

Richard E. White

F-105 History

05-Apr-68

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The eighteenth F-105 RTU Class 68HR graduated at the 23 TFW, McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 2 Nov 67 with 26 students. Twenty five graduated -- 2 Lt Cols, 13 Majs and 10 Cpts. This was the 23 TFW's first RTU class in which the students reported to McConnell PCS instead of TDY. This status allowed the 23 TFW to obtain each student's follow-on assignment rather than requesting it from the student's previous base.

The class deployed 30 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 12 - 28 Mar 68 with the 562 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col James L. Flowers. Maj Elwyn R. Capling was the Outstanding Graduate.

The class graduates were:

Lt Col Lewis R. "Benny" Bennington	Maj Daniel P. Van Sickel
Lt Col Robert J. Klingensmith, Jr.	Maj Richard E. White
Maj Joseph H. Brotherston	Capt Harry I. Axakowsky
Maj Elwyn Rex Capling	Capt Oral L. Bell
Maj David J. Carroll	Capt Ronald M. Cole
Maj Forrest G. "Dupe" Dupree	Capt Ralph E. Durnbaugh
Maj Victor R. Hollandsworth	Capt Gene D. Hartman
	Capt Jack S. Houser
Maj Donald E. Kelley	Capt Ronald A. Shoemake
Maj Walton G. Kilbourn, Jr.	Capt William M. Snow, Jr.
Maj Joseph W. O'Toole	Capt Tom E. Steward, Jr.
Maj Curtis Patterson	Capt Willis M. Thompson
Maj Jimmey N. Phipps	

Prior to his F-105 training, Capt Durnbaugh was a T-37 Stan/Eval pilot in the 3510 TFG (Air Force Instructor Training) at Randolph AFB, TX. After completing F-105 upgrade, he was assigned to the 34 TFS at Korat, where he arrived in April 1968.

23 TFW History, Jul - Dec 67 & Jan - Jun 68, USAF microfilm MO554 & Ralph Durnbaugh, e-mail 7 April 2010.

31-May-68

6552

"Detroit" flight, two F-105s from the 34 TFS, was part of the strike force in RP-1. The pilots were:

#1 - Capt Joseph S. Sechler, flying his 50th mission logging 3:10 flying hours.
#2 - Capt Lawrence L. Bogemann

After completing their missions for the practice Alpha strike, "Detroit" flight joined with the two-ship "No Trump" flight led by Maj Eugene Paul Beresik with wingman Maj Richard E. White. They were directed to strafe AAA sites on Hon Co (Tiger) Island off the coast just above the DMZ.

Joe Sechler described what happened. "My flight and his flight, after hitting our main targets were directed to go strafe some enemy gun positions on an island off the coast of N. Vietnam. On the way there we decided to join up as a four-ship. The FAC marked the position and we started to work. On one particular pass this fellow [Maj Beresik, "No Trump 01"] got too low and they let him have it. He called out he was hit and was going to bail out. No one saw him for a long time, so I took it on down low in a direction away from the island in which I thought he would go while staying with his plane as long as possible. I had just gone past some clouds when I saw it ... a bright orange and white chute floating down toward the water. I began making a tight circle around him, trying to follow him all the way down so as to direct the Jolly Green in or someone else. But I lost him. I couldn't believe it -- I was so close to him and the only one to see him hit the water. I

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couldn't forgive myself for losing him. I flew over the area several times and finally had to leave for low fuel. I can't help feeling I could have performed in a more efficient manner and maybe saved his life. I know they will classify him as missing in action, but in my own mind he went under, possible because of being wounded. If he had been OK he would have deployed his life saving gear and crawled into his raft. What a helpless feeling for me that day."

Larry Bogemann recalled how Beresik was hit. "Gene pulled up after the initial strafe to start his second pass. I had to pull off my dive because he had re-entered directly under me. He was hit in that pass and ejected. We saw the chute but when we came back around we saw no signs of a chute in the water."

Probably in response to Nora Beresik's efforts in asking the Air Force to declare her husband as MIA not KIA, on 8 July the Military Personnel Center at Randolph AFB TX asked Korat for details about his loss. Members of the 388th Combat Support Group Public Affairs Office interviewed Major White, Capt Bogemann and Capt Sechler and responded two days later in a TWX message.

"Altitude of fully deployed chute was 3,500 to 4,000 feet. ... Maj White stated that he was within 100 feet of Major Beresik as chute was descending. He did not see a life raft deployed on descent nor did he see any indication that LPU's had been inflated prior to impact with water. ... He or the other flight members did not see any sign of a raft or anyone swimming in the water. ... Estimated distance from Tiger Island to water impact was three miles." The message also stated: "We believe that a life raft in the water could be undetected by circling high-speed aircraft but should have been seen by SAR aircraft. A swimmer could go undetected by all concerned." (388 CSG/CBPO/PA TWX 100950Z Jul 68 provided by Paul Jansen, e-mail 16 May 19.)

The Forward Air Controller directing the F-105 attack against the ground guns on Tiger Island was Capt Robert Wiltuck, 20 TASS, flying an O-2 from Da Nang using call sign "Covey". He told his story in a 16 July 68 message also to the Military Personnel Center at Randolph AFB TX.

"... On No Trump One's second pass, he received ground fire, which was probably 23mm He made three radio calls prior to ejection. The first two were on the discreet UHF frequency 'I've flamed out', slight pause, 'I'm hit', and then switched to Guard and transmitted 'Mayday, Mayday, Mayday'. I personally did not see him eject or come down in his parachute due to cloud cover. ... No beeper or voice transmissions were received which could definitely be connected with No Trump One. I personally heard a beeper approximately 30 minutes after the ejection and it was not heard by any other aircraft in the SAR effort. The pilot landed in the water and the current was drifting northwest which would cause the pilot to float toward the coast of North Vietnam. When I heard the beeper, I was tracking northwest from the spot where the pilot landed and was under a thunderstorm on the deck. I personally never saw the pilot, parachute or any raft after the ejection, although one of the fighter pilots said over radio that he ejected, and had a good chute, and that he thought he was getting into the raft."

Capt Wiltuck was probably hearing calls about the ejection of and SAR for the Navy A-7 pilot "Streetcar 307" who did get into his raft before being rescued at the north end of Tiger Island. (161916Z Jul 68 TWX from 366 CSG Danang to USAF MPC, provided by Paul Jansen, e-mail 16 May 19.)

Joe Sechler, mission log via e-mail 28 Apr 10 & Joe Sechler letter to his wife dated 5 June 1968 & Larry Bogemann e-mail 23 June 2019.

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

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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
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

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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.

10-Apr-69

8097

Maj Richard E. White flew the F-105 for the last time. Since his first flight on 1 November 67, he had accumulated 505.5 hours in the Thunderchief.

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