

# Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman

## F-105 History

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**13-Feb-67**

230

The eighth F-105 RTU Class 67FR graduated at McConnell AFB KS. The class started on 22 Sep 66 with 15 pilots and consisted of 1 Lt Col, 4 Maj, 7 Capt, and 3 1Lts.

They named themselves "The Untouchables".

The class deployed 16 F-105s for conventional weapons delivery training to George AFB CA between 13 Jan - 3 Feb 67 with the 560 TFS. The squadron commander was Lt Col Louis D. Braun, Jr. One of the students, Maj Francis P. Walsh, was the 100th pilot to enter the RTU program since it started in Jan 66. Student Lt Col Harry W. Schurr was awarded the Top Gun and Outstanding Pilot plaques.

The graduates were:

Lt Col Harry W. Schurr	Capt Robert D. Reese
Maj Robert T. Cavanaugh	Capt William J. Schaff
Maj Ward Kent Dodge	Capt Francis T. Torikai
Maj Benjamin M. Pollard	Capt Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman
Maj Francis P. "Frenchy" Walsh	1Lt John William Bischoff
Capt Aquilla Friend Britt	1Lt Neil F. Blake
Capt Douglas G. Glime	1Lt John W. Ronemus
Capt Frank R. Jenkins	

Three of the pilots received Wild Weasel training at Nellis AFB, NV before reporting to South East Asia. They were Lt Col Schurr assigned to the 469 TFS, and Maj Cavanaugh and Capt Schaff who were both assigned to the 357 TFS.

Born in France, "Maj Frank P. 'Frenchy' Walsh ... saw his home in France destroyed three times during World War II bombing raids." (Sawdee Flyer, Feb 23, 1968)

Unfortunately, these guys were hardly "untouchable". Within 8 months of graduation, five of the 15 graduates were lost. Two were killed in SEA and three others become POWs, one of whom died in prison.

*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 Tom 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

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Capt Neil F. Blake

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.*

### 28-May-67

5139

The 34 TFS Ryan's Raider crew of Maj James R. Bassett and Capt Konrad W. Trautman flew a night North Scope mission in F-105F 63-8353 using call sign "Fume". They dropped six 750-pound bombs on target 1463, the Nui Caay Seeding Segment in RP 1, North Vietnam. "Good TA/CM calibration on second peak but TA/CM was unusable because video pedestal adjustment was out of calibration between ground map and terrain masking modes. Flew MEAs to target. Dropped TBC using center of 'S' return for freeze point. ... Good tanker rendezvous. Excellent boomer on tanker Red Anchor 50."

*388 TFW TWX 281810Z May 67 to 7 AF in PACAF DO Read File for 27 - 29 May 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 00518474.*

### 30-May-67

5145

The 34 TFS Ryan's Raider crew of Maj James R. Bassett and Capt Konrad W. Trautman flew a night North Scope mission in F-105F 63-8346 using call sign "Cambo". In radar BTIP mode, they dropped six 750-pound bombs on target 1501, the Quang Khe highway ferry. "... TBC appeared to release as programmed. Got good release (30K cursor). Saw flashes from bomb detonation but unable to determine CEA due to darkness. Exited over the water (Gulf of Tonkin), climbed to 18,000' and returned. ..."

*388 TFW TWX 301855Z May 67 to 7 AF in PACAF DO Read File for 31 May - 1 Jun 67, AFHRA Call # K717.312, IRIS # 00518476.*

### 01-Jun-67

4107

Lt Col James E. McNerney, 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 McNerney, 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 McNerney 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 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 crew of Capt George A. Bogert and Capt Donald S. Aunapu also transferred to the 13 TFS as did the crew of Maj James R. Bassett and Capt Konrad W. Trautman.

*388 TFW history, Apr - Dec 67, USAF microfilm NO 583, frame 1494 & Jim McNerney, e-mail 1 Nov 2004 &*

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*Nancy Fitzgerald 5 Nov 85 letter to Bauke Jan Douma.*

### 05-Aug-67

4721

The Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrough, Jr. and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 13 TFS at Korat flew their 21st mission over North Vietnam.

"Sat -- Mission #21 was a Ryan's Raiders support. The weather was bad around Yen Bai, so the second strike was diverted to PAK 1. We had to hold on a tanker for almost an hour because Korat's runway was closed for repairs."

Capt Konrad W. Trautman of the 13 TFS received a DFC for the mission he flew today. "The President of the United States of America ... takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Flying Cross to Captain Konrad Wigand Trautman, United States Air Force, for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a combat strike pilot near Kep, North Vietnam on 5 August 1967. On that date, Captain Trautman flew an F-105 Thunderchief in a perilous air attack on extremely aggressive anti-aircraft batteries. Undaunted when his aircraft was engulfed by exploding flak, Captain Trautman courageously delivered his ordnance. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Trautman reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

*Bob Dorrough's Combat Diary & <http://valor.militarytimes.com/search.php?term=trautman>.*

### 13-Aug-67

1382

Pilots struck the Lang Dang railroad siding (BE 616-01586) on the Northeast Rail Line (RR 2) in RP-6A at 21-39-07N and 106-35-07E.

At 0055Z, four 355 TFW F-105Ds in "Red Dog" flight dropped 24 M-117 bombs on the Lang Dang railroad siding. The pilots saw approximately 20 railroad cars near the center of the siding and 35 to 40 cars in the northeast end of the tracks. All bombs hit the center of the target cutting the tracks in one place and causing one secondary explosion from the southernmost rail cars of a train in the north portion of the yard. The flight encountered light 37/57-mm barrages bursting 9,000 feet over the target.

BDA photos of 13 August showed the yard was unserviceable but the through track was serviceable. Also, there were 26 serviceable pieces of rolling stock in the yard with only 2 of them damaged. Strikes against the Lang Dang railroad yard, resulted in four secondary explosions from rolling stock. A photo taken 7 minutes after the strike showed the yard had only 2 locomotives and 23 rail cars, 3 of which were damaged. "This is the smallest amount of rolling stock photographed in this yard since June." Enlarged photos showed all rail lines to be interdicted with rails twisted and strewn across the yard. (PACAF briefing.)

Capt Konrad W. Trautman from the 13 TFS, 388 TFW, received a DFC for a mission he flew today. "The President of the United States of America ... takes pleasure in presenting a Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Second Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Captain Konrad Wigand Trautman ... for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a combat strike pilot at Lang Son, North Vietnam on 13 August 1967. On that date, while flying an F-105 Thunderchief Captain Trautman was directed to attack a vital unfriendly railroad yard near the border of Communist China. Although he was burdened by severe weather, he courageously pressed the attack through clouds and accurate hostile anti-aircraft fire, subsequently destroying the target. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Trautman reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." (<http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=3544>)

*PACAF 16 August 67 Rolling Thunder briefing to CINCPAC for period 24 Jul - 13 Aug 67 & 355 TFW JOPREP JIFFY DOI 4730 OPREP-4/116 in USAF microfilm NO463, frame 258.*

### 23-Aug-67

1400

In the afternoon, F-105s from the 388 TFW and the 355 TFW and F-4s from the 8 TFW struck the Yen Vien railroad classification yard (JCS 19) (BE 616-00221) at coordinates 21-05-03N and 105-55-12E in RP-6A. It was the largest rail yard in North Vietnam and had been hit two days before.

The strike force approached the target in two waves. "Alpha" force consisted of four flights of F-105Ds from Korat (including pilots from the 34 TFS) in a box formation ("Vampire", the strike force lead; "Hotrod"; "Mallard"; and

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"Crossbow") followed by three flights of F-4Ds from Ubon ("Falcon", "Ford", and "????") in a triangular formation. These seven strike flights were supported by an Iron Hand flight from Korat ("Warhawk") made up of two F-105Fs and two F-105Ds positioned to the front right of the force, and an F-4C MIGCAP flight from Ubon, led by the 8 TFW commander Col Robin Olds, positioned on the left behind the F-105s.

"Alpha" force encountered numerous MiG-17s and MiG-21s. These encounters resulted in MiGs shooting down two F-4Ds, "Ford 1" and "Ford 4". A third F-4D, "Ford 3", was lost due to fuel starvation, and a fourth, "Falcon 3", was shot down by AAA.

Cannon fire from a MiG-17 damaged one F-105D, "Hotrod 3". "Hotrod 2" was Maj Aquilla F. Britt from the 469 TFS. Maj Britt was awarded the Silver Star (1 OLC) for gallantry in flying this mission. He "... led a flak suppression flight of four F-105s on a strike against a high priority military target. Though subjected to intense antiaircraft fire and attacks by MiG-17s, Major Britt successfully accomplished his mission and not a single F-105 was lost on this raid. He further exposed himself to danger in order to aid one of his flight that had experienced difficulty over the target area. ... " (Citation to Accompany the Award of The Silver Star (First Oak Leaf Cluster) (Posthumous) to Aquilla F. Britt, provided by his son Bryan Britt.)

An F-105D pilot, 1Lt David B. Waldrop, "Crossbow 3", was credited with destroying one MiG-17 and his flight lead, Maj Billy R. Givens, "Crossbow 1", was credited with "probably" destroying another MiG-17. Both pilots were from the 34 TFS. (Red Baron II Report, Event 11, pgs 97 - 117 and "Aces and Aerial Victories", pgs 65 - 66).

Capt Konrad W. Trautman from the 13 TFS received a DFC for his mission today. "The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting a Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Third Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat "V" to Captain Konrad Wigand Trautman for heroism while participating in aerial flight as pilot of a F-105D Thunderchief over North Vietnam on 23 August 1967. On that date, Captain Trautman, in the midst of heavy anti-aircraft weapon fire and attacking hostile aircraft, turned from the safety of his flight to render assistance to the crew of a stricken aircraft. Staying in the hostile target area, Captain Trautman maintained a visual watch on the falling aircraft until it impacted. Not until he was certain of the fate of the unfortunate crew did he give any thought to his own safety. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Captain Trautman reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." General Orders: Headquarters, 7th Air Force, Special Orders No. G-1990 (November 13, 1967) (<http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=3544>)

Takhli's "Bravo" force was 20 minutes behind "Alpha" force. It consisted of four F-105D strike flights ("Kingfish", "Bear", "Wolf", and "Wildcat") led by an all-F-105F Iron Hand Wild Weasel flight. These flights did not encounter MiGs and all returned safely.

Each flight in the strike force had four planes for a total of 44 F-105Ds and F-4Ds that went after the remainder of the box cars trapped in the yard.

Having spent the past two months resting and training, the North Vietnamese air force launched two MiG-21s and eight MiG-17s in defense of the rail yard. ("The -Ology War: Technology and Ideology in the Vietnamese Defense of Hanoi", 1967, Merle L. Pribbenow II, in *The Journal of Military History*, Jan 2003, pg 192.)

Five flights from the 388 TFW struck first, beginning at 0816Z. Each of the four F-105Ds in "Hotrod", "Crossbow", "Vampire", "Mallard", and "Warhawk" flights "... successfully struck the Yen Vien Classification Yard. ... The eight F-105Ds in "Mallard" and "Warhawk" flights ... landed at Udorn due to low fuel." One of the F-105s that landed at Udorn had an "... unexploded Soviet-built Sidewinder stuck through his vertical fin, half on one side and half on the other at about a 45-degree angle."

The 12 aircraft of the other three flights dropped a total of seventy-two M-117 bombs. Pilots reported "... an excess of 75 pieces of rolling stock located in the central part of the target." They estimated they damaged or destroyed 10 pieces "... but bomb smoke precluded accurate BDA."

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"Crossbow flight engaged three MiG-17s with one definite kill on one of the MiG-17s. Damage to the other two is unknown. Hotrod flight sighted one MiG-21 but no engagement took place. No SAMS were sighted. Flights encountered intense 37/57/85-mm in the target area."

"During a mission near Hanoi on 23 August, Capt Richard W. Arnold (from the 13 TFS) was leading the Iron Hand ["Crossbow"] flight when the force was jumped by MiGs. He succeeded in positioning himself and obtaining a 'probable' kill on a MiG-17." (13 TFS history, Aug 67, microfilm NO584, frame 0054.) This "probable" kill was not officially recognized.

The twelve F-4Ds in the strike force, led by "Falcon" flight, followed by "Ford" and "???" flights from the 8 TFW, also attacked the Yen Vien rail yard. Four F-4s from the 555 TFS at Ubon were lost -- two "Ds" from "Ford" flight shot down at 0815Z by missiles from MiG-21s and one "D" from "Falcon" flight was hit by AAA at 0819Z as it was diving toward the target. At 0950Z, an F-4D from "Ford" flight ran out of fuel just as the plane was connecting to a tanker. Both crewmen ejected 54 NM east of Udorn. They were picked up by Jolly Greens and returned to Udorn about midnight. Of the eight F-4 crewmembers who ejected this day, two were rescued, four became POWs, and two died. It was the worst day in the Triple Nickel's history.

"The MiG-21s came out of a cloud layer at 25,000 feet, made a single firing pass from the rear, and fired three air-to-air missiles which downed the two F-4Ds. The MiGs then climbed back into the overcast and disappeared. This tactic clearly demonstrated a well-coordinated enemy ground controlled intercept capability." (CHECO).

F-4D pilot, Dick Collins, recalled their encounter with the MiGs. "The MiG-21s had been strangely inactive that summer, and we didn't know why. Some people at 7th Air Force knew, but that knowledge never made it out to the only people who needed it -- the fighter squadron guys going downtown every day. ..."

To find out why they didn't know about the MiG-21s, "... the day after our losses, the Wing D.O., John Burns, and I jumped in an F-4 and flew to 7th Air Force in Saigon." What they learned was that, "the North Vietnamese did not have a sophisticated air defense system in place, and it became apparent that if they wanted to shoot down more strike aircraft and reduce their own losses then things had to change. So, that summer the Soviets showed up with pilots, ground radar controllers and ground radar technicians to implement Soviet air defense tactics. We learned that they had been practicing for months honing new skills, getting their training missions in when our MiG CAPs and strike forces were not in the area. ..."

"On August 23, NVN unveiled their new system at the Triple Nickel's expense. The wraps were off; the MiG-21s were back in action. They were scrambled from runway alert when we left the tankers, vectored to a perfect position at our six o'clock high. Then in a supersonic dive they were on top of us and in firing range without warning and before they could possibly be seen."

*388 TFW JOPREP JIFFY DOI 4201 Aug 67 OPREP-3/PINNACLE/012 388 TFW msg 231200Z Aug 67 & "Bad Day at Black Rock: An Old Movie" by F-4 pilot Dick Collins in MiG Sweep, Winter 2002 & CNA Database frame G-23 & Project CHECO Report, 17 Nov 67, pg 37.*

### 05-Oct-67

4764

As a member of a Wild Weasel flight from the 388 TFW at Korat in the morning, 1Lt Earl J. Henderson, 469 TFS, flew his 21st combat mission into North Vietnam.

"Target: Causeway north of Kep Airfield.  
"Armament: 6x500 inst. One Shrike.

"Wild Weasel flight. Land route. Flak extremely heavy in target area. Detroit lead hit [Maj Konrad W. Trautman, 13 TFS]. Went down in the Delta near Thai Nguyen. Said he was OK but they were coming after him. I took 37-mm hit in aft fuselage. No problems. I'm still here!"

Lt Henderson received the Distinguished Flying Cross (7th OLC) for this mission. "...Lieutenant Henderson was a member of a flight of four F-105 Thunderchiefs assigned to suppress the surface-to-air missile sites in a vital target

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area of North Vietnam. During his attack on one of these sites, his aircraft was heavily damaged by antiaircraft fire. Instead of departing the area with his crippled aircraft, he elected to remain with his flight until their mission was completed. ..."

In the afternoon, the Wild Weasel crew of Capt Robert E. Dorrough, Jr. and EWO Maj Clarence S. "Bud" Summers from the 44 TFS flew their 60th mission over North Vietnam.

"Thurs - #60. Capt Konrad Trautman was hit near Hanoi this morning [Capt Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman, 13 TFS, POW]. He got out, but was captured. Flew #60 to Pack 6 in the afternoon. Saw my first SAM close up. It passed about 700' behind me.

"On the way out, we heard a voice on guard radio channel that sounded like Maj Barnett [from the 469 TFS who had been shot down on 3 October]. He said he was alive and to pick him up. {He had been captured and was being forced to make the radio call.} It was too late to try this afternoon. So a big effort tomorrow morning."

*Earl Henderson, combat diary and award citation & Bob Dorrough's combat diary.*

### 05-Oct-67

F-105D 581169 13 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit by 85-mm AAA while en route to the Quang Kien RR causeway. Crashed 2.5 miles from Nga My in RP-6A, North Vietnam. 21-28N 106-00E Capt Konrad Wigand Trautman 13 TFS pilot ejected on his 60th mission. POW. Released 14 Mar 73. Call sign: "Detroit 01". Major Konrad W. Trautman from Oberlin, PA, flew as Detroit 01 leading a flight of four F-105s on a strike mission to the Quang Kien RR Causeway at location 21-25-47N and 106-17-57E in North Vietnam. Other members in the flight were Maj Donald S. Aunapu, Maj James R. Bassett and Maj Harold B. Wilson. The flight from the 13 TFS took off from Korat at 05:45 and Major Trautman was lost over the target at 07:30.

"The following is an extract from the statement of Major Harold D. Wilson, Detroit 4: '... We rolled in on the target as briefed in elements of two. Captain Trautman ... and the Number 2 aircraft attacked the causeway and 3 and 4 attacked AAA positions. Intense flak was encountered from five miles from roll in until about five miles on egress. After rolling with 3, I then established my own attack against a separate AAA site. At about 12,000 in the dive I heard Lead call 'Detroit's hit.' I came off the target to the right as briefed and began looking for the rest of the flight. Five aircraft were immediately ahead of me but none appeared to have been hit. As I closed to join with these aircraft, I observed a long trail of fire at 10 o'clock about 10 miles which appeared at first to be an SA-2 but on closer look was an F-105 aircraft. At this time I heard Detroit 3 call Lead saying that he had him in sight and was joining on him. Shortly after, I heard a beeper and heard Detroit 3 call, 'I have a beeper and good chute.' Detroit 3 then called downed position as 2128N/10600E. Detroit flight then rejoined and egressed the area. On egress we received a call from an unknown aircraft saying he had established contact with Captain Trautman and that he had said, 'I'm alright, but they're coming after me.' " ("PACAF Intelligence Index of USAF Personnel MIA/PW in Southeast Asia", pg 3-165).

He received a Silver Star for his final mission. "The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Captain Konrad Wigand Trautman ... for gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force while serving as Pilot of an F-105 Thunderchief of the 13th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Korat Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand, in action over North Vietnam, on 5 October 1967. On that date, Captain Trautman was the leader of a flight of four F-105 Thunderchiefs in an air attack against an intensely defended causeway. Although his aircraft was struck repeatedly by accurate and tracking flak, Captain Trautman courageously pressed the attack and devastated the target with his ordnance. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Captain Trautman has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force. General Orders: Headquarters, 7th Air Force, Special Order G-1988 (November 13, 1967) (<http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=3544>)

"On 5 October, Captain Konrad Trautman ... was shot down over North Vietnam on his 60th mission. He is listed as MIA." (13 TFS history) He had accumulated 288.4 hours in the F-105. (F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

He received the Air Force Cross for the period 10 May - 8 Oct 1968 while he was a POW. His award citation read: "The President of the United States of America, authorized by Section 8742, Title 10, United States Code, awards the

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Air Force Cross to Major Konrad W. Trautman for extraordinary heroism in military operations against an opposing armed force as a Prisoner of War in North Vietnam from 10 May 1969 to 8 October 1969. Under his leadership, an escape committee was formed which eventually precipitated an escape from a prison camp located on the edge of the city of Hanoi. Through the escapees were soon recaptured, it resulted in extreme embarrassment to the camp commander who lost his position along with others of his staff. Major Trautman was subjected to a cruel round of torture in which the interrogators attempted to get details of prisoner plans and organization. Major Trautman absorbed this torture and accepted blame for the escape in a gallant bid to protect the senior ranking American and other prisoners who were active in operations against the Vietnamese. He suffered excruciating tortures and beatings resulting in many serious wounds which placed him physically and mentally on the edge of death. Through his extraordinary heroism and aggressiveness in the face of the enemy, Major Trautman reflected the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." ("Recipients of the Air Force Medal of Honor and Air Force Cross", by Eric R. Caubarreaux, pp 271 - 272.)

The POW escape was by John Dramesi, an F-105 pilot and Ed Atterberry an RF-4C pilot. They escaped on Saturday 10 May 1969 but both were recaptured the next day. Atterberry died from beatings on 18 May 1969. Dramesi and Atterberry (posthumously) also received the Air Force Cross for their escape attempt.

*U.S. Navy CNA Loss/Damage Data Base & 13 TFS history, 1 Sep - 17 Oct 67, USAF microfilm NO584, frame 0059.*

**09-Oct-67**

4828

In the afternoon, two 2-ship flights from the 34 TFS attacked targets in North Vietnam.

Maj John O. Rollins, flying his 100th mission, led Maj Spence M. "Sam" Armstrong in F-105D 61-0132 on his second combat mission into North Vietnam. "Cambo" flight took off at 15:25 for a mission lasting 1 hour 50 minutes. "2-ship flight fraged against a natural river ford in Laos just west of Vietnam but was unable to go to target due to heavy cloud coverage in eastern Thailand and Vietnam. Instead we received a Combat Sky Spot (CSS) and dropped our 12 bombs together from level flight at 18,000 ft. Target was Mu Gia Pass. Could not see impact because of clouds. Came back to Korat and made low pass in trail and tactical pitchup to honor Maj Rollins completing his 100 missions."

With a takeoff time of 16:00, Capt David L. Burney flying F-105D 61-0126 led "Laredo" flight. It was his 95th mission. "Laredo 02" was Capt Jacob C. Shuler flying his second combat mission in 60-0409. The flight's spare was Capt Robert M. Crane in 60-0428. Their three targets were:

Primary: 19-37N and 103-27E  
Secondary: 20-02N and 103-43E  
Tertiary: 16-59N and 106-56E

Jake Shuler described the flight in his log. "Proceeded directly to Orange Anchor and refueled with OA 52. 'Rainbow' flight from Takhli was on the tanker when we got there and we were told that all four of us were to orbit with tanker for possible rescap. Before I finished my one gulper, we were notified to go to primary target. Had comm problems with Cricket but finally was turned over to Firefly 17 and 18 (an A-1E and an Air America O-1E). Rainbow flight was already there and the A-1E dropped some 500# bombs to mark the target for them and they got 100% on target, 50% coverage. I still had not acquired the target but Dave had. Firefly 18 told us that he would mark our target with Willie Peter and as he rolled in, I caught sight of him but did not pick up the WP just before Dave rolled in. I rolled in and pickled 9000' above the target. We got 100% on target and 75% coverage and the FAC was pleased. Saw the bomb craters but couldn't see much. We came on home and landed uneventfully.

"Maj James Clements [469 TFS, POW] was shot today by a MiG-21. A chute was seen but no voice contact or beeper. This was the seventh aircraft we have lost since I have been here. Maj Barnett (SAM), Maj Clements (MiG-21), Capt Trautman, Maj Fullum (85), Joe Howard (MiG-21) and his GIB all in Route Pack Six. A Weasel went in in route pack five for unknown reasons and another Weasel ran off the end of runway due to a chute & hook fail and no utility hydraulic pressure. Logged 2+05".

Lt Col Rufus Dye, Jr. flew his 2nd combat mission as "Cleveland 02". His target was a Ba Nam highway segment in

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RP-1. Due to weather, he dropped his bombs by Sky Spot.

*Maj Sam Armstrong's 100 mission combat log, pg 1 & Jake Shuler combat mission spreadsheet and "Mission #2 Narrative" via e-mail 28 July 2010 & Rufus Dye, Mission History log.*

**14-Mar-73**

1251

The fourth set of POWs was released from North Vietnam during "Operation Homecoming". Among the 107 military prisoners released on this Wednesday, were 26 F-105 pilots and EWOs who had been shot down between 3 August 1967 (Capt Wallace Grant Newcomb) and 9 August 1968 (Col David William Winn).

Col Roger Dean Ingvalson was one of the F-105 pilots released today. He had been Operations Officer of the 34 TFS and was downed by AAA on 28 May 1968.

Maj Konrad W. Trautman was one of the POWs released today. He had been shot down on 5 Oct 1967 while assigned to the 13 TFS. After his release he told the story of his life. "Hi! I was born March 18, 1927 in Oberlin, Pennsylvania (near Harrisburg). Mom and Dad were immigrants from the 'old country'" and I cherish my German ancestry. As a child the joy of flying caught my heart and it was "love at first sight." On March 18, 1944, I enlisted in the Army Air Corps Reserve as an Aviation Cadet. That summer, between washing and gassing up planes at the local airport, I soloed and earned my Private Pilot's License.

"June 20, 1945, I entered active duty, but the pilot training program was terminated. Then, as a G.I. I was stationed in the United States, Alaska, and Germany. In the fall of 1948 I again enlisted in Aviation Cadets for pilot training. March of 1949 I reported to Randolph Field, Texas for Primary/Basic Training flying the T-6, then to Advanced Training at Las Vegas, Nevada flying the P-51D "Mustang." In March 1950 I received my 'bars and wings.'

"Off to Neubiberg Air Base, Germany (near Munich) with the 86th Fighter-Bomber Wing flying the P-47N, the F-84E, and the F-86F Sabrejet, with 90 days TDY to Taegu, Korea, flying 20 combat missions in the F-84E. In July 1953 I returned stateside and with mixed emotions, I decided to leave the Air Force in November.

"In July 1954, I married Angela, and soon lovely Diane became our new joy. I became active in the Pennsylvania Air National Guard flying the old 'Mustang' But civilian life was not for me and in August 1955 I was voluntarily recalled to active duty and assigned to the 1737th Ferry Squadron at Dover AFB, Delaware. While there in December 1957, another man entered the family, a large 9 lb. son, Konnie, 'joined up' to make our family a 'flight of four.' Subsequent assignments at Olmstead AFB, Pennsylvania (1958 to 1959); Clark AB, Philippines until July 1961; then 4 years at Custer AFS, Battle Creek, Michigan. In July 1965 I was assigned to a GCI (radar site) in Fort Yukon, Alaska. After a one year remote tour I was reassigned to South East Asia. So it's off to Korat RTAFB, Thailand, via F-105D 'Thunderchief' training school at McConnell AFB, Wichita, Kansas.

"I arrived at Korat in May 1967. While on a bombing mission, not far from Hanoi, on October 5, 1967 (my 62nd mission), my aircraft was hit by flak. In minutes I ejected and was captured within 15 minutes. That night I 'checked in' to the infamous Hanoi Hilton." (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/t/t034.htm>) "He was briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries at Andrews AFB, Maryland, and then received an Air Force Institute of Technology assignment to complete his bachelor's degree at Penn State University, followed by Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. His final assignment was at Sheppard AFB, Texas, where he served as Assistant to the Center Commander, Deputy Commander of the 3785th Field Training Group, and Commander of the 3760th Technical Training Group from August 1976 until his retirement from the Air Force on December 1, 1981." (<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.php?recordID=1200>)

Col James E. Bean was released in this group. He had been the 388 TFW Deputy Commander for Operations. He was shot down on 3 January 1968 while flying with the 469 TFS. "He was briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries, and then attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces before retiring from the Air Force on September 18, 1974."

Col John P. Flynn was in the group of POWs. He had been the 388 TFW Wing Vice Commander when he was shot down on 27 October 1967. He flew with the 34 TFS.



# Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman

## F-105 History

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Maj Raymond Walter Vissotzky from the 34 TFS, shot down and captured on 19 November 1967, was another F-105 pilot released today.

Maj Dwight E. Sullivan from the 34 TFS was also released from Hanoi today. "... He was briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries at March AFB, California, and then attended Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, from August 1973 to August 1974. His final assignment was as Assistant Deputy Commander for Logistics and then Deputy Commander for Maintenance with the 47th Flying Training Wing at Laughlin AFB, Texas, from August 1974 until his retirement from the Air Force on June 1, 1978." (<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.asp?ID=1085>)

Capt Anthony Charles Andrews from the 34 TFS, shot down on 17 October 1967, was one of the 26 F-105 pilots released today. "My home town is Chico, California, where I was born and remained until after finishing two years of college. Next I attended the University of California at Berkeley where I finished as an Electrical Engineer in 1963. My Air Force career started that Fall. "Anthony Andrews left the Air Force after his return home. He now works for a major airline." (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/a/a041.htm>)

Maj Donald E. "Digger" Odell from the 34 TFS was in today's POW release. He had been downed in the same flight as Maj Sullivan and Capt Andrews.

Also released was Capt Thomas E. Norris from the 469 TFS shot down on 12 Aug 1967.

Capt Carl William Lasiter was released today. He was from the 34 TFS and had been shot down by a MiG-21 on 4 February 1979.

Capt Jay Criddle Hess was released today. He had been with the 357 TFS when he was shot down on 24 August 1967. He returned to March AFB on March 17, 1973. Hess was a prisoner of war for more than five years after enemy fire downed his F-105 bomber. A photo of his daughter running to greet him was printed in the Los Angeles Times. The photographer was Ben Olender. "Heidi Hess, 9, runs to greet her father, Air Force Maj. Jay C. Hess, at March Air Force Base following his release by the North Vietnamese. ... On the weekend of March 17-18, 60 former POWs were flown from the Philippines to three bases around the United States. Maj. Hess was one of 20 former POWs flown to March AFB." (<http://framework.latimes.com/2010/11/11/welcome-home/>)

Maj Elmo C. Baker was released today. He was in the 357 TFS when he was shot down on 23 Aug 1967. "Upon his return, 'Mo' Baker was awarded numerous medals, badges and decorations which included, the Silver Star with 3 OLC, the Bronze Star with Device, the Distinguished Flying Cross with 3 OLC, the Air Medal with 10 OLC, Purple Heart and the Legion of Merit. Although Baker's wife divorced him upon his arrival home, his two children chose to live with him. In reflection, he says the medical follow-up was very good, but the Air Force was VERY inept at helping the returnees re-adjust. He says they were usually assigned staff work, with little regard for command experience gained in captivity. They were given no help on getting their careers back on track." (1997 update in <http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/b/b074.htm>.)

Maj Robert Lewis Stirm was also released today. From the 333 TFS, he had been hit by a SAM on 27 October 1967. "I attended San Mateo Park School, San Mateo High School, and San Mateo Junior College, California. I then went to the University of Colorado where I studied Mechanical Engineering. I entered Aviation Cadets in the summer of 1953." (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/s/s117.htm>.)

A photo of Stirm's family greeting him on the ramp at Travis AFB on 17 March 1973 was taken by Associated Press photographer Slava "Sal" Veder. The photo, titled "Burst of Joy", received a Pulitzer Prize for feature photography in 1974. ([http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/Coming\\_Home.html](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/Coming_Home.html))

Also released was Col Richard A. Dutton, a Wild Weasel pilot from the 333 TFS, who had been shot down on 5 November 1967. "... Now I am home and my biggest job is to become a father instead of 'that man Mama's been telling us about.' (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/d/d063.htm>)

# Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman

## F-105 History

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Capt William Wallace Butler from the 469 TFS, shot down on 20 Nov 67, was one of the F-105 pilots released today. "Capt Butler was briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries at Travis AFB, California, and then received an Air Force Institute of Technology Assignment to attend the University of California from September 1973 until he left active duty on June 30, 1974. After leaving the Air Force, Bill completed his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree ...." (<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.php?recordID=1708>) "I'll give you more information on myself and current status now. My physical condition overall is excellent. I've gained back a few needed pounds and suffer no serious illnesses or malformations, as some of the men that you've probably seen. Being with my wife, Julie, again, is truly wonderful, as we are both still happily in love. Our two children, Peter, 6, born 8 months before I left the USA, and Sheila, 5, born 4 months after I left, are the greatest! I think 'Daddy' is still a novelty around the house, but we are having a ball getting to know one another. My plans for the future are as yet uncertain. Things have changed a lot in America, and I'll need some time to adjust and decide on a future for our family." (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/b/b111.htm>)

Col David W. Winn was the 355 TFW Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations flying with the 357 TFS when he was shot down on 9 Aug 1968. "I was born in Austin, Minnesota, and had a totally unspectacular childhood. I went off to Carroll College, just outside of Milwaukee, to get two years of college in order to qualify for the Army Air Corps. When the age and college requirements were dropped following Pearl Harbor, I dropped school, and graduated from pilot training in February 1943.

"During the next five years, I flew nearly all the fighters we had, but my World War II combat flying was in Martin B-26's and the photo version of the P-38. I instructed gunnery for three years at Williams Field, Arizona in P-47's, P-51's and P-80's until 1948, when I switched to the Minnesota Air National Guard to look for a wife and an education.

"Without achieving either, I was recalled to active duty in February 1951. But Mary Flumerfelt married me on Flag Day in 1952, and the Air Force Bootstrap program got me a University of Minnesota degree in Journalism in 1958.

"We had a most rewarding year in Yorkshire (flying Hawker Hunters and English Electric Lightnings, Mk. II) plus eight months at Fighter Command Headquarters at Stanmore on exchange with the R.A.F. Mary finally added a daughter, Helen, to our family of sons, David Jr., Frank and Peter, while we were in England.

"After two puzzling years in the Pentagon, my prejudices were totally shattered by a very rich year at the National War College at Ft. McNair, during which I completed graduate studies in international relations.

"The post, post-graduate training in Hanoi was next. I was a two-time loser, having been downed in April 1968 and again on 9 August.

"I don't know how to put those 55 months at Hoa Lo and the Plantation into words right now - maybe someday. For me, that experience has to marinate awhile." (<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/w/w072.htm>)

"He was promoted to the grade of brigadier general April 2, 1973, with date of rank March 30, 1973."

"In August 1973 General Winn was appointed vice commander, Sheppard Technical Training Center, Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. He then became deputy commander of the 22d NORAD Region, Canadian Forces Base North Bay, Ontario, Canada. He served in this position from August 1974 to August 1976, when he became chief of staff, Headquarters NORAD/ADCOM, at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo." On May 27, 1977, he became "... commander of the North American Air Defense Command Combat Operations Center located in Cheyenne Mountain near Colorado Springs, Colo." (USAF biography on-line at <http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/Biographies/Display/tabid/225/Article/105193/brigadier-general-david-w-winn.aspx>.)

Winn retired as a Brigadier General on July 1, 1978.

*"Honor Bound" by Stuart I. Rochester and Frederick Kiley, pg 585 &  
<http://www.veterantributes.org/TributeDetail.asp?ID=1030>.*

# Konrad Wigand "Konnie" Trautman

## F-105 History

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Former POW Col Konrad W. "Konnie" Trautman, who had been shot down in his F-105D on 5 October 1967, was the fiftieth F-105 pilot to begin re-qualification flight training when he flew his T-38 "Champagne Flight" at Randolph AFB TX with IP Maj Jerry Kasperbauer. His call sign was "Freedom 146". He received a follow-on assignment as the Special Assistant to the Commander, Sheppard AFB, Texas.

*"Home With Honor", Commemorative book by the 560th Flying Training Squadron, July, 1976, Pg 109.*

**23-Dec-17**

7878

Colonel Konrad Trautman, 90 years old, died 23 December 2017, at Blue Skies Over Texas in San Antonio, TX.

Funeral services will be held at the Ft. Meyer Chapel at Arlington National Cemetery in VA.

Col. Trautman was born on 18 March 1927 in Oberlin, PA to Konrad J. and Susanna Wigand Trautman. He is a graduate of Swatara Township High School in Oberlin and a graduate of Penn State University with a Bachelor of Humanities degree. Konrad married Angela G. Simonic 3 July 1954 in Steelton, PA.

He served in the Air Force during the latter part of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. During a brief break in service he was active in the PA Air National Guard, Reading, PA, flying the P-51 Mustang fighter.

In Korea, he flew 20 combat missions in the F-84G Thunderjet fighter. In Vietnam he flew 62 combat missions in the F-105D Thunderchief fighter, before his aircraft was shot down north of Hanoi. He was captured and held as a Prisoner of War for 5 ½ years. He retired from the Air Force in 1981 with 34 years of active duty. He was a command pilot with over 3800 flying hours.

Among his awards and decorations are the Air Force Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star Medal with Valor Device and one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Medal with seven Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple Heart with one Oak Leaf Cluster and Prisoner of War Medal.

He was a life member of both the Order of Daedalians and the Legion of Valor.

Col. Trautman was preceded in death by his dear wife, Angela, of 51 years.

Survivors include one daughter, Dr. Diane M. Hartman and husband David of China Spring, TX, with two granddaughters, Mrs. Laura A. Johansen and husband Captain David Johansen, U.S. Army and great-grandsons, Cody D. Johansen, John D. Johansen and great granddaughter Sarah G. Johansen of JBSA, TX, and granddaughter Dr. Amanda N. Hartman and husband Dr. Raphael Mattamal of Amarillo, TX.

Col. Trautman is also survived by one son, Colonel (Retired) Konrad J. Trautman, U.S. Army and wife Elizabeth Henry Trautman, of Wimauma, FL, with three grandchildren, Major Konrad L. Trautman, U.S. Air Force, Randolph AFB, TX and wife Katrina and great granddaughters Amelia Angela and Evelyn G. Trautman; Captain (Retired) Cathryn J. Trautman and husband Master Sergeant (Retired) Gus Sadiku, U.S. Army of Chicago, IL; and grandson, Cadet Christopher M. Trautman of Wimauma, FL.

The family will receive friend and family at the Chapel located at Ft. Meyer adjacent to Arlington National Cemetery in VA at a time to be determined.

Memorials may be made to Smile Train or a health foundation of your choice.

*J. C. Jones, e-mail 27 Dec 17 forwarding obituary from Konrad's daughter Diane Hartman.*