

Thomas T. Walker

F-105 History

06-Jan-67

229

The seventh F-105 RTU Class 67ER graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 22 August 1966 with 16 pilots. It was named "The Orphans" since it was assigned to three different fighter squadrons in the 23 TFW. It consisted of 1 Lt Col, 6 Majors, and 9 Captains. The class deployed 16 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 2 - 17 December 1966 with the 563 TFS, which had been reformed on 3 November 1966. The squadron commander was Lt Col Joe Pickett. The class completed required training on 16 December 66 but delayed graduation until 6 January 1967 due to the holidays.

The class pilots and their SEA squadron assignments were:

Lt Col Obadiah A. Dugan - 357 TFS
Maj Donald F. Fryauf - 34 TFS
Maj Wray C. Lasswell - 13 TFS
Maj Albert J. Lenski - 333 TFS
Maj James N. McClelland - 34 TFS
Maj Dewey Lee Smith - 34 TFS
Maj John R. Whaley - 34 TFS
Capt James E. Chambers - 421 TFS
Capt David H. Coats - 13 TFS
Capt Tony A. Cox - ?
Capt David W. Forgan - 34 TFS via Ryan's Raider training at Yokota
Capt Jackie E. Moothart - 13 TFS
Capt David L. Nichols - 357 TFS
Capt Robert B. Piper - 421 TFS
Capt Robert Allan Stewart - 34 TFS via Ryan's Raider training at Yokota
Capt Thomas T. Walker - 34 TFS via Ryan's Raider training at Yokota

23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm MO554.

22-May-67

3814

By 22 May 1967, eleven more Ryan's Raiders pilots had arrived at Korat from training at Yokota. These were the third set of crews for the Ryan's Raiders flying F-105Fs. The men, all pilots, were assigned to the 34 TFS.

This group was the last of the original pilot/pilot crews assigned to the Ryan's Raider program. Don Henry, one of the front seat pilots who had arrived from Kadena on 4 May 1967, recalled that these crews "... traveled by various modes of transport (military cargo to Korat or commercial to Bangkok etc.) and arrived on various days." (Don Henry, E-mail, 28 March 2005.)

The pilots were:

Maj Kenneth D. Oliver
Maj James B. Register
Maj Harold D. Wilson
Maj James R. Bassett

Capt Thomas T. Walker, graduated from McConnell's RTU Class 67ER on 6 January 1967.

Five other pilots graduated from F-105 RTU Class 67FR on 13 February 1967. They were:

Maj Francis "Frank" P. Walsh
Capt Konrad W. Trautman
Maj Robert D. Reese
Capt Douglas G. Glime
Capt Neil F. Blake

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Don Henry recalled, "... during May and June, there were more backseaters than frontseaters and crew pairings were not always the way we flew each mission. (Don Henry, E-mail, 28 March 2005.)

Maj Oliver was teamed with Maj Walsh. "I was very fortunate to have Major Frank Walsh as my backseater. In addition to being a pilot he was a former SAC Navigator/Radar Specialist and we really made a good team. Frank and I flew about 52 missions over North Vietnam before we ever saw it in the daytime. We had about 65 missions when he was moved to the F-105D day mission. From there on, I flew with a number of different backseaters and 'graduated' to flying Wild Weasel support missions for the B-52 'Arc light' strikes in the southern part of North Vietnam." (Frank Oliver letter to Rick Versteeg, dated 9/11/98.)

The crews who arrived in April and May, "... flew a total of 98 missions in the high risk Route Packages 5 and 6A during the next 80 days. They are credited with the first night, low-level, single ship attacks on targets such as the Thai Nguyen steel mill, Kep airfield, Yen Bai railroad yard, and the Bac Kan trans-shipment point."

388 TFW history, Apr Dec 67, Vol II, 13 TFS history, 1 Apr - 31 July, microfilm NO584, frames 0044 - 0045 & "A Special Report on 'Ryan's Raiders', by Maj Albert L. Michael for Project Corona Harvest, Jan 1970, pg 6.

29-May-67

5143

The 34 TFS Ryan's Raider crew of Capt Thomas T. Walker and Capt Neil F. Blake flew a night North Scope mission in F-105F 63-8353 with call sign "Moonstone". Using the Toss Bomb Computer in the BTIP mode and flying at 3500 feet, they dropped six 750-pound bombs on target 1496, the Hou Hong Ferry Complex. "Calibration successful. Refueled as briefed. Flew route to IP at 5000 feet AGL. In area, descended to 1000 AGL from IP to target. Excellent radar freeze point on target and TBC BTIP bomb release. ... Bombs were seen to impact along north bank in target area. Unable to observe range from target due to darkness."

388 TFW TWX 300143Z May 67 to 7 AF in PACAF DO Read File for 29 - 31 May 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 00518475.

01-Jun-67

4107

Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr. replaced Lt Col Gerald F. "Jerry" Fitzgerald as commander of the 13 TFS. Lt Col Fitzgerald had just completed 100 missions over North Vietnam as well as 13 missions over Laos. On this same date, the Ryan's Raider crews in the 34 TFS transferred to the 13 TFS.

Lt Col McInerney, along with his EWO Capt Fred A. Shannon, had reported in to the squadron in March 1967 after they both had completed Wild Weasel Class 67WWIII-8 at Nellis. Lt Col McInerney was the squadron's Wild Weasel Operations Officer. He continued transitioning the Wild Weasel crews into the Ryan's Raider operation and releasing the Ryan's Raider back-seat pilots into the strike force as F-105D pilots.

Most Ryan's Raider back seat pilots transferred as strike pilots to other 388 TFW squadrons. For example, Capt David L. Burney and Capt Aquilla F. Britt transferred from the 34 TFS to the 469 TFS. Maj Francis "Frank" P. Walsh a rear seat pilot transferred to the strike mission in the 13th.

However, pilots Maj James B. Register and Maj Kenneth D. Oliver remained with the Ryan's Raider Commando Nail mission when they transferred to the 13 TFS and flew together.

The Ryan's Raider crews of Capt George A. Bogert, and Capt Donald S. Aunapu, Capt Thomas T. Walker and Capt Neil F. Blake also transferred to the 13 TFS as did the crew of Maj James R. Bassett and Capt Konrad W. Trautman. Also, Maj Robert D. Reese and Capt Douglas G. Glime transferred to the 13 TFS. Maj Harold D. Wilson transferred to the 13 TFS.

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583, frame 1494 & Jim McInerney, e-mail 1 Nov 2004 & Nancy Fitzgerald 5 Nov 85 letter to Bauke Jan Douma.

06-Jun-67

1494

In a mission designated RT-56A-0033, "Thunderchief pilots from the 388 TFW strung bombs down the middle of the tracks at the Mo Trang railroad yard, 38 miles north-northeast of Hanoi, causing multiple rail cuts and extensive

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damage. The pilots estimated between 25 and 50 pieces of rolling stock were destroyed or damaged by their attack." The coordinates of the yard were 21-30-30N and 106-07-50E.

F-105D pilots striking the Mo Trang yard included Maj Richard E. Moser from the 44 TFS flying 61-0069, and Maj Randall R. Renken from the 469 TFS flying 60-0422. F-105D 61-0219 was also involved in the strike on the yard.

Capt Jack A. Phillips from the 34 TFS flew his 64th mission to North Vietnam. "Pack 6; railroad." (Jack Phillips Mission Summary via e-mail 18 Mar 11.)

Under Hq 7 AF Special Order # G-1413, Capt Steven J. Savonen, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, received the Air Medal (Twelfth OLC) for meritorious achievement for bombing the yard.

"... Captain Savonen was assigned to destroy the Mo Trang Railroad Classification yard and the Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Works. While under fire from defending flak sites, Captain Savonen attacked and destroyed the rail yard. ..."

Maj Randall R. Renken received the AM (13th OLC) for his mission today.

Two other 469 TFS pilots received Air Medals for missions today under the same Hq 7th Air Force order. (Award Citation approved by Hq 7 AF Special Order # G-1413 dated 11 September 1967.)

Maj Earl L. Thornton (2nd OLC)
Capt Aquilla F. Britt (1st OLC)

"One mile away, other 388th pilots hit the Mo Trang railroad bridge causing considerable damage. Multiple rail cuts near the bridge also rendered a 15,000 foot segment of the tracks unserviceable." A pilot from the 34 TFS involved in the bridge strike was Maj Roderick G. Giffin flying F-105D 61-0124,

"Bombs were reported impacting throughout the target area when 388th pilots struck the Bac Giang railroad yard, 50 miles northeast of Hanoi. Pilots estimated eight to 10 pieces of rolling stock were in the southern end of the yard before the attack, but dense smoke prevented any damage assessment. Several fires were left burning in the yard by the striking aircraft and an 85-mm AAA site just west of the yard was destroyed." Capt Larry David Wiggins from the 469 TFS, flying F-105D 62-4316, struck the Bac Giang yard at coordinates 21-16-35N and 106-11-40E.

F-105 pilots from the 388 TFW also struck the nearby Bac Giang railroad and highway bridge (JCS 18.23) at coordinates 21-16-30N and 106-11-18E. Two F-105D pilots on this strike were Capt David C. Carter from the 34 TFS flying 61-0068 and Capt Francis D. Leonard, Jr. from the 13 TFS flying 61-0124. Capt Carter's strike camera film showed a good hit on the bridge. The 34 TFS pilots dropped five 3,000-pound bombs on the bridge's choke points. (Video, "F-105 Missions Over North Vietnam", 1967, Film Report FR-816, Produced by the Aerospace Audio Visual Service.)

Three pilots from the 355 TFW received Distinguished Flying Crosses for extraordinary achievement for missions they flew this day. They were Capt John Gary McGukin and Capt Joseph L. Ritter, Jr. from the 354 TFS and Capt William J. Schaff from the 357 TFS. (7th AF Special Order G-1730 dated 15 October 1967.) Capt Schaff's citation read, in part "... supporting a force of sixteen F-105s, Captain Schaff successfully attacked and destroyed a hostile surface-to-air missile control unit. During his attack he disregarded heavy flak and threats from several hostile surface-to-air missile sites in order to reach a perfect launch position for his radar homing missile."

For a mission flown on 6 June 1967, the PACAF Commander General John D. Ryan presented the Distinguished Flying Cross to F-105 pilot Capt Thomas T. Walker from the 13 TFS/44 TFS during Gen Ryan's visit to Korat the week of 10 December 1967. (Sawadee Flyer, Vol I, No. 11, Friday, Dec 15, 1967, pg 1.)

388 TFW history Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583 frame 1496 & NARA records "Air Strike Films, Vietnam, archive control number NWDNM(m)-342-USAF-41720D.

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31-Aug-67

3816

As of 31 August 1967, the 13 TFS possessed one F-105D and 20 F-105Fs to perform their three separate operations. "The day Strike pilots visually attack all assigned targets. The Wild Weasel crews destroy enemy defenses i.e., surface-to-air missiles and antiaircraft artillery. The 13th [Ryan's Raiders] operate singly against point-targets at night or in weather."

"Late in August several of the initial crew members assigned to the Raiders were released to the day strike force. This was brought about by the imminent arrival of specially trained Wild Weasel crews from Nellis AFB. These crew members will remain in the 13 TFS and will still be available for Raider operations should the need arise." The six Ryan's Raider pilots transferred to strike missions were:

Maj James B. Register
Maj Francis P. Walsh
Maj Harold D. Wilson
Capt Thomas T. Walker
Capt Neil F. Blake
Capt Calvin H. Markwood.

By the time he transferred to the strike force, Maj Walsh had flown 41 night, low-level Ryan's Raider missions. (Sawadee Flyer, Friday 23 Feb 1968)

Thirteen pilots departed the 13 TFS after completing 100 missions in August 1967. They were:

Maj William E. Underwood departed 3 August.
Capt Christopher D. Dascalos departed 3 August.
Maj Russell A. Starkman departed 3 August.
Capt William M. Milstead departed 3 August.
Capt Donald M. Majors departed 4 August.
Maj Charles E. Van Driel departed 4 August.
Maj David H. Coats departed 5 August.
Maj William T. "Ted" Twinting departed 5 August.
Maj John R. Des Jardins departed 7 August.
Maj Robert J. Lines departed 8 August.
Maj George V. Wish departed 22 August with 1003.6 hours in the F-105.
Maj Anthony Gardecki departed 26 August.
Maj Edwin F. Malone departed 26 August.

Capt Rowland F. "Frank" Smith, Jr. and EWO 1Lt David H. Williams and Maj James H. Mirehouse and EWO Capt Albert L. "Mike" Michael, were credited with destroying SAM sites in August 1967.

388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, Vol II, 13 TFS history, 1 Apr - 31 July, microfilm NO584, frames 0052 -0056.

01-Oct-67

18-Oct-67

847

Under PACAF Movement Order 35, dated 20 September 1967, the 13 TFS designation was transferred from the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand, to an F-4 squadron at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. The departure of the 13 TFS left the 388 TFW with the 34 TFS, 469 TFS, and 44 TFS. The reduction to three squadrons was a result of combat losses of the F-105.

Under 388 CSG special order AB-3874, sixty officers were transferred from the 13 TFS to the 44 TFS. On 1 October 1967, personnel and F-105F aircraft of the 13 TFS began being absorbed into the 44 TFS, which had arrived at Korat from Kadena on 25 April 1967. The 44 TFS distributed their twenty-one F-105Ds to the 34 TFS and 469 TFS and picked up the Wild Weasel and Ryan's Raider missions from the 13 TFS. The changeover was completed on 18 October 1967.

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The 388 TFW commander, Col Edward B. Burdett, led the change of command ceremony. Lt Col James E. McInerney, Jr., who had been commander of the 13 TFS, replaced Lt Col Fred A. Treyz as commander of the 44 TFS.

Korat's base newspaper, "The Sawadee Flyer", reported the event but got its facts wrong. "It was noted that the retiring 13 TFS, which came to Korat in June 1965 [wrong year. It was June 1966] from Kadena AFB, Okinawa, had been an offspring of the 44th. A cycle is now completed: from the 44 TFS in March 1965, [1966] then the 13 TFS for over two [one] years and back again to the 44 TFS in September 1967".

One of the 13 TFS Wild Weasel crews transferring to the 44 TFS was Capt Robert E. Dorough and his EWO Maj Clarence S. Summers. Another crew, this one assigned to night raider missions, was Maj Kenneth D. Oliver and Maj James B. Register. Capt Norman E. Powell was a Wild Weasel pilot who transferred to the 44 TFS.

Maj Robert D. Reese, Capt Calvin H. Markwood, Maj Harold D. Wilson, Thomas T. Walker and Capt Neil F. Blake, former Ryan's Raider pilots, transferred to the 44 TFS.

About this time, Maj Robert W. Barnett transferred from the 44 TFS to the 469 TFS. Maj Eugene L. Main transferred from the 13 TFS to the 469 TFS.

While at Korat, Lt Col Treyz flew 107 combat missions in F-105s. He was next assigned to the USAF IG at Norton AFB, CA. (USAF bio Brigadier General Fred A. Treyz)

Maj Donald S. Aunapu and Capt James H. Wright, Jr. transferred from the 469 TFS to the 44 TFS.

Wild Weasel pilot Capt Rowland F. "Frank" Smith, Jr. transferred from the 13 TFS to the 44 TFS as did Maj James H. Mirehouse.

Sawadee Flyer, Friday, October 13, 1967 388 TFW history, 1 Oct - 31 Dec 67, USAF microfilms NO584, frame 0031 and NO583 frame 1721.

07-Oct-67

F-105F 638330 44 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit by a AA missile from a MiG-21 over Kep RR yard in RP-6B, North Vietnam. Crashed in the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Vietnam. 17-20N 108-12E Capt Joseph C. Howard 44 TFS pilot ejected and was rescued by a USMC helicopter. Capt George L. Shamblee 44 TFS EWO ejected and was rescued by a USAF helicopter. Call sign: "Warhawk 01". "... During their 60th mission, Capt Howard and Capt Shamblee, received battle damage over North Vietnam. They managed to get their aircraft safely over water and ejected. Both were picked up with broken legs." #2 Was Capt Thomas T. Walker, #3 was Maj Lawrence L. "Larry" Friedman with EWO Capt Tracy P. Rumsey. (388 TFW history)

"... Joe Howard & George Chamblee punched out of their F on a recent Korat mission, were picked up OK, & were on a Navy hospital ship with broken legs. Their Iron Hand flight had all picked up battle damage from MiG-21s; the other 3 made it back to Korat, but Joe & George just got to Hue & bailed out over the water." Both men received Silver Stars and Purple Hearts. (Moyer diary)

"Captains Joe Howard and George Shamblee provided Iron Hand support for a Korat attack on a railroad marshalling yard near the city of Kep, northeast of Hanoi. They'd ingressed in front of the strike force to check the target weather when they were bounced by a flight of six MiG-21s. A Fishbed fired an Atoll heat-seeking missile that struck their tail section. As they departed a projectile from an 85 mm AAA tore a three foot hole in their left wing. They continued east toward the Gulf of Tonkin, hoping to then fly southward to land at Da Nang. By that time they were burning and lost oil pressure. They endured a series of compressor stalls. Thankfully the fire extinguished and they started thinking about not having enough fuel. A KC-135 tanker headed north to join them, hooked up and actually off-loaded fuel - but the fire reignited. The controls went out; there was no alternative to bailing out. They were at 10,000 feet in a shallow dive, flying at 510 knots indicated airspeed when they left the bird; somewhere over the Gulf of Tonkin, probably about 70 nautical miles north of Da Nang. Neither crewman was wearing leg restraints. Both suffered broken

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legs: George both, Joe one. George realized he'd broken his legs when he tried to get into his raft and his legs would not respond. A helicopter from the USMC assault ship Tripoli arrived and picked up Joe Howard. When he tried to tell them about

Shamblee they wouldn't listen, convinced that all Thuds were single seaters." (Tom Wilson quoting from "First In ...", e-mail to Weasel Net, 23 Jul 07)

An HH-43 helicopter from Detachment 7, 38 ARS, from Da Nang picked up Capt Shamblee. "Mission 1-3-159, 7 October 1967. Pedro 95 was scrambled by Queen on an F-105 airborne emergency. The emergency developed into a bailout of the F-105's crew approximately 20 miles north of DaNang. Pedro 95 crew responded and recovered Captain George Shamblee, F-105 pilot, by night water pick-up. One combat save was recorded." (History of 38th Air Rescue Squadron 1 July 1967 - 31 Dec 1967, pg 129, AFHRA Call # K318.221-38, IRIS # 492262.)

Their wingman, Capt Thomas T. Walker from the 44 TFS flying as "Warhawk 2", received the Silver Star for his efforts in the successful RESCAP. "In spite of severe damage by air-to-air missile, Walker escorted his flight leader's mortally damaged aircraft from the scene of the air battle, directed their successful rescue, then landed (at Korat) just before he ran out of fuel." He flew F-105D 61-0220. (Thomas T. Walker, e-mail to Ron Thurlow, 5 May 2001.)

Capt Joe Howard became a Thunderbird pilot (Right Wing) from Oct 1970 to June 1972. In 1972, he was killed in the crash of his F-4E in a show at Dulles Airport during Transpo 72 that was held from 27 May to 4 June 1972. The pitch actuator failed and he ejected but fell into the crashed plane's fireball.

388 TFW History, Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO584 & Diary of Frank Moyer & "Diamond in the Sky", Pg 150

07-Oct-67

3821

1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, 388 TFW, flew his 23rd and 24th combat missions into North Vietnam.

"Target: Kep Railroad yard.

"Armament: 6x750 .01.

"Water route. MiG-21s jumped Wild Weasel flight. 1 and 4 hit by MiG missiles. 4 made it back to Da Nang. One bailed out near Da Nang [Capt Joe Howard & EWO Capt George Chamblee, 44 TFS, rescued]. Mission Commander [Major Wayne E. Fullam, 469 TFS, KIA] hit in dive pass, bailed out at 500 knots 3 minutes later. We RESCAPd but bad guys got him. Six planes took hits. When will it end!"

The pilot of the F-105 damaged by the MiG was Capt Thomas T. Walker, "Warhawk 04", from the 44 TFS. "... He successfully recovered the aircraft."

Capt George H. Teas from the 469 TFS was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry on this mission. He was a member of Maj Fullam's flight. "Capt Teas was a member of a flight of four F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned to attack a vital rail yard thirty miles northeast of Hanoi. During his diving attack on the yard, the lead aircraft in his flight was hit by the intense anti-aircraft fire over the target. After scoring a direct hit on his assigned target, Captain Teas joined on his crippled leader. A few minutes later, the pilot was forced to eject while still over hostile territory and Captain Teas circled the parachute until his leader reached the ground safely. Despite the heavy concentrations of anti-aircraft guns in the area and the constant threat of MiGs and surface-to-air missiles, Capt Teas orbited the downed pilot, flying cover and giving directions to the rescue forces."

Earl Henderson, combat diary & 388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, Vol II, 13 TFS history, 1 Sep - 17 Oct, microfilm NO584, frame 0059 & George Teas award citation issued under 7 AF SO G-590, 23 Feb 68.

29-Nov-67

8105

Capt Thomas T. Walker from the 44 TFS flew the F-105 for the last time. Since his first flight on 1 August 1966, he had accumulated 357.7 hours in the Thunderchief.

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