

Chester H. Thatcher, Jr.

F-105 History

11-Jun-68

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The twentieth F-105 RTU Class 68JR graduated at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 16 January 1968 with 30 students. Twenty six graduated -- 2 Lt Cols, 8 Maj's, 11 Capt's and 5 Lt's.

The class deployed for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 14 - 29 May 1968 with the 560 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Robert L. Fair.

The student pilots were:

Lt Col Earl F. Bancroft	Capt Adolph M. Guidi
Lt Col James H. Broussard	Capt Jerry W. Hoyt
Maj Charles Richard "Dick" Brownlee	Capt Brian D. Mauden
Maj Vincent Colasuonno	Capt Larry B. "Tex" McBride
Maj Altman Doty	Capt Leonard A. Morgan
Maj Donald L. "Buns" Fraizer	Capt Chester H. Thatcher, Jr.
Maj John E. Perkins	Capt Richard E. Tracey
Maj David L. Perry	Capt Ronald M. Walker
Maj John N. Sexton	Capt Leland B. "Les" Ransom III
Maj Grant V. Swinford	1Lt Omar R. Wiseman
Capt John Martin Brucher	2Lt Robert Clifton Edmunds, Jr.
Capt Jackie E. Crouch	2Lt Gary M Goebel
Capt Arthur G. Dunston IV	2 Lt Terry E. Paasch

Maj Charles R. Brownlee was the Outstanding Graduate.

Four of the class's pilots received further training in Commando Nail radar bombing when they were joined by navigator/bombardiers. They were assigned in September 1968 to the 44 TFS at Korat as the first F-105F crews trained only for Commando Nail missions. The pilots were:

Capt John M. Brucher
Capt Larry B. McBride
Capt Leonard A. Morgan
Maj Grant V. Swinford

Within eight months of graduating, six of the class' 26 pilots were shot down in Vietnam. Four of them died, including Maj Brownlee killed on 24 Dec 68.

Two students later received awards for airmanship. Maj John E. Perkins, then assigned to the 333 TFS, Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, was named TAC Pilot of Distinction for December 1968 for successfully coping with an in-flight emergency during his training at McConnell. Also in December 1968, 1Lt Terry E. Paasch, assigned to the 354 TFS, Takhli RTAFB, Thailand received the PACAF Able Aeronaut Award for successfully recovering an F-105 after a malfunction caused loss of throttle control while en route to an air strike over North Vietnam.

23 TFW History, Jan - Jun 68, USAF microfilm MO554 & 355 TFW History, Oct - Dec 68, microfilm NO465.

31-Aug-68

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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)

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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.

31-Aug-68

4134

The 388 TFW history listed the aircrews assigned to the 34 TFS and the number of sorties each had flown as of the end of August 1968.

34 TFS	Sorties	Counters
Lt Col Klingensmith	59	43
Maj Langford	91	86
Capt Barr	84	67
Capt Sechler	105	87
Capt Murphy	107	97
Lt Col Christensen	118	105
Maj Roysdon	109	89
Capt J. Hartman	116	94
Col Douglas	47	43
Capt Durnbaugh	65	56
Maj Goodrich	115	97
Maj Matthews	75	61
Capt William A. Thomas, Jr.	109	104
Capt Ahrens	79	59
Lt Col Dye	114	101
Capt Germann	97	86
Capt Thatcher	34	29
Maj Shunney	107	95
Capt Brooks	80	66
Capt Bogemann	115	97
Capt Fuhrman	118	99
Lt Col Shaver	80	66
1Lt Confer	33	28
Capt Pharmed	114	99 (Had flown 100 missions by the end of Aug)
Capt Durkee	111	99 (Had flown 100 missions by the end of Aug)
Capt Everett	69	56
Lt Col Ross	122	108
Col Stewart	118	110
Capt Bell	70	57
Maj White	75	58
1Lt Venturi	36	29
1Lt Hoffmeyer	38	33
Capt Ducton	31	27
Capt Crouch	32	27
Lt Col Bancroft	20	16

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Maj Colasuonno	33	29
1Lt Stafford	34	31
1Lt D. Hartman	33	27
Lt Col Glass	6	6
Maj Holly	4	3
Maj Knapp	8	5

388 TFW History, July - Sep 68, USAF microfilm NO585, frames 0250 - 0251.

14-Nov-68

7887

Two weeks after the halt of bombing missions in North Vietnam and the suspension of the 100-mission combat tour on 1 November, the 388 Combat Support Group published Special Order P-94 that adjusted the DEROS of F-105 pilots and EWOs in the three fighter squadrons in the 388 TFW. The new dates anticipated when each man would complete his one year in combat. The two-page order introduced the list with the directive, "The DEROS of the following officers, organization indicated, PACAF, this station, are changed as indicated. Authority: AFM 36-1 and PACAF Msg 080408Z Nov 68." The names were:

Capt Darrell J. Ahrens	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
Capt James V. Barr	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
Lt Col Earl F. Bancroft	34 TFS	30 Jun 69
Capt Oral L. Bell	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Col Felix A. Blanchard	469 TFS	2 Feb 69
Maj Eugene A. Bonfiglio	44 TFS	20 Apr 69
Maj George K. Bowling	44 TFS	30 May 69
Capt Donald R. Brian	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj David Brog	44 TFS	28 Jan 69
Capt Jack D. Brooks	34 TFS	10 Mar 69
1Lt Robert E. Bryan	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Ralph C. Budde	44 TFS	19 Apr 69
Maj David J. Carroll	469 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Donald D. Carson	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj Richard P. Cisco	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Maj Robert M. Clark	44 TFS	31 May 69
Maj Robert G. Denison	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
1Lt David T. Dinan III	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Altman Doty	469 TFS	16 Jun 69
Maj John J. Doyle, Jr.	44 TFS	9 Feb 69
Capt Ralph E. Durnbaugh	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Arthur G. Duston IV	34 TFS	16 Jun 69
1Lt Robert C. Edmunds, Jr.	469 TFS	30 Jun 69
Capt Olin K. Everett	34 TFS	1 Mar 69
Maj Stanley E. Goldstein	44 TFS	28 Jan 69
Capt Gene D. Hartman	469 TFS	16 Apr 69
1Lt David S. Hartman, Jr.	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
1Lt Ronald A. Hoffmeyer	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
1Lt Clarence J. Holm	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Capt Lawrence E. Huggins	44 TFS	9 Dec 68
Capt Jerry E. Knotts	44 TFS	9 Feb 69
Capt Lawrence LeMieux	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Capt Kenneth G. Lindell	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Capt James E. Logan	44 TFS	31 May 69
Maj Richard D. Matthews	34 TFS	11 Apr 69
Maj Lorne F. McCormick	34 TFS	20 Apr 69

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Maj Thomas P. McGowen, Jr.	44 TFS	31 May 69
Capt Richard R. Middleton	44 TFS	20 Apr 69
1Lt Phillip A. Miller	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj John F. O'Donnell	388 TFW	4 Jun 69
Maj Thomas J. Phelan, Jr.	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Capt Victor B. Putz	44 TFS	1 Apr 69
Maj Bernard C. Reck	44 TFS	31 May 69
Capt John W. Redmond	388 TFW	16 Jan 69
Maj John J. Revak	44 TFS	28 Jan 69
Capt James L. Rossetto	44 TFS	23 May 69
Capt Ronald L. Shepard	44 TFS	17 Feb 69
Maj William A. Smith	44 TFS	31 May 69
1Lt Ronald D. Stafford	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Paul F. Swanson	34 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Russell J. Tagliareni	44 TFS	23 May 69
Capt Chester H. Thatcher, Jr.	34 TFS	15 Jun 69
Maj John J. Thornton, Jr.	44 TFS	26 Apr 69
1Lt Marshall D. Tilley	469 TFS	12 Jun 69
Maj Clarence J. Tolle, Jr.	44 TFS	22 Apr 69
Capt Richard E. Tracey	469 TFS	16 Jun 69
Maj Albert L. Villaret	44 TFS	23 May 69
Maj Richard E. White	34 TFS	16 Apr 69
Capt Robert L. Wilbanks	44 TFS	19 Apr 69
1Lt Robert J. Zukowski	469 TFS	12 Jun 69

Hq 388th Combat Support Group (PACAF) APO San Francisco 96288 Special Order P-94 dated 14 Nov 1968.

11-Jun-69

8095

Capt Chester H. Thatcher, Jr. from the 34 TFS flew the F-105 for the last time. From his first flight on 1 February 1968 during his RTU training at McConnell, he had accumulated 542.2 hours in the Thunderchief.

F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.