

# Wayne N. Whatley

## F-105 History

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26-Aug-65

28-Oct-65

309

In a continuing series of TDY combat rotations by the three squadrons of the 6441 TFW at Yokota AB, Japan, the 36 TFS deployed for their third combat tour. Their first was to Korat in August 1964. This was their second deployment to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand, to replace the 80 TFS. The 36 TFS commander was Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks.

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was one of the 36 TFS pilots on this deployment. This was his third 60-day TDY deployment with the 36th to Thailand and his second one to Takhli. During this deployment, he raised his total North Vietnam combat missions to about 48.

Other pilots on the deployment were:

Col Chester L. Van Etten, the 6441 TFW Commander

Maj Dean A. Pogreba, the 36 TFS Operations Officer

Capt John O. Rollins II

Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald

Capt Lester W. Sundt

Capt John R. Layman

Capt Rex L. Dull

Capt Clarence E. Fox

Capt Jerry L. Stamps

Capt William A. Becker

Maj Wayne N. Whatley

Capt Fredrick William Shattuck, Jr.

Capt David L. Hatten

Capt Bernard G. Lyons

Capt James I. Miholick

Lt Col William L. Janssen from the 6441 TFW Staff

Capt Michael F. McNamara from the 6441 TFW Staff

Capt Jack R. Stresing from the 41 AD Staff

Capt Robert H. Jones

Capt Vernon D. Hesterman

Capt Thomas W. Sima

Capt Onofiro J. Andrews

Capt Roderick G. Beckett

Capt Donnie R. Duplissey

Capt Robert H. Schuler, Jr.

1Lt Delbert F. Miller

Capt Bruce G. Seeber

Capt Paul H. Stormont

Capt Wayne D. Hauth

Capt David S. Graben

Capt Stanley S. Rynear

1Lt Benjamin D. Ulrich

1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

*6441 TFW History, Jul - Dec 65, USAF microfilm PO232 & Doug Lauck, e-mail 25 Sep 2006 & 441 Cmbt Spt Gp  
Special Order TA-424 dated 5 Aug 65.*

18-Apr-66

5176

The 6441 TFW selected the pilots for the squadron that became the 34 TFS to deploy to Korat. Most would come from the 36 TFS; consequently, the 36 TFS was slated to disband.

Bob Pielin from the 36 TFS, who had already flown 87 combat missions during temporary duty tours to Korat and Takhli, remembered how he helped select the pilots for the new squadron. "Fitz [Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald, the squadron's Operations Officer] and I initially made out a list of 25 pilots from the Wing resources to go as 34th members. The list was bounced back from HHQ as being too overloaded in pilots with over 50 missions. They recommended 6 guys in the 0 to 20 mission category, 6 in the 21 to 40, 6 in the 41 to 60, 6 in the 61 to 80, and anyone with over 80 to go TDY." This distribution was to spread out their eventual departures from Korat as each pilot completed his 100-mission tour. Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked the list "... with some pronounced disapproval from those that were removed from the [original]. ... A 1.5 aircrew/aircraft ratio was authorized for 27 pilots plus Commander and Operations Officer. ... Bob Jones [Capt Robert H. Jones] was removed from the first list since he had his papers in to be discharged. When he found out about the 34th going PCS to Korat, he volunteered to go with [them] and get 100 missions before he got out. Red Dog [Lt Col Howard F. 'Red Dog' Hendricks the squadron commander] worked a 'deal', and he went TDY." (Bob Pielin e-mails, 23 Sep 2006 and 7 April 2007.)

The following list contains the positions and names of the initial twenty-nine pilots assigned to the 34

# Wayne N. Whatley

## F-105 History

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TFS. This is the revised list after Capt Pielin and Maj Fitzgerald reworked their original to provide a broader base of experience. One of the pilots, Gordon Walcott, annotated his copy of the printed list, dated 18 April 1966, with this comment: "This was the original 34th TFS crew roster when formed as an all-volunteer squadron from the 35 TFS, 36 TFS, and 80 TFS (Yokota AB, Japan)"

Commander - Lt Col Howard F. "Red Dog" Hendricks who had been commander of the 36 TFS.  
 Operations Officer - Maj Richard P. Fitzgerald

### India Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
 Capt Robin K. Nierste  
 Capt James I. Miholick  
 Capt Douglas G. Lauck  
 Capt Robert H. Jones  
 Capt Robert R. Reed

### Lima Flight

Flight Commander - Capt James E. Hayes  
 Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr.  
 Capt Gordon M. Walcott  
 Capt Stanley S. Gunnersen  
 1Lt John Bernard Sullivan III

### Juliet Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Kenneth T. Blank  
 Capt Carl L. Hamby  
 Capt Thomas H. Curtis  
 Capt David H. Groark  
 1Lt Phillip J. Kelley

### Metro Flight

Flight Commander - Capt Robert D. Pielin  
 Capt Alan K. Rutherford  
 Capt Ralph D. Watkins  
 Capt Wayne D. Hauth  
 Capt Rainford "Ray" McMaster Tiffin

### Kilo Flight

Flight Commander - Maj Jack R. Stresing  
 Capt William O. Lessard  
 Capt John R. Layman  
 Capt Rex L. Dull  
 Capt Clarence E. Fox  
 1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

*E-mail from Monty Pharmer, 22 Sep 2006 forwarding letter to him from Lt Col (Ret) Gordon Walcott dated, 29 Ju 1988, which included a roster of 36 TFS pilots, dated 18 April 1966.*

## 25-May-66

4957

On Wednesday morning, twenty F-105Ds (18 aircraft and 2 spares) now assigned to the 34 TFS left the 6441 TFW at Yokota for Kadena on the first leg of their movement to the 388 TFW at Korat. The aircraft took off in flights of four using call signs "Yule". Each flight departed Yokota at half-hour intervals beginning at 0800. The deployment's flight line-up consisted of:

Pilot	Call Sign	Acft Tail No	Yokota TO Time	Kadena Arr Time	Acft Maint Status at Kadena
Lt Col Howard F. Hendricks	Yule 01	62-4361	0800	0955	Tacan/Doppler probs
Capt Robin K. Nierste	Yule 02	62-4288	0800	0955	O/R
Capt James I. Miholick	Yule 03	62-4336	0800	0955	O/R
Capt Wayne D. Hauth	Yule 04	62-4303	0800	0955	Gnd blower inop
Maj Wayne N. Whatley	Yule 11	62-4306	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert H. Jones	Yule 12	62-4318	0830	1025	O/R
Capt Robert R. Reed	Yule 13	62-4308	0830	1025	Autopilot
Capt Douglas G. Lauck	Yule 14	62-4358	0830	1025	O/R
Maj Kenneth T. Blank	Yule 21	62-4370	0901	1058	O/R

## Wayne N. Whatley F-105 History

---

Capt Thomas H. Curtis	Yule 22	62-4380	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Carl L. Hamby	Yule 23	62-4364	0901	1058	O/R
1Lt Phillip J. Kelly	Yule 24	62-4277	0901	1058	O/R
Capt Alan K. Rutherford	Yule 31	62-4270	0930	1134	Autopilot
Capt Rex L. Dull	Yule 32	62-4312	0930	1134	O/R
Capt Ralph D. Watkins	Yule 33	62-4378	0930	1134	CIN
1Lt John B. Sullivan III	Yule 34	62-4356	0930	1134	Fire Ctrl/Elec
Capt James E. Hayes	Yule 41	62-4352	1000	1200	Fire Ctrl
Maj Jack R. Stresing	Yule 42	61-0132	1000	1200	O/R
Capt Andy Olman	Yule 43	62-4379	1000	1200	Fuel Leak
Capt Robert D. Reichardt	Yule 44	62-4354	1000	1200	O/R

(History of the 6441 TFW, 1 Apr 65 to 15 Nov 66, Supporting Documents, Mobility Control Center Log, pg 6, in AFHRA folder K-WG-6441-HI, IRIS# 0462464.)

Capt Alan K. Rutherford was one of the pilots on the deployment. "I recall so well how we formed up with 16 Thuds and midst many tears (from wives) and go get um's from the troops we launched to the war. We were going to 'kill the Cong'. We intended to overnight at Kadena, and then launch the next day with the squadron to Korat. Needless to say it got drunk and rowdy that night ...". (Al Rutherford, e-mail, 21 Sep 2006.)

Capt Douglas G. Lauck was another of the 34 TFS pilots moving to Korat. "We packed our household goods [at Yokota] and sent them along with our cars back to the States. Our wives and dependents had flights booked back to the States." (Doug Lauck, e-mail 21 Sep 2006.)

The pilots from the 34 TFS were to join with pilots from the 13 TFS at Kadena on 25 May and deploy to Korat. Unfortunately, circumstances required the 34th pilots at Kadena to return to Yokota on 26 May.

In the 13 TFS, "the squadron was cocked to move as planned on the 25th of May, but a staying order was received, delaying departure for thirty days. Rumors were rife that perhaps the move would not be made at all. Unfortunately, on the basis of the rumors and the lack of further communications, after numerous inquires to higher headquarters on the subject, many members of the new squadron cancelled proceedings to return their dependents to the United States. As a result, when the order to deploy on 23 June was received with a week's advance notice, many dependents were left to arrange their own moves. Much help was rendered by friends and Wing personnel, of course, to facilitate these peoples' departure. On 23 June, support personnel departed for Korat via C-130. Aircrews departed the following day."

388 TFW History, Jul - Dec 66, USAF microfilm NO583 frame 1742 & 44 TFS history, 1 Jan 65 - 30 June 1967, 4 - 5.

### 30-Jun-66

866

"Oil depots near Hanoi were struck for the second straight day. USAF F-105s hit the Nguyen Khe depot 7 1/2 miles from the city. Another flight of F-105s struck the Viet Tri POL storage area 28 miles northwest of the city. Navy aircraft hit the Bac Giang POL dump (JCS 51.11) 25 miles northeast of Hanoi."

"Over the next two days, U.S. pilots returned to hit the remaining key POL installations. General Moore dispatched two separate missions, each consisting of twelve F-105 strike and support aircraft, against the POL storage areas at Nguyen Khe (JCS 51) and Viet Tri (JCS 51.14), seven miles north and twenty-eight miles northwest of Hanoi. The pilots rained sixty-two 750-pound bombs on the first

# Wayne N. Whatley

## F-105 History

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and thirty -two on the second, with supporting aircraft plastering antiaircraft positions in each area with CBU-24 cluster bombs. Only one Thunderchief was damaged and the pilot, who ejected, was recovered safely. The dual mission proved only marginally successful, however, destroying only 20 percent of the target area at Nguyen Khe and 15 percent at Viet Tri."

Maj Wayne N. Whatley, 34 TFS, 388 TFW, was a strike pilot flying against one of the POL sites. He was awarded the Air Force Cross for his "extraordinary heroism". " ... Major Whatley led a flight of four F-105 aircraft against an extremely heavily defended petroleum, oil, and lubricant storage complex in North Vietnam. By exhibiting extraordinary flying ability, leadership qualities, and personal bravery in the face of intense hostile fire, Major Whatley successfully struck the assigned target, thus contributing greatly to the objectives of his country. Although sustaining hits on his aircraft, Major Whatley, disregarding his personal safety, stayed with his downed wingman and directed a successful rescue operation ... ". The downed wingman was Capt Robin K. Nierste.

Also on this day the Navy bombed the Bac Giang POL dump (JCS 51.11) near the Viet Tri area. (Corona Harvest Chronology of Significant Airpower Events in Southeast Asia, 1954 - 1967, pg 119.)

*Seventh Air Force Chronology 1 July 65 - 30 June 1966 CHECO 66-0044 & "Gradual Failure: The Air War over North Vietnam: 1965 - 1966", pg 292 & extract from "For Extraordinary Heroism - The Air Force Cross" by Maj Jeffery B. Floyd, provided by Ron Thurlow.*

**17-Aug-66**

5209

Four F-105 pilots from the 34 TFS from Korat formed "Anvil" flight that was part of a large 388 TFW strike force targeted against the Nguyen Khe POL storage area (JCS 51) in Route Pack 6 north of Hanoi. The line up for Anvil flight was:

"Anvil 01" - Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
"Anvil 02" - Capt Douglas G. Lauck  
"Anvil 03" - Capt Robert R. Reed  
"Anvil 04" - Capt James J. Miholick

It was the 87th combat mission for Capt Lauck and he remembered it as, "... probably one of the more exciting missions I flew." The route to the target was across Laos and South Vietnam below the DMZ with refueling in the Brown Anchor track over the Gulf of Tonkin. The strike force then headed north with intentions of turning west at the "Wart on the Elephant's Ear", an island landmark below China, to approach the target from the north.

Shortly after taking on fuel from the KC-135 tankers, the four F-105Ds in Anvil flight broke off from the rest of the strike force and headed northwest dropping down into RP 3 for a high-speed low-level approach to the target from the south. As the flight crossed into North Vietnam, Anvil 4 lost his radio and aborted the mission. Anvil 3 accompanied him back to Korat while Anvil 1 and 2 continued north with their loads of six 750-pound bombs.

When the two planes entered Pack 6 using low-level terrain masking, they found clear but hazy weather allowing 5 miles visibility. As they skirted Hanoi to the east, they met heavy AAA and got warnings of SAM launches on their RHAW gear. Doug Lauck recalled, "... stuff began flying every which way." The two pilots didn't realize until later that the strike force had aborted at their turning point when they ran into thunderstorms that blocked their route to the target. The force turned south and, accompanied by EB-66s with their standoff jammers and other support aircraft, headed home. Anvil 1 and 2 became the only planes in the area and the North Vietnamese defenses, primed for a large strike force, opened up on them.

Strangely, the flak stopped just before Anvil 1 popped up to 12,000 feet, rolled in to drop his six bombs on the POL storage site, then pulled out at 3,000 feet. A minute later, as Capt Lauck pulled

## Wayne N. Whatley

### F-105 History

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up from his bomb run, he spotted a silver MiG-17 with Chinese markings flying at 5,000 feet heading toward his flight lead. The MiG was firing his nose guns and Lauck could see shells bursting. He called, "Anvil 1 break -- you have a MiG closing." Maj Whatley punched off his tanks and racks, hit afterburner, and headed for the deck in a 4.5-G turn. The MiG pilot cut into his turn and continued to close on Anvil 1 then fired again when he was 4,000 feet away. The MiG closed to 1,500 feet still firing. Anvil 1 took it lower -- so low "he had to pull up to avoid rice paddy dikes."

Capt Lauck began chasing the MiG-17 that was still pursuing his flight lead. The three planes headed toward China and may have crossed the border during the battle. Lauck tried to set up his gun sight for air-to-air firing but didn't have time to properly reset the five cockpit switches in his F-105 to get his sight out of air-to-ground mode. He maneuvered to put the MiG in the center of his windscreen and began firing his 20-mm cannon. Anvil 1 crossed in front of the MiG and Lauck let off the trigger after firing 600 rounds. His slugs missed their target and to avoid an overshoot, he barrel rolled up and over the MiG. Both F-105 pilots turned south, went supersonic, and outran the MiG-17, which gave up the chase.

Their ordeal was not yet over since they still had to get out of North Vietnam; and Anvil 1 was running short of fuel. During his approach to the target, he had mistakenly used gas from his bomb-bay tank instead of his external tanks and, when he punched off his wing tanks, had depleted much of his remaining fuel. To make matters worse, most of the airborne tankers had left their orbits and weren't in position to hook up with the two F-105s. Calling on a discrete frequency, the two pilots finally reached a tanker willing to fly into Laos to meet them. With only 800 pounds of fuel, Anvil 1 connected with the KC-135 over the Plain of Jars in northern Laos and took on enough gas for both F-105s to land safely at Korat.

The Fighter Weapons Center history described this event this way. "Anvil flight, four F-105s, were attacking a target in the vicinity of 21-10N and 105-54E. As Anvil 1 pulled off the target, Anvil four called a MiG-17 at Anvil 1's seven o'clock position, closing at 5,000 feet AGL. Anvil 1 lit AB, jettisoned tanks, and began a 400 K, 4.5 G left turn. The MiG stayed inside the turn, closing rapidly, and firing bursts from ranges of 4,000 ft down to 1,500 ft. Anvil 1 dove to ground level and the MiG followed, still firing. During this time, Anvil 4 had come off the target, engaged AB and had closed on the engagement at 600 K plus. Anvil 4 closed on the MiG (about 65 K overtake in firing range) and began firing at 1,500 ft range. Anvil 4 had not repositioned all necessary switches and, consequently, did not have computing gunsight. Anvil 4 fired 75 rounds of 20-mm at MiG and then ceased fire because Anvil 1 had jinked into the line of his fire in front of the MiG. Anvil 1 and 4 accelerated away from the MiG and departed the area."

The two pilots later learned from reconnaissance photos that their bombs had failed to damage their POL target. However, their harrowing experience wasn't a total waste. Capt Lauck briefed other pilots in the wing on how he had simply centered the MiG in his windscreen when he didn't have time to reset his gun sight. The next day, 18 August 1966, Maj Kenneth T. Blank, also from the 34 TFS flying as "Honda 02", used the briefed technique to shoot down a MiG-17 under similar circumstances.

*Doug Lauck, e-mails 11 and 14 April 2007 & Red Baron I Vol II, Event II-33 pp 125 - 126 & USAF Tactical Fighter Weapons Center Deputy For Combat Analysis Bulletin 7, AFHRA Call # K417.316 IRIS # 503560, pg 7.*

**31-Oct-66**

5152

Six pilots assigned to the 34 TFS in the 388 TFW at Korat completed flying 100 missions during October 1966. They were:

Maj Wayne N. Whatley  
Maj Jack R. Stresing  
Maj James E. Hayes  
Capt Alan K. Rutherford

# Wayne N. Whatley

## F-105 History

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Capt Thomas H. Curtis  
Capt Robert R. Reed

Capt Reed was next assigned to the Armament Development Test Center (AFSC) at Eglin AFB, FL. "For the next five years, I had the best flying assignment in the USAF -- flying two and three different kinds of aircraft -- dropping all the new experimental conventional ordnance, and no one was shooting back! Indeed happiness! ... While at Eglin, I had the unique pleasure of flying the Thud concurrently with the F-100 D/F, A-37B and the F-4 C/D/E model. This enabled me to, somewhat objectively, compare the qualities of the aircraft ... . The F-105 is still the finest weapon system I have flown, It carried me home from some 1500 of my 4500 total hours, virtually without any problem --- that I did not cause.

"My last flight in the Thud was in December 1971, just prior to my posting to an 'exchange tour' with the RAF at Manby, Lincolnshire, England -- another hardship tour to be sure, but someone has to do it !!???" Bob Reed accumulated 1187.4 flying hours in the F-105.

*34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us.34tfs/scarf.htm> & Bob Reed letter dated Mar 28, 1988 to Bauke Jan Douma.*

**01-Dec-66**

2360

The January 1967 issue of Republic's "Thunderchief Worldwide Report" included several recent awards and decorations for F-105 pilots.

Maj Kenneth T. Blank from the 34 TFS flew his 100th mission and reported to Nellis AFB.

Maj Wayne N. Whatley, also from the 34 TFS, earned an Air Force Cross for extraordinary heroism. "Whatley, now a test pilot for the San Antonio Air Materiel Area, won the medal for leading an F-105 flight against a fuel depot in North Vietnam."

"Eleven F-105 pilots, [actually 10 pilots and one EWO] aggregating more than 2,700 combat flying hours, joined in an impressive formation flyby recently marking the end of a significant tour of duty for each. The 11 flyers were returning from their 100th combat mission over North Vietnam. Ten of the group were assigned to the same tactical fighter squadron - making the occasion an unusual first for that unit [the 13 TFS]. The organization holds the day in special regard, since a dozen 'graduates' in a month's time is unusual, and that many in a single day is an extreme rarity. On their final mission, the group flew in three separate raids then, upon completion, they regrouped for a low-level flyby over their home base [Korat]. The 100-mission pilots [and one EWO] in the flyby were:"

### 13 TFS

Maj Frederic C. Hiebert  
1Lt Roger J. Hagstrom  
Capt George H. Vipond  
Capt Roger L. Counts  
1Lt Jerry L. Garner  
1Lt Maxie A. Hatcher, Jr.  
Capt Charles H. Haberstich  
1Lt Russell M. Lanning  
Maj Richard D. Westcott - Wild Weasel pilot (WW# 76)  
Capt Herbert L. Friesen - Wild Weasel EWO (WW # 81)

### 34 TFS

Capt Duane H. Zieg

"Earlier that same day, four pilots assigned to another squadron [421 TFS] under the same tactical

## Wayne N. Whatley

### F-105 History

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fighter wing [388 TFW] completed their 100 missions, making a total of 15 in a single day for the unit." The pilots were:

Maj William F. Loyd, Jr.  
Maj Daniel G. McIntosh  
1Lt Edwin L. Harvey  
Capt Harry E. Mattoon

"Seventeen F-105 pilots, ... who completed 100 missions over North Vietnam, were presented with certificates at an informal session held in Florida this month. Making the presentation was Doug Meadowcroft, Republic program manager." The pilots and their SEA squadrons were:

Maj Hansel W. "Turk" Turley - 13 TFS  
Capt Jimmy D. Ginger - 13 TFS  
Maj Douglas D. Brenner - 333 TFS  
1Lt Thomas A. Gibbs - 469 TFS  
Capt Robert W. Davis - 354 TFS  
Capt Ralph A. Hanson - 354 TFS  
Capt Cecil W. Powell - 354 TFS  
Lt Col Ralph A. Ritteman - 333 TFS  
Maj John J. "Jack" Gaudion - 469 TFS  
Maj Frederick B. Green - 354 TFS  
Lt Col Charles W. Barnett - 421 TFS  
Lt Col Kenneth L. Skeen - 357 TFS

Five of the 17 pilots had flown their 100th mission while assigned to the 34 TFS:

Capt David H. Groark  
Maj Jack R. Stresing  
Capt James E. Hayes  
Capt Allan K. Rutherford  
Capt Robert R. Reed

*Thunderchief Worldwide Report, Vol II No 5, Jan 67.*

**19-Sep-07**

6817

"Wayne N. Whatley died on September 19, 2007, and was buried at the BG William C. Doyle Veteran's Memorial Cemetery in Wrightstown, New Jersey."

<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.asp?ID=778>