

Gordon M. Walcott

F-105 History

05-Nov-63

5227

At the 4520 CCTW at Nellis AFB NV, Class 64-E of F-105D Operational Training Course 111506E graduated 25 pilots. The course started on 6 September 1963 and was assigned to the 4526 CCTS commanded by Maj Warren Foss. The student pilots and their home stations were:

Lt Col William R. Peters - Itazuke	Capt Malcolm D. Winter - 388 TFW McConnell
Lt Col Louis R. Vogt - McConnell	Capt William J. Barthelmas, Jr. - 355 TFW George
Capt Dwight P. Bowles - Itazuke	1Lt David H. Groark - George
Capt Joseph Edward Bower - George	1Lt Murphy Neal Jones - England
Capt Giles W. Gainer - Luke	Capt William M. Kurtz - George
Capt Teddy Gay - George	1Lt Cecil W. Powell - George
Capt Stephen G. Huisenfeldt - George	1Lt John W. "Jack" Redmond - 8 TFW Itazuke
Capt Frank J. Kohler, Jr. - George	Capt Stanley S. Ryneer - Itazuke
Capt Lothar A. Olman - Cannon	1Lt Larry G. Van Pelt - Itazuke
Capt Robert D. Pielin - Nellis	1Lt Victor Vizcarra - Homestead
Capt Robert D. Reichart - Cannon	Capt George M. Weeks III - George
Capt Robert P. Taylor - Myrtle Beach	1Lt Larry J. Wright - George
Capt Gordon M. Walcott - England	

Robert Taylor had entered the Air Force as an enlisted man. "In March '52 I entered Air Cadet training in Texas and earned my wings in March '53 when I graduated from T-33 training at Webb AFB, Big Springs, Texas. I went through F-84G upgrade training at Luke AFB, Arizona and was stationed in Maine with the then SAC Fighter Bomber Group. Went to northern Japan (Misawa AB) for Korean backup in the fall of '53. Our squadron upgraded to the F-84F swept wing planes in '54 and I went back to Officer's Electronic School at Keesler, AFB, Mississippi in mid '54. I pulled duty as Radar Maintenance and Communications Officer at Langley AFB, Virginia (TAC Headquarters), spent about a year at a remote radar station in Labrador, went to two years of electrical engineering school and got my BSEE from Oklahoma State University. I worked for a few years at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico on nuclear weapons drop systems and was manager of the electronic shop that did the installation of all the diagnostic equipment for the 1962 Christmas Island US nuclear drop testing. I then went back to full-time flying in F-100s and moved to the F-105s in the fall of 1963. I went to Itazuke AB in southern Japan for 6 months and then we moved the whole fighter wing to Yokota AB near Tokyo.

"... On my first flight at Nellis, I lost my ATM (Air Turbine Motor) and had to land without any AC power so used backup instruments only. This was somewhat sporty for the first time you ever flew in the machine."

Prior to his F-105 training, Lt Groark had flown F-104s with the 476 TFS at George AFB, CA. He went on TDY to Hahn AB, Germany, during the Berlin Wall crisis in August 1961 and in October 1962 was deployed to Boca Chica NAS, Key West, FL to fly missions around Cuba during the Cuban Missile crisis. (Dave Groark, e-mail 10 April 2010.) After his F-105 training he was assigned to the 80 TFS, Itazuke AB, Japan.

1Lt Vizcarra was an F-100 pilot from the 309 TFS at Homestead. His next assignment was to the 80 TFS, 8 TFW, Itazuke AB, Japan. ("Thud Pilot" unpublished memoirs)

1Lt Murphy Neal Jones "... was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 3 January 1938. I attended Baton Rouge High School (Class of '56) where I played football and baseball. I attended Tulane University on a football scholarship. I graduated with a B.A. degree. I also received my commission in the United States Air Force through the AFROTC at this time. ...

"I attended primary pilot training (Class 62-A) at Graham Air Base, Florida, and basic pilot training at Reese Air Force Base, Texas. I then attended combat crew training in the F-100 at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, and then at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. I was assigned to the 612 TFS at England Air Force Base, Louisiana."

(<http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/j/j030.htm>) After his F-105 training he was assigned to the 8 TFW, Itazuke AB,

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Japan.

SO AA-3 dated 6 Sep 63 in History of the 4520 CCTW, 1 Jul - 31 Dec 63, AFHRA Call # K285.5435, IRIS # 0488615 & Robert Taylor letter to Bauke Jan Douma, 2 Dec 1988.

31-Dec-63

5655

Eight new pilots arrived in December to join the undermanned 80 TFS, 8 TFW, Itazuke AB, Japan. They were:

Maj Phillip A. Coll
Capt Lothar A. Olman
Capt Robert P. Taylor
Capt Robert D. Pielin
Capt Giles W. Gainer
Capt Gordon M. Walcott
Capt Robert D. Reichart
1Lt Victor Vizcarra

Robert Taylor described his experience at his new base. "On joining the 80th at Itazuke, we were in the final stages of converting from the F-100 to the F-105. We also pulled nuclear alert at Osan AB in Osan, Korea. We would pull a week's alert at the alert pad and then be back at our home base for 2 - 3 weeks and then rotate back on alert. This was our main purpose there in Japan. Of course we couldn't store nuclear weapons in Japan so we had them all in Korea."

Capt Larry D. Waller was the one F-100 pilot in the 80th who departed in December.

"The year 1963 was the safest flying year for the 8 TFW since 1955. According to statistics kept by the Consolidated Safety Office, more than 25,000 hours were flown by the Wing's F-105, F-100, and F-102 aircraft. The figure also included flying time logged by the T-39A, T-33, and C-47 support aircraft. ... The F-105s logged over 6,000 accident free hours since Lt Col Max T. Beall, 8 TFW Director of Operations, flew the first Thunderchief to Itazuke in May 1963. The 80 TFS, flying F-100 and F-105 aircraft completed two years of accident-free flying hours"

By the end of 1963, the 8 TFW possessed 74 F-105Ds. "Some problems were encountered with the block 31 series F-105D, since this was the first organization to utilize this series. However, every possible corrective action was taken throughout the maintenance complex. In addition, aircrews were constantly kept abreast of the newer problems, which aided considerably in reducing the accident potential."

8 TFW history, 1 July - 31 Dec 63, pp 121, 129 - 130, 145 - 146, AFHRA Call # K-WG-8-HI, IRIS # 447600 & Robert Taylor letter to Bauke Jan Douma, 2 Dec 1988.

17-Nov-64

29-Dec-64

1051

Pilots from the 80 TFS from Yokota AB, Japan, continued arriving at Korat RTAFB, Thailand, to replace the 35 TFS. This was the 80th's first combat deployment of the Vietnam war and they were the third F-105 squadron from Yokota to fly combat missions at Korat. Maj John P. Anderson commanded the 80th.

In addition to Maj Anderson, twenty pilots eventually deployed with the squadron:

Maj Phillip A. Coll	Capt Robert D. Pielin
Capt Robert D. Reichart	Capt David E. Weaver
Capt John Atkinson	Capt Ralph L. "Pappy" Detwiler
Capt Giles W. Gainer	Capt Chan E. McNelly
Capt Lothar A. "Andy" Olman	Capt Robert L. "Bob The Wedge" Keller
Capt Lawrence D. Wilson	Capt Wayne Ensminger
Capt Gary Banks	Capt Murphy Neal Jones
Maj Delbert F. Smith	Capt Charles W. McClarren
Maj Arthur Mearns	Capt David H. Groark

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Capt Victor Vizcarra

Capt Gordon M. Walcott

Capt Vizcarra described the primitive conditions he found at Korat. "The whole base with the exception of the flightline was on dirt, no concrete or asphalt roads or sidewalks. Sidewalks that did exist were wood planks like in the old west. Throughout the base, in the center of nowhere, there were pipes sticking out of the ground with funnels on top about waist high - urinals! There was no Officer's Club (O'club); enlisted and officers ate together in the mess hall. You either walked or rode bicycles to wherever you needed to go. The phones were connected with open wire lines that were strung out from beneath the hooches."

Victor Vizcarra, e-mail, 10 Sep 00 & "Thud Pilot", unpublished memoirs, Chap. 1, pp 2 - 3.

04-Oct-65

17-Oct-65

1

The 6441 TFW deployed under "Pacific Concord I" from Yokota AB, Japan, to Australia. Five F-105Fs and one F-105D deployed to Williamtown RAAF Base, Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia, for a joint exercise with the Royal Australian Air Force and the Royal New Zealand Air Force. The Thunderchiefs flew 4,300 miles from Yokota to Williamtown and flew exercises with Mirages, Sabres, and Canberras flown by the Australian and New Zealand air forces.

The deploying aircraft were F-105D 62-4375 and F-105Fs 63-8294, 63-8283, 63-8279, 63-8271, and 63-8296.

The 6441 TFW commander, Col Chester L. Van Etten, led the deployment and was also Deputy Exercise Director. Other pilots on the deployment were:

Maj William D. Lockwood - 35 TFS

Capt John W. "Jack" Redmond - 80 TFS

Maj Henry Shudinis - Hq 6441 TFW

Capt Robert P. Taylor - 80 TFS

Capt Edward R. Bracken - 35 TFS

Capt Victor Vizcarra - 80 TFS

Capt James T. Brown - 35 TFS

Capt Gordon M. Walcott - 80 TFS

Capt Mike MacNamara - Hq 6441 TFW

Capt Cecil W. Powell - 80 TFS

Lt Col Harold J. Steffen, the 6441 TFW Chief of Maintenance, was the maintenance officer on the deployment.

Capt Robert Taylor recalled details about this deployment. Col Van Etten flew the "D" and Taylor flew his wing in one of the "Fs". Col Van Etten "... flew us head-on right through two KC-135 tankers over Kyoto, Japan. We were to rendezvous with them but he didn't fly enough to know the procedures. You met them head on with 1000 feet separation not at the same altitude. We survived but the tanker crews were P.O'd for sure. He simply didn't fly enough to know what he was supposed to do." (Robert Taylor letter to Bauke Jan Douma, 2 Dec 1988)

During the deployment, a woman in the Royal Australian Air Force, Flight Officer Marj Cummins, rode in an "F" piloted by Maj Henry Shudinis. She became the first Australian woman to fly faster than the speed of sound.

"F-105s flew 82 sorties, alternating as attacker and interceptor, with only 1 abort. The OR rate normally stood at 100% but was never below 84%. During the maneuvers one Thunderchief achieved a speed of Mach 1.7 at 37,000 feet, while another reached a speed of Mach .98 on a low-level pass."

"At altitudes above 45,000 feet some of our pilots experienced speed of 1.7 Mach and still increasing. Captain Jim Brown of the 35 TFS reported passing through 45,000 at a rate of climb over 3,000 feet per minute, indicating 1.5 Mach ..."

5th AF Safety News, November 1965 & "Thunderchief Worldwide Report on Republic's F-105 Fighter-Bomber", Vol I, No. 3, Nov 1, 1965 & Vol I, No. 4, Dec 1, 1965.

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.

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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 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. Gunnerson
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 - 80 TFS

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 July 1988, which included a roster of 36 TFS pilots, dated 18 April 1966.

21-Jun-66

F-105D 624358 36 TFS 34 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit twice by heavy 85-mm AAA while attacking the Dao Quan

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POL storage area (BE 616-01748). Crashed in RP-6A, North Vietnam. 21-24N 106-14E 1Lt John Bernard Sullivan III 36 TFS pilot on TDY with the 34 TFS was MIA. Call sign: "Anvil 02". The POL target was about five miles northwest of Kep airfield. Lt Sullivan was a member of the 36 TFS from Yokota AB, Japan, on temporary duty with the 34 TFS at Korat.

Other members of Anvil Flight were Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson, Capt James E. Hayes and Capt Gordon M. Walcott. Their target was the Dao Quan POL Storage Area at location 21-26-10N and 106-12-22E, 6 miles NW of Kep, North Vietnam. The flight took off from Korat at 06:04 and Lt Sullivan was shot down at 07:25.

"Following initiation of pullup for bomb delivery, Lt Sullivan called, 'I'm hit; smoke in the cockpit. I think I've had it.' A member of his flight saw Lt Sullivan's aircraft hit a second time by 85-mm just below the canopy. Smoke was observed and he was told to eject. His aircraft was last seen proceeding on a heading of 160 degrees. No member of his flight saw Lt Sullivan eject or his aircraft impact the ground. No chute was observed and beeper signals were not heard. His last known position was over an area of flat terrain, spotted with small villages. Two Navy aircraft completed four high-altitude electronic searches over water on a line between 2102N/10605E and 2003N/10636E with negative results. The search was terminated at 1000 hours local, 21 Jun 66." ("PACAF Intelligence Index of USAF Personnel MIA/PW in Southeast Asia", pg 2-085, AFHRA Call # K717.6031-3, IRIS # 1028640.)

Capt Gordon M. Walcott was in Lt Sullivan's flight and recalled his loss. "Lt Sullivan was shot down over Kep AF and probably KIA. Hayes [Capt James E. Hayes, Lima Flight Commander], Gunnerson [Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson], and myself were with him" (Gordon Walcott, letter to Monty Pharmer, 29 July 1988.) Capt Victor Vizcarra from the 80 TFS knew Lt Sullivan from Yokota. "He was a real good old country boy. An interesting fact about him, he never learned how to drive a car! He always rode a bike."

SSgt Aaron D. Farrior was a PJ with the Jolly Greens from NKP. He recorded in his diary some details about the attempted rescue for Lt Sullivan. "Listened to mission up north. F-105 pilot ejected 100 miles north of Hanoi. Wingman had a visual. Scrambled J.G. out of [Lima Site] 98. ..."

Lt Sullivan was born 28 June 1940. He entered the service from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was declared dead on 9 January 1978. His remains were returned to the U.S. on 13 September 1990. His name appears on the Vietnam Memorial Wall on panel 08E line 73.

U.S. Navy CNA Loss/Damage Data Base & Col Victor Vizcarra, e-mail, 4 Sep 00.

20-Jul-66

F-105D 624308 34 TFS 388 TFW Korat Hit by 85-mm AAA near the Vu Chua RR bridge (JCS 18.74). Crashed in RP-6A, North Vietnam. 21-34N 106-40E Capt Merrill Raymond Lewis, Jr. 34 TFS pilot ejected. MIA. ("Rosco's" master) Call sign: "Crab 01". Capt Merrill R. Lewis, Jr. flew as Crab Lead, a flight of four on a strike on Vu Chua Railroad Bridge, 12 miles NE of Bao Chiang, North Vietnam. Other members of the flight were Capt Gordon M. Walcott, Capt Stanley S. Gunnerson, and 1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue. The flight took off from Korat at 05:52 and Maj Lewis was shot down at 07:43.

"The following is an extract from the statement by Captain Gordon M. Walcott, Crab 2: '... the flight was approaching pullup for bomb delivery as 85-mm radar-controlled guns began firing with bursts at #1's altitude. Shortly thereafter, Lead called that he had been hit and started a right climbing turn. Crab Lead jettisoned bombs and called that he was jettisoning his canopy. I observed the canopy separate from the aircraft and that fuel was streaming from the aft section. Crab Lead continued to turn to 060 and rolled out. I called Lead to turn to 090 several times with no response. Approximately 1½ - 2 minutes later, the aircraft caught fire and porpoised. Lead ejected at approximately 4 thousand feet, 450 knots, and about 5 deg nose down. I observed the seat leave the aircraft but lost sight of the seat during its descent. I made 3 orbits at 2 - 4 thousand feet and then descended through a scattered cloud layer and made 3 more orbits at approximately 1000 - 1500 feet. Doppler read out was 2134/10640, but I believe the position may have been at 2147/10652. There was no beeper and I could not get contact with Lead on UHF Guard....' SAR was not

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conducted due to the location of the crash site. The area of the pilot's last known position consisted of a farming area within a flat valley and was sparsely populated". ("PACAF Intelligence Index of USAF Personnel MIA/PW in Southeast Asia", pg 2-096, AFHRA Call # K717.6031-3, IRIS # 1028640.)

Later, Gordon Walcott recalled Lewis' loss. "I was with him when he bailed out with a fouled chute near the China border." (Gordon Walcott, letter to Monty Pharmer, 29 July 1988.)

Stan Gunnensen was element lead in Lewis' flight and recalled more details. "#1 Ray Lewis, #2 Gordy Walcott. #3 Gunnensen, #4 Denis D. O'Donoghue. We went the water route and the target was, I think, a submerged bridge on the NE road system. We were loaded with two 3,000-lb bombs. We were at medium altitude, probably about 8,000 feet because there were no SAMs in the area. A few minutes out from the target 85-mm guns were walking their rounds up #1s tail. I called it out to Ray at least twice and told him move it. He stayed straight and level. I had just started to break into him to try and break their radar lock. He was hit before I could swing my element behind him. Not sure why he didn't respond because his radio was working and he transmitted he was hit. Suspect he was concentrating on navigating since there were lots of lower broken clouds. As #3, I was having a hell of time figuring out where we were. I just knew we were about 2 min out and the target was on our nose.

"I next made a bad decision and told Gordy to escort Ray out and I took Denis on in to the target. Figured we would catch back up with them in a few minutes. Could not get to the target because of weather. On the way out Gordy said Ray had bailed out but did not separate from the seat. Do not know if you remember how well armed Ray was when he flew but he carried a 2' machete and a machine gun that I think was an Israelie Uzzi (sp?). Never looked at how he strapped that stuff on but suspect it caused him to hang up with the seat."

Capt Lewis was the owner of the mascot of the 34 TFS, the dog "Roscoe", that he had brought with him from Yokota when he had arrived at Korat on a C-130 on 20 May 1966 as one of the four F-105 pilots in the 34 TFS advance party. After Ray Lewis' loss, the pilots in the 34th continued to care for Roscoe.

"The day Ray went down I sat on the steps of our hooch with Roscoe for a long time. I swear I think that dog knew something bad had happened to Ray." (Stan Gunnensen, e-mail to Bob Pielin, 3 Oct 06.)

Captain Lewis was born 17 August 1932 in Kansas City, MO and entered the service from Indianola, Iowa. He was declared dead on 15 January 1979. His body was recovered. His name appears on the Vietnam Memorial Wall panel 09E line 48.

U.S. Navy CNA Loss/Damage Data Base & Robert P. Taylor, former 80 TFS pilot, letter 13 Mar 1994.

20-Jul-66

6528

1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue from the 34 TFS received the Air Medal (8th OLC) for the mission he flew as "Crab 04" when his flight lead was shot down and KIA. The members of Crab flight were:

- #1 - Capt Merrill Raymond Lewis, Jr.
- #2 - Capt Gordon M. Walcott
- #3 - Capt Stanley S. Gunnensen
- #4 - 1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue

Their target was the Vu Chua RR bridge (JCS 18.74) in RP-6A.

"First Lieutenant Denis D. O'Donoghue distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight as an F-105 pilot over Southeast Asia on 20 July 1966. On that date, as a member of a flight of four F-105s bombing a heavily defended railroad bridge, Lieutenant O'Donoghue continued to press his attack through intense flak which had downed his lead. After finding he could not strike the bridge because of adverse weather conditions, he continued still deeper into hostile territory to search out and bomb a main highway. The professional skill and

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airmanship displayed by Lieutenant O'Donoghue reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

Award Citation provided by Denis O'Donoghue via e-mail 6 April 2010.

30-Sep-66

5151

Seven pilots assigned to the 34 TFS, 388 TFW, at Korat, completed flying 100 missions during September 1966. The pilots were in the original group who arrived at Korat in May and June 1966, They were:

Capt Clarence E. Fox
Capt James I. Miholick
Capt Gordon M. Walcott
1Lt Denis D. O'Donoghue
Capt Carl L. Hamby
Capt Douglas G. Lauck
Capt Rex L. Dull

When he left Korat, Lt O'Donoghue was assigned to an F-5 squadron at Williams AF, AZ. He "... delivered an F-5 to Bien Hoa AB during the Tet Offensive and hung around long enough to fly some F-37 missions with an old Willy F-5 instructor." In 1968, he joined the New Jersey ANG at McGuire AFB "... and flew Thud Bs and Ds for another 10 years."

Carl Hamby last flew the F-105 in March 1968. He had accumulated 738.5 hours in the airplane. (F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.)

As a replacement pilot, Maj Edward C. Jones was assigned to the 34 TFS in September 1966. He had qualified in the F-105 while stationed with the 36 TFW at Bitburg in 1962. He had left Bitburg in 1964 and spent a year in Hq TAC in the F-105 maintenance shop. He was then assigned to Shaw AFB where he flew Functional Check Flights in RF-4Cs. While at Shaw he volunteered for SEA expecting to fly RF-4s but instead received orders as an F-105 pilot. He went to Nellis AFB for F-105 requalification training, to Fairchild AFB for USAF Survival School, then to PACAF Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Phillipines, before arriving at Korat. (Ed Jones, phone interviews 26 and 28 April 10 and e-mail 26 Apr 10.)

34 TFS web site on 2 April 2007 at <http://s88204154.onlinehome.us/34tfs/scarf.htm> & Denis O'Donoghue, e-mail 7 Apr 10.

31-Dec-73

2158

The 17 WWS history included a list of 36 officers who arrived or departed the squadron during the last three months of 1973.

The following departed in October 1973:

Capt Noel J. "Chris" Christman
Capt Stephen W. Marlow - EWO
Capt Richard J. Louaas
Capt Donald D. Henry - Departed on 8 October 1973.
Maj Thomas H. Edge
Capt Paul W. Harbison, Jr.
Capt Sidney R. Howard - EWO
Capt Gregory E. Anders - EWO
Capt Frank A. Parker - EWO
Capt Peter T. McInerney, Jr.
Maj Gerald J. Fowler

The following departed in November 1973:

Capt Dale E. Baxter - EWO

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Capt Thomas E. Harty - EWO
Capt Gordon L. "Gordy" Jenkins
Lt Col Harrison W. Matthers

Those departing in December were:

Capt Anthony A. Germann
1Lt George T. Lynn - EWO
1Lt George F. Dunican III - EWO
1Lt William L. Price - EWO
Lt Col David L. Perry
Capt Eugene F. Beauvais - EWO
Lt Col Allan L. "Bud" Young
Maj Daniel (NMI) Polis
Lt Col John H. Busbee
Capt James R. Simons

The following arrived in the squadron in October 1973:

Capt Larry G. Virgil - Pilot
Maj John R. Easter
Capt Esan Nichols - EWO
Maj Gordon M. Walcott
Maj Gordon Francis Billington

The following arrived in November 1973:

Maj Wayne D. Hauth
Capt Roger J. Hegstrom
Maj Jimmy R. Sharp

Those arriving in December 1973 were:

Maj James H. Wright, Jr.
Capt Wilbur E. Jowers - EWO
Maj Rudolph M. Newman - EWO

History of the 17th Wild Weasel Squadron, October - December 1973.

31-Dec-73

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The 17 WWS history for the period listed the squadron Key Personnel and the date they were assigned:

Lt Col J. D. Tindall - Commander as of 13 Nov 73
Lt Col Alan K. Rutherford - Ops Officer as of 16 Oct 73
Maj Gordon M. Walcott - Asst Ops Officer as of 23 Oct 73
Maj Robert E. Stogdill - Executive Officer as of 15 Oct 73
Maj Kenneth G. Lindell - A-Flight Commander as of 30 Jul 73
Maj James H. Wright, Jr. - B-Flight Commander as of 17 Dec 73
Maj Wayne D. Hauth - C-Flight Commander as of 23 Nov 73.

The squadron history also listed the following members who received the indicated award:

Capt Theodore Powers, Jr. - DFC and Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Larry J. Funk - DFC and Air Medal in Oct 73
Maj John D. Benner - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt William E. C. Kennedy III - Air Medal in Oct 73

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Capt George C. Connolly - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Frederick M. Schleich - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt John D. Anderson - DFC and Air Medal in Nov 73
Maj William R. Shriver - Commendation Medal in Nov 73
Maj Gordon M. Wallcot - Commendation Medal in Nov 73
Capt Charles L. Veach - Commendation Medal in Nov 73

The following members of the 17 WWS squadron were recommended for the indicated award:

Capt Donald D. Henry - Distinguished Flying Cross in Oct 73.
Maj Thomas H. Edge - Silver Star and Air Medal in Oct 73
Maj Kemper J. "Bear" Gleason - EWO - Silver Star and Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Jack T. Stone, Jr - DFC and Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Charles W. Chatham - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Noel J. "Chris" Christman - Air Medal in Oct 73
Maj Frederick L. Covington - Air Medal in Oct 73
Maj Dean A. Leverenz - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Stephen W. Marlow - Air Medal in Oct 73
Capt Sidney R. Howard - DFC and Commendation Medal in Nov 73
Maj Daniel (NMI) Polis - Air Medal in Nov 73
Capt Thomas E. Harty - Air Medal in Nov 73
Maj Thomas J. Coady - Air Medal in Nov 73
Capt Dale E. Baxter - Air Medal in Nov 73
1Lt George T. Lynn - Air Medal in Nov 73

During his assignment to the 17 WWS, Maj Tom Coady had accumulated 350 combat missions, "... 250 of which were flown over North Vietnam. Coady extended his tour in Thailand once again and was transferred to Headquarters, 7 AF, United States Special Activities Gp., Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand. Here he was assigned as Air Operations Staff Officer in the Weapons and Tactics Branch.

"In December 1970, Coady returned to Nellis AFB, NV, and was assigned to the Tactical Fighter Weapons Center as a test project manager, Operational Test and Evaluation Div. During this period, he also flew operational test missions and served as instructor pilot in the 66 FWS."

History of the 17 Wild Weasel Squadron, Oct - Dec 1973, pgs 15 - 16 & 22 & Tom Coady bio in "Red River Valley Fighter Pilots of Vietnam", River Rats Album 1, Turner Publishing, pg 78..

29-Oct-74

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The 17 WWS was inactivated at the 388 TFW, Korat RTAFB, Thailand. The last commander of the squadron was Lt Col Gordon M. Walcott. He departed Korat with EWO Capt Walter F. Kennedy in F-105G 63-8316 along with nine other F-105Gs, 62-4440, 63-8291, 62-4444, 62-4442, 63-8296, 63-8336, 63-8350, 63-8292 and 63-8275. Two aircraft aborted and left the next day.

Gordon Walcott's last flight in the F-105 was 3 Nov 74 by which time he had accumulated 1522.3 hours in the airplane.

388 TFW Chronology compiled by SSgt Bryon Beers, 388 TFW Historian & F-105 Pilot Flying Hour report dated 18 Nov 85 provided by the USAF Safety Center to Bauke Jan Douma.