl W. McKenzie led the last flight over the area and reported, 'We rolled in third on the target and were able to see everyone's bombs hit in the target area. The visibility was clear and I saw bombs hit in the very heart of the center buildings. A large hole appeared in the building in a great gush of yellowish-orange smoke came oozing out.' Heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire was reported in the area."

The attack involved 10 sorties. "Eleven buildings were damaged or destroyed giving less than 16% target destruction." (CHECO)

"F-105 pilots from the 388th set off two large secondary explosions when their bombs knocked out two artillery positions 38 miles southeast of Dong Hoi."

"Two artillery pieces were destroyed when other 388th pilots hit a heavy gun position, 37 miles southeast of Dong Hoi."

Capt Peter B. Lane, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, received an Air Medal (1st OLC) for a mission he flew today.

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 1967, USAF microfilm NO463 frames 1755 and 1486 & Project CHECO, Rolling Thunder 17 November 1967, pg 18 & Award approved by Hq 7 AF Special Order # G-1161 dated 8 August 1967.

30-Jun-67

5117

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

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

"Changes have been noted in the enemy AAA defenses. They have strengthened their gun emplacements at key points around the rail yards in an attempt to counter our repeated attacks on that

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system. MiGs have been reported airborne on nearly all strikes but they appear to be extremely reluctant to engage in aerial combat."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 Capts. 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.