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*From* AIR FORCE ATLANTIC FLEET  
FIGHTING SQUADRON SIXTY-THREE  
Care of Fleet Post Office  
New York, New York



1 OCT 1944

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*Comm 725-48*  
From: Commanding Officer.  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Attn: Aviation History Unit OP-519B).

✓ Subject: Quarterly Historical Report.

Reference: (a) ACL 22-46.  
(b) ACL 71-46.  
(b) Manual for Historical Officers (NavAer 00-25Q-26).

Enclosure: (A) Chronology and Narrative.

1. In accordance with reference (a), (b) and (c), enclosure (A) is forwarded herewith.


*E. M. Volz*  
E. M. VOLZ  
By direction

Copy to:  
CVG-6

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AIR FORCE ATLANTIC FLEET  
FIGHTING SQUADRON SIXTY-THREE  
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New York, New York



CHRONOLOGY

1. Commissioned - 27 July 1948, Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia.
2. Commanding Officer - LCDR Malcolm W. CAGLE, USN, from Knoxville, Tenn.
3. Boarded USS CORAL SEA (CVB-43) for two (2) weeks maneuvers in Guantanamo area 10 September 1948. Returned to NAAS, Oceana, Va. 24 September 1948.
4. Assigned F8F-2 aircraft.

NARRATIVE

On 27 July 1948 Fighting Squadron SIXTY THREE was commissioned; LCDR Malcolm W. CAGLE, Commanding and LCDR Edward M. VOLZ, Executive Officer. Fighting 63 drew part of her pilots from old VF-5B and VF-6B and the remainder from the ranks of the Organized Reserve called back to active duty. SIXTY THREE's commissioning increases the number of squadrons in CVG-6 from four to five. The additional squadron provides an opportunity for training officers in more responsible jobs as well as making for a smaller (20 planes) more integrated outfit.

The first few weeks kept everyone up to his neck in work; but under the able direction of the Skipper and with the enthusiasm and high morale of all hands, the squadron quickly shaped up to an efficient outfit.

Shortly after commissioning we received our first F8F-2 Bearcat, and 28 naval aviators jumped at the chance to fly this new fighter. One by one additional planes came until Fighting 63 could boast of thirteen (13) aircraft. The same number as our sister squadrons in Air Group SIX.


It was with this number that we went on board the CORAL SEA, for a two weeks cruise to Guantanamo and Ciudad, Trujillo. The weather played an important part in the cruise and put a damp damper on flight operations, but we managed to fly enough to qualify the pilots with six landings each.

Before the cruise and a less vital vein, the Skipper arranged with orchestra leader Sammy Kaye and the Chesterfield Supper Club, to select one of their candidates for "Miss American Co-Ed of 1948" as our squadron sponsor and as "Miss Bearcat of 1948". We agreed with Chesterfields selection and also named their winner, charming Patricia Cotter of Louisiana State University, as our squadron sponsor and "Miss Bearcat". A military ball honoring Miss Cotter provided pleasant diversion and was thoroughly enjoyed by all hands.

The squadron is now busily preparing to embark on the USS MIDWAY for a five (5) weeks shakedown in the Guantanamo area. This cruise will give us a chance to add the polishing touches and make us the fightinest outfit in the Navy.

ENCLOSURE (A)



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CHRONOLOGY

1. Commissioned - 27 July 1948, Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia.
2. Commanding Officer - Lieutenant Commander Malcolm W. CAGLE, USN, from Knoxville, Tenn.
3. Boarded USS MIDWAY (CVB-41) for six (6) weeks shakedown cruise to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, on 11 October 1948. Returned to Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia 23 November 1948.
4. Assigned F8F-2 aircraft.

NARRATIVE

1 October found Fighting Squadron SIXTY THREE preparing to take her new F8F-2's aboard the USS MIDWAY (CVB-41) for a six weeks shakedown cruise to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. On 11 October the MIDWAY stood out of Hampton Roads with Air Group SIX aboard, and the cruise was officially underway. There were qualifying landings aboard followed by CAP hops, coordinated attacks on towed spars and the ship itself, squadron tactics, dive bombing, strafing, etc---everything went according to plan, until 14 October when Ensign M. E. RUSSELL, USNR, with a sudden and unexplained cut out was forced to ditch. He was picked up by the USS WARE (DD-865) in about 30 minutes and returned to us that same afternoon. Flying again took up its familiar shakedown pattern for almost two weeks---then LTJG S. ROREX, USN, went in with another unexplained power failure in the groove during recovery. He was picked up by the USS VOGELGESANG (DD-862) and returned to the MIDWAY. In rapid succession two more F8F-2's from a sister squadron went in, and 1 November found Air Group SIX's fighter squadrons grounded and temporarily based ashore at McCalla Field, Naval Air Station "Gtmo". Experts from Pratt & Whitney, Grumman, and ComAirLant were flown down to diagnose the trouble, (which we felt attributed to faulty carburetion), and after two weeks our planes were ungrounded and test flying began. On 19 November the F8F-2's flew out to the MIDWAY for the return trip to Norfolk, Virginia. Weather prevented an early launch on the 22 of November but Air Group SIX finally launched at 1135 and headed for Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia, (East Field). During this launch an F8 in a sister squadron experienced another power failure on take off, and pilot and plane were lost. Upon arrival at Norfolk, Virginia, the F8's again were grounded---more work, more diagnosing, and on 13 December more test flying. On 30 December a sister squadron had another power failure over Naval Air Station, Norfolk, Virginia at 6000', resulting in a crash landing, strike to aircraft, no injury to pilot---again the F8F's were grounded, and Fighting Squadron SIXTY THREE greets the New Year with its wings temporarily clipped.

ENCLOSURE (A)