

James B. Ross

F-105 History

14-Oct-67

236

The fourteenth F-105 RTU Class 68BR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class, named "The Many Splendored Studs", began on 20 Apr 67 but didn't start training until 15 May 67. It took the place of class 68CR that was deleted due to the extension of RTU training from 70 to 92 flying hours. The class had 22 student pilots and deployed 24 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 29 Sep - 13 Oct 67 with the 562 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col James A. Young.

"Experience level in this class ranged from 760 to 5,500 flying hours. ... This was considered to be one of the outstanding classes to have graduated from the 562 TFS and the 23 TFW. Reason for this was due to nearly unanimous high performance aircraft background of the students, who were assigned exclusively from tactical fighter, fighter interceptor and trainer aircraft units."

Capt George D. Graves was Overall Outstanding Student and Capt Kenneth D. Thaete was Top Gun. Col Thomas H. Curtis had graduated early, in July 1967, for his assignment as Deputy Commander for Operations at the 355 TFW, Takhli RTAFB, Thailand.

One of the students, Maj Billy J. Dulin, was awarded the TAC Pilot of Distinction for the month of December 1967.

The student class roster included:

Col Thomas H. Curtis	Capt Edward Y. Cleveland
Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen	Capt Robert J. Furman
Lt Col James B. Ross	Capt George D. Graves
Maj Thomas W. C. "Robert" Birge	Capt Eric B. Nelson
Maj Richard J. Bono	Capt Frank E. Peck
Maj Francis J. "Frank" Byrne	Capt James E. Sehorn
Maj Kenneth W. Dickson	Capt Anthony Cameron Shine
Maj Billy Joe Dulin	Capt Kenneth D. Thaete
Maj Kenneth M. Hiltz, Jr.	Capt Forrest S. Winebarger
Maj James G. LaChance	1Lt William C. Jones
Maj Grayson C. Powell, Jr.	
Maj Clair L. Thompson	

Lt Col Ross had been a squadron commander of a pilot training squadron at Vance AFB, OK. He was next assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat.

23 TFW History, Jan - Jun 67, USAF microfilm MO554, frames 0986 and 1058 & Jim Ross, e-mail 30 Apr 10.

21-Nov-67

4841

At 1420, four pilots from the 34 TFS comprising "Waco" flight took off from Korat to be the flak suppression flight in a strike force to RP-6 but weather diverted them to RP-1. The mission lasted 2 hours 20 minutes.

The flight line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 62-4270
- #2 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #3 - Maj George G. Clausen, 34 TFS Commander flying hi 99th mission
- #4 - Capt Robert M. Crane

It was Maj Armstrong's 24th mission to North Vietnam. "This was originally scheduled as a Pack VI mission, down town. The weather was bad so we went in individual flights to Laos and Pack I. My flight got a Combat Sky Spot over Pack I about 15 miles west of Dong Hoi. It was undercast so we didn't see our bombs hit. No MiGs, no SAMs, and no flak. Happiness!"

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F-105 History

Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pp 10 - 11 & 7 AF TWX 242110Z Nov 67, in PACAF DO Read File 16 - 30 Nov 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 898727.

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.

04-Jan-68

3497

Four flights of F-105s from the 388 TFW struck the Lang Son railroad and highway bridge (JCS 18) interdicting both the north and south approaches. The planes dropped 72 750-pound bombs cutting the north and south approaches.

"The flak suppression aircraft expended 12 CBU-24s, one CBU-29 and 61 M-117s on four active flak sites near the bridge. Pilots estimated all four sites were silenced." (388 TFW History)

Strike activities against the Lang Son railroad bridge complex on 4 and 5 January were partially successful. The main bridge was attacked on 4 January. "Prestrike coverage of one of the bypasses on 5 January showed 3 moveable spans adjacent to the rail lines. Post-strike coverage of the same bridge on 6 January revealed that strikes on 5 January had destroyed one of the supporting piers, thus rendering the bridge unserviceable.

"Waco" flight from the 34 TFS was one of Korat's four strike flights today. The flight left Korat at 1335. The flight line up was:

#1 - Capt Vernon D. Ellis, Mission Commander
#2 - Capt Carl William Lasiter, POW 4 Feb 68
#3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0462.
#4 - Lt Col James B. Ross

This was Maj Armstrong's 47th combat mission. "We went to the 2nd alternate target which was the Lang Son Railroad Bridge up right close to the Chicom border. We went in via the water route. We anticipated poor visibility because of the haze we had yesterday. We also anticipated a heavy MiG reaction. We were pleasantly surprised on both counts. There wasn't a cloud in the sky from the coast inland. There was some haze but we were able to pick up the target about 15 miles out. There was some light 37/57-mm flak as we rolled in and some 85-mm when the trailing flights started down. We were a little bit shallow on our dive angle and had a strong headwind for bombing. Consequently we seemed to hit a little short of the bridge. There were many MiG calls but no engagements. Vern Ellis took a minor hit but nobody else got hit." The mission lasted for 3 hours 40 minutes. (Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 20.)

Capt Craig M. White with the 44 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 61-0161 as "Bass 03" to Lang Son in North Vietnam. He logged 3+25 flying hours.

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Having graduated from McConnell's F-105 RTU on 24 November 1967, Capt William A. Thomas, Jr. arrived at Korat and was assigned to the 34 TFS. En route, he had attended the TAC SEA Survival School (5 days) and the PACAF Jungle Survival School (5 days).

388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frames 0459 and 0495 & Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 1 - 15 January 1968 & Bill Thomas, AF Form 11 & Craig White log book, pg 3, e-mail 21 Nov 17.

10-Jan-68

4862

For the second day, a weather diversion sent "Gator" flight from the 34 TFS into Laos instead of North Vietnam. The flight took off at 15:10. Its lineup was:

- #1 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #2 - Capt Douglas A. Beyer
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 58-1172
- #4 - Maj Almer L. "Buddy" Barner, Jr.

This was Maj Armstrong's 51st combat mission. "Again the primary target was cancelled due to weather and we wound up doing North Star. We went down into southern Laos outside of Mu Gia Pass and hit a karst and tumbled it down on the road. Cricket cleared us into Pack I to let #4 drop his tanks as they wouldn't feed. I had P-2 flight control system failure on way back and had to land straight-in." The mission lasted 2 hours five minutes.

Capt Jacob C. Shuler, also from the 34 TFS, flew F-105D 60-5381 on his 46th mission into NVN. It was his final combat mission before his reassignment to Hq 7th Air Force in Saigon. Prior to his Hq assignment, he went on an R&R between 12 - 18 January and returned to Korat.

Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 21 & Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet.

16-Jan-68

4866

"Scuba" flight from the 34 TFS used the Commando Club radar against a target in Laos. The flight took off at 1415. Its line up was:

- #1 - Capt Sam P. Morgan
- #2 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 59-1759
- #4 - Maj Billy R. Givens (killed in accident 25 Apr 68)

This was Maj Armstrong's 56th combat mission. "We were originally the mission commander's flight. Due to weather, we went Commando Club instead on a target in Laos. We hit the target almost with no effort and started home when we got a call to go on a RESCAP in Pack I where 2 F-4s had gone down. We went over and picked up one beeper. Although the weather was completely undercast, we orbited just 10 miles northeast of Mu Gia Pass and finally established radio contact with 2 or 3 of the crew members on the ground. They were OK and in a non-populated area. We had to leave for low fuel and go to the tanker just as the A-1E and HH-43s started in. We refueled and came back but [there was] nothing we could do with the undercast. One A-1E got under the undercast and vectored a chopper in. We came home and as we got out of range, they still hadn't picked anybody up." Their mission lasted for 3 hours 30 minutes.

The two F-4s were in "Hanger" flight from the 480 TFS, 366 TFW out of Da Nang. They went down when a bomb on one of the planes exploded and blew them both out of the sky. The crew of the F-4C, Maj C. E. Lewis and 1Lt J. L. Kelly, were rescued. The pilot of the F-4D, Capt Scott B. Stovin was also rescued, but his back seater, 1Lt Thomas Nelson Moe, was captured and became a POW.

Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 23 & CNA Loss/Damage Database, USAF losses 805 and 806, pg M24.

14-Feb-68

2705

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F-105 History

"... Seventh Air Force used the rare day of clear weather to attack Hanoi's canal bridge, one of the targets President Johnson had again released only a week earlier. Since the bridge raids of December, the Canal Bridge (JCS 13) had returned to operation, while the Doumer Bridge over the Red River (JCS 12) was still down."

"Late in the afternoon, strike forces from Takhli and Korat converged on the bridge from opposite directions. Sixteen bomb-laden F-105s from the 355 TFW at Takhli came down Thud Ridge from the west, with eight F-105 escorts to threaten the SAM sites and eight F-4s to guard against the MiGs. A similar force escorted a like number of F-105s from the 388 TFW at Korat as they penetrated North Vietnam from the Gulf of Tonkin. Although the two wings dropped forty-eight 2,000-pound and 3,000-pound bombs, only one hit the bridge, and three days later trains were using it. An escort F-105 from Korat was lost to a SAM and the pilot, ["Pancho 02"] Capt. Robert M. Elliot [from the 34 TFS], was never seen by Americans again." (To Hanoi and Back")

"The two wings expended 22 3,000-pound bombs and 26 2,000-pound bombs in the target area. KA-71 strike photography showed one direct hit on the south end of the bridge and several craters on the southern approach. It was estimated severe damage was inflicted on the bridge." (388 TFW history)

Maj Cecil G. Prentis from the 333 TFS at Takhli received the Distinguished Flying Cross (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) for heroism on this mission. "... Major Prentis led the last of four flights against a heavily defended bridge. After flying through intense barrages of flak and surface-to-air missiles to deliver his ordnance directly on target, he successfully broke up an impending attack by MiG interceptors which allowed the force to egress without loss." (Cecil G. Prentis, DFC (2nd OLC) citation)

Capt Craig M. White, 44 TFS, 388 TFW, flew F-105D 62-4270 as "Locust 02" against the Canal des Rapides Bridge. It was his 49th combat mission. He logged 3+20 flying time.

Maj Roger D. Ingvalson from the 34 TFS from Korat was awarded the Silver Star for a mission he flew on this day. He was presented the award on 25 July 1968 under SO G-2248. "Major Roger D. Ingvalson distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force over North Vietnam on 14 February 1968. On that date, Major Ingvalson exhibited extraordinary courage as a member of a surface to air missile suppression flight of F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned to protect a large strike force. Despite electronic equipment malfunctions, his aggressiveness and skill enabled him to successfully decoy numerous surface to air missiles as well as intense, accurate antiaircraft fire away from the main force and to his own aircraft. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Major Ingvalson has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Citation posted on-line at <http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.asp?ID=13>)

Maj Eugene P. Beresik flying with the 34 TFS received a Distinguished Flying Cross for his mission today. "... Major Beresik was a member of a force of F-105s on a mission against a key military target in the vicinity of Hanoi. In spite of heavy barrages of surface to air missiles and antiaircraft fire, Major Beresik courageously pressed his attack to make precise ordnance run on this highly defended target. The professional competence, aerial skill and devotion to duty displayed by Major Beresik reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (Citation to Accompany the Distinguished Flying Cross (Posthumous) to Eugene P. Beresik provided by his son Paul Jansen)

Lt Col James B. Ross from the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, led the CBU flight attacking the four corners of Gia Lam airport (JCS 3) in Hanoi to provide cover for 388 TFW flights bombing the Canal bridge. His call sign was "Locust Lead". This was the first attack on this airport. "No AAA fire on mission aircraft! One A/C lost to SAM on egress." Col Ross was awarded the Silver Star for this mission. (Jim Ross, undated note circa May 2001 to Ron Thurlow.)

Capt Lamont H. Pharmer also from the 34 TFS was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement for supporting this mission. The award citation read, "Capt Pharmer was a

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member of the flak suppression flight for a force of F-105s assigned the mission of destroying a vital military target in the heavily defended Hanoi area. Despite heavy missile and antiaircraft artillery fire, Captain Pharmer unhesitatingly selected and attacked a lethal antiaircraft artillery site over the one originally assigned him in order to suppress a more potent threat to the strike force. Capt Pharmer displaying outstanding courage and flying skill, delivered his ordnance directly on target, contributing significantly to the safety of the main force on an important and highly dangerous mission." (Lamont H. Pharmer DFC Award Citation.)

Years later, Monty Pharmer still remembered details of this mission. "It was my first Pac 6 mission and it amazed me how much fire power, AAA, SAMs, etc. the NV sent up at us. Before the flight, I rode out to the flight line in the van with Bob Elliot. He was trying to ease the tension for some of us new heads. He said it won't be as bad as some had told us. Unfortunately, he got hit by a SAM that day and his body wasn't recovered until sometime in the 1990s. Sq. CO, L/C Bob Smith was leading the mission and I was Number 4 on (I believe) Jim Ross' wing [Lt Col James B. Ross]. Gary Durkee was on Bob Smith's wing as No. 2." (Monty Pharmer, e-mail 22 Sep 2006)

On his 43rd combat mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Bass 3" against the Canal bridge. "On target. Heavy 37/57/85 mm/SAMs. Pancho 2." (Rufus Dye Mission History log.)

A newspaper article told of today's bridge strike and other targets struck in February. It was headlined "Bridge, Airfield Hit Despite Poor Weather". Fighting 388th Tactical Fighter Wing pilots struck two major targets during the nine day period, Feb. 10 through 18, although bad weather continued over North Vietnam.

"Striking near the heart of Hanoi Feb. 14, 388th TFW F-105 pilots dropped their 3,000 pound bombs on the Canal des Rapides railroad and highway bridge, five miles northeast of the capital city. No bomb damage assessment (BDA) was available due to the weather. [Craig White noted on his clipping "It was Clear!"]

"Feb 18, Yen Bai airfield, 78 miles northwest of Hanoi was hit by Thunderchief crews utilizing radar bombing techniques. Again weather precluded any BDA.

"Using radar bombing techniques, 388th Thunderchief pilots struck Kim Lan army barracks, 55 miles northwest of Hanoi, Feb. 12.

Xom Bai army barracks, 43 miles west-northwest of Hanoi fell victim to 388th TFW pilots Feb. 16. They dropped their 750-pound bombs using radar bombing techniques.

"During another strike a surface-to-air missile (SAM) site, seven miles south of Vinh was silenced. "Two more SAM sites were silenced, in a line, 14 miles northwest to 28 miles northwest of Hanoi Feb. 17.

"During the entire period, 388th pilot struck lines of communication and military storage areas in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam."

"To Hanoi and Back", pg 128 & Craig White log book, pg 5, and news clipping, e-mails 21 Nov 17 & 388 TFW history, Jan - Mar 68, USAF microfilm NO 584, frame 0501.

16-Feb-68

4878

"Pistol" flight from the 34 TFS flew an ineffectual radar bombing mission into North Vietnam and Laos. The flight took off at 0540. Its line up was:

- #1 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0518
- #2 - Capt William A. Thomas, Jr.
- #3 - Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen

James B. Ross

F-105 History

#4 - Capt Lamont H. Pharmer

This was Maj Armstrong's 68th combat mission. "Today was really a farce. My flight had the radar drop in Pack V, near Phu Tho as a first alternate target since the weather was too bad for visual bombing. We got almost to drop and they lost us on radar so we went down into Laos to an alternate target and tried twice to radar drop down there but again they lost us. We wound up with no fuel and no place to bomb so we dropped our bombs safe at Udorn Range and came home. 3+30 and 24 wasted bombs!"

Today was the first combat mission over North Vietnam for Capt Joseph S. Sechler, also from the 34th. His flight lineup was:

#1 - Lt Col James B. Ross
#2 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler
#3 - Maj Roger Dean Ingvalson
#4 - Capt John S. Murphy

Capt Sechler logged 2:30 flying hours.

Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 27 & Joe Sechler flight log via email 28 Apr 10.

24-Feb-68

4883

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

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 band dated 24 Feb 68.

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."

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F-105 History

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.

20-Mar-68

4906

The four pilots in "Scuba" flight from the 34 TFS bombed a road in RP-1. They took off at 1355 and returned after 4 hours 10 minutes. Their line up was:

- #1 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #2 - Maj Eugene Paul Beresik
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 60-0409
- #4 - Capt Anthony F. Germann

This was Maj Armstrong's 89th combat mission. "We got words at the last minute today to go primary. It looked pretty good for awhile but we started running into clouds right at Tanker drop-off. It was undercast there just short of the coast and we had to weather abort about 25 miles from the target (just abeam Gia Lam Airfield) 2 miles from the heart of Hanoi. We took our bombs out and finally got to the tankers after being given the run-around for 15 minutes by the radar agency. We took our bombs over into Pack I and dropped them on a road and recovered with very little fuel after hitting a tanker in White Anchor."

Lt Gen Armstrong mentioned this mission in his memoirs. "My last Pack VIA mission was my 89th. This was a target close to Gia Lam Airfield in Hanoi and we found the weather completely undercast dropping off the tankers in the Gulf. Lt. Col. Ross was the mission commander and I was his deputy. I concurred when he called the abort and we dropped our bombs in Pack I on our own recognizance."

"Pancho" was another 34th flight on a mission to RP-6 but was diverted due to weather. Its lineup was:

- #1 - Maj Roger D. Ingvalson
- #2 - Maj Billy R. Givens
- #3 - Maj William P. Shunney
- #4 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler flying his 19th mission. He logged 3:50 flying time. "RP 6 (Wx abort 10 mi N of Hung Yen)"

Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 34 & Lt Gen USAF (Ret) Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong, unpublished memoir in chapter titled "Southeast Asia October 1967 - May 1968", pg 42 & Joe Sechler, mission log via e-mail 28 Apr 10.

23-Mar-68

4907

The four pilots from the 34 TFS in "Scuba" flight bombed a target in Laos. They took off at 0625 and returned after flying for 2 hours 45 minutes. Their line up was:

- #1 - Lt Col James B. Ross
- #2 - Maj Billy R. Givens (killed in accident 25 Apr 68)
- #3 - Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong flying F-105D 61-0161
- #4 - Capt John E. Hartman

This was Maj Armstrong's 90th combat mission. "I went 'Golden' with this mission. That means I don't go to Pack VI anymore. We were supposed to go to a target in Pack I where there had been a big buildup but it was solid undercast so we went into middle Laos and hit a vulnerable road segment. Nothing too different about that."

On his 51st combat mission, Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr., 34 TFS, flew as "Pancho 1" to bomb a storage area in northern Laos. He then flew armed recce in RP3. "No significant sightings."

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F-105 History

Maj Armstrong's 100-mission combat log, pg 34 & Rufus Dye Mission History log

30-Jun-68

5166

Three pilots assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat completed flying 100 missions during June 1968. They were:

Lt Col James B. Ross - 100th on 21 June 1968
Lt Col Nevin G. Christensen
Col James L. Stewart, the 388 TFW DO

In July 1968, Col Ross was assigned to the 8 TFS, 49 TFW, flying F-4s at Holloman AFB, NM. Initially he was the Operations Officer. He last flew the F-105 on 2 August 1968. Since his first flight in the plane on 1 April 1967, he had accumulated 435 hours in the Thunderchief. He became the 8th TFS squadron commander in January 1969. He retired on 1 July 1970.

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & John Revak 13 Mar 2011 interview with Jim Ross.

30-Sep-68

4155

"A total of nine 34 TFS pilots completed one hundred combat missions over North Vietnam during August and September 1968. One pilot, Maj Douglas A. Roysdon, has completed his second Southeast Asia tour. His first tour was spent at Bien Hoa and Pleiku where he accumulated a total of 500 combat hours in the A-1E and A-1H aircraft."

The other eight pilots were: Maj Clarence E. Langford, Capt Joseph S. Sechler, Capt John S. Murphy, Maj William P. Shunney, Maj Ivor K. Goodrich, Capt Ben J. Fuhrman, Capt Lawrence L. Bogemann, and Capt John E. Hartman.

Maj Langford flew his 100th on 26 September 1968. This was his last flight in the F-105. Since his first flight during RTU training in August 1967, he had accumulated 385.8 hours in the airplane.

Capt Sechler flew his 100th on 28 September 1968. It was his last F-105 flight. He had accumulated 421.4 hours in the airplane. He was reassigned in December 1968 as a T-38 IP at Laughlin AFB, TX. He later had two tours in F-5s. (Joe Sechler, e-mail 28 Apr 10)

Maj Goodrich flew his 100th mission on 3 September 1968. This was his last flight in the F-105. He had accumulated 404.1 flying hours in the airplane.

Maj Shunney's 100th on 5 September was his last F-105 flight. He had accumulated 383.8 hours in the airplane.

Capt Fuhrman flew his 100th on 3 September 1968 with Larry Bogemann and Ivor Goodrich. (Ben Fuhrman, e-mail 19 Feb 2011.) When he retired as a Lt Col he had accumulated 456.5 hours in the F-105.

Capt Bogemann flew his 100th mission on 3 September 1968. It was his last flight in the F-105. He had accumulated 416.8 hours in the plane. He was reassigned to the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena CA under AFIT, where he received an MS in Aeronautical Engineering. (Larry Bogemann, e-mail 27 Apr 10)

Capt Hartman flew his 100th on 2 September 1968. It was his last flight in the F-105. He had accumulated 416.1 flying hours in the airplane.

During this period, the 34 TFS commander was Lt Col Robert J. Klingensmith, Jr. and the Operations Officer was Lt Col Earl F. Bancroft.

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"During August and September the 34 TFS received eight new pilot inputs from the replacement training unit (RTU) at McConnell AFB, Kansas. All eight pilots fall under the one year tour criterion which began on 1 July 1968, rather than the 100 mission criterion which affects pilots with arrival dates prior to July 1968. After receiving three days of procedural briefings, the new pilots are given one local area training flight prior to flying combat. On this flight, pilots are shown the emergency landing fields available, jettison ranges and range procedures, and local landing pattern procedures. Pilots are also given practice refueling and several practice bombing runs at the Chandy RTAF bombing range located twenty miles west of Korat. The Chandy Range facility has proven itself valuable for checking out pilots in the use of the continuous solution sight modifications which is now installed on all but one aircraft possessed by the 34 TFS."

Fourteen pilots from the 34 TFS received medals approved by 7 AF during September 1968. They were:

Lt Col Robert J. Klingensmith, Jr. DFC SO G-2978 26 Sep 1968 (10 Jun 68)
Maj William P. Shunney AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-2910 21 Sep 68 (1 Mar - 5 Sep 68)
Capt Lawrence L. Bogemann AM (3 - 11 OLC) SO G-2913 21 Sep 68 (1 Mar - 3 Sep 68)
Capt Ben J. Fuhrman AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-2913 21 Sep 68 (27 Feb - 3 Sep 68)
Capt Joseph S. Sechler DFC (1 OLC) SO G-2809 11 Sep 68 (9 Jun 68)
Capt Lamont H. Pharmer DFC (1 OLC) SO G-2809 11 Sep 68 (25 May 68)
Capt John E. Hartman DFC SO G-2799 11 Sep 68 (25 May 68)
Capt Edward C. Jones DFC SO G-2799 11 Sep 68 (7 Nov 66)
Capt James V. Barr DFC SO G-2798 11 Sep 68 (9 Jun 68)
Maj Clarence E. Langford DFC SO G-2797 11 Sep 68 (25 May 68)
Lt Col James B. Ross AM (14 OLC) SO G2732 3 Sep 68 (21 Jun - 2 Aug 68)
Maj Melvin L. Irwin AM (1 - 9 OLC) SO G-2731 3 Sep 68 (7 Feb - 31 Jul 68)
Maj Carl B. Light AM (11 - 15 OLC) SO G-2731 3 Sep 68 (11 Feb - 5 Jun 68)
Capt Gary G. Durkee (AM (3 - 11 OLC) SO G-2727 3 Sep 68 (4 Feb - 3 Aug 68)

388 TFW History, Jul - Sep 68, and Oct - Dec 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 0807 and 0808 and 1766 & F-105 Flying Hour Report, dated 18 Nov 1985 provided by USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma & Jack Phillips, e-mail 18 Mar 11.

01-Oct-68

2597

"Forty-four F-105 pilots were honored this month for completing 100 missions in the Thunderchief fighter-bomber over North Vietnam. During a special ceremony at Phoenix, Arizona, the following pilots were awarded special recognition certificates by Republic:

Lt Cols William C. Decker, James B. Ross, Jr., Randy R. Renken, and Maurice E. Seaver. Mo Seaver made his last flight in the F-105 in August 1967. He had accumulated 1016.6 hours in the aircraft.

Majs Robert A. Zang, Fontaine, Dave Parker, James Steinke, Porter Thompson, R. K. Ely, H. W. Goodman, William O. Harris, James G. LaChance, Robert C. Green, John O. Colton, Walter C. Swaney, William D. Stigers, John O. Rollins, Dale W. Leathan, John R. Desjardins, Thomas J. Murch, James S. Walbridge, and Francis J. Byrnes;

Capt George E. Gifford, John L. Smith, Thomas H. Platt, Lamont H. Pharmer, Robert G. Lanning, Larry J. Wright, J. M. Thigpen, John W. Gross, V. V. Sisney, Frank R. O'Neill, Lee Hollingsworth, John C. Morrissey, Russel F. Brownlee (EWO), Richard Koehnke, Arthur A. Powell, Paul E. Dillon, George D. Graves, Richard E. Guild, James M. Kroyer, David L. Ferguson, and Jerad P. Lowe a Commando Nail radar navigator.

Thomas J. Murch last flew the F-105 on 19 Aug 1968. He had accumulated 1214.6 hours in the plane.

While at Korat with the 13 TFS, Capt John M. Thigpen last flew the F-105 on 28 Nov 1967 by which time he had accumulated 698 hours in the aircraft. He was now assigned as a T-33 Instructor Pilot at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ.

James B. Ross

F-105 History

Robert G. Lanning had accumulated 803.6 hours by his last flight in the F-105 in May 1968.

Thunderchief Worldwide Report Vol IV No 2, October 1968 & F-105 Aircrew Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma..

16-Jun-19

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James B. Ross, Jr., Lt. Colonel, USAF (Retired) (August 21, 1928 - June 16, 2019)

Memorial service for James B. (Jim) Ross, Jr., Lt. Colonel, USAF (Retired) will be 10:00 am. Saturday, June 23, 2019 in Becker-Rabon Funeral Home Chapel.

Colonel Ross died Sunday, June 16, 2019 in Lawton. He was born on August 21, 1928 in Ozark, Arkansas. After graduating from Little Rock High School (later renamed Central High) in 1946, he attended Arkansas Tech, a Junior College. After completing the two years, he joined the Air Force's Aviation Cadet Class 49-C. His class was one of the last lucky ones to fly the F-51 Mustang.

Upon graduating, he flew the F-86 in the 93rd Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. He then flew over 100 missions in the F-80 and F-86 over North Korea.

Next came the more hazardous assignment of Pilot Training from beginners to fighter upgrade training in later years. A two year stint in the B-66 light bomber in England helped broaden his perspective of aviation, before returning to the states to get his first college degree through Operation Bootstrap.

Another tour in Training Command provided much operational supervisory experience before a second combat tour flying the F-105 'Thud' over North Vietnam in 1967-68. His final assignment brought him back to New Mexico as Commander 8th Fighter Squadron, flying the F-4 at Holloman AFB. He retired after 22 years in 1970.

He received numerous awards and decorations including the Silver Star Medal.

Career #2 as a high school teacher began with establishing and teaching Air Force Junior ROTC for five years followed by teaching various levels of mathematics until retirement in 1986. His wife of 36 years and mother of their two sons, Zenie, died of cancer in 1986. He then returned to school earning his second Master's degree in social work and worked as a family therapist in Career #3.

While in graduate-school he met and married Norma DeLoach Munden. They moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he retired from his last career. Jim and Norma traveled extensively throughout the U.S., Canada and every continent except Antarctica.

Jim leaves behind his wife, Norma; his son, Jim (III) and daughter-in-law Naomi; brothers, David and Robert; Norma's son Steve Munden; Norma's daughter, Julia Salas; five grandchildren, Caylor, Halley and Logan Ross, Mistral and Leah Salas, and a dear friend and devoted visitor, Tony Salas; plus extended family members. His son, Larry, and Norma's son, Mark Munden, preceded him in death.

In lieu of flowers, please make memorial contributions to Cedar Crest Manor, 1700 NW Ft. Sill Blvd, Lawton OK 73507.

Becker-Rabon Funeral Home