

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
FIGHTER SQUADRON ONE HUNDRED TWO
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From: Public Affairs Officer, Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO
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Subj: Squadron History; submission of

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Encl: (1) Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO Squadron History 1 JAN 69 - 1 JAN 70
(2) Biography and Photograph of Commanding Officer
(3) Precedence List
(4) Enlisted Roster
(5) Dependent's Handbook

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are hereby submitted.

K. G. Guilfoyle
K. G. GUILFOYLE
By direction

PART I

- 1 JAN 69 Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO based ashore at NAS Oceana, CDR Frederick G. FELLOWES, Jr., Commanding.
- 31 JAN 69 CDR John M. FLORANCE and Radar Intercept Officer LTJG Michael H. JOBLIN lost their lives in an airplane crash off the Virginia Capes.
- 2 MAR 69 Aircraft and crews departed for Key West, Florida for an air defense commitment.
- 15 MAR 69 VF-102 changed from CAG-6 to CAG-7.
- 28 APR 69 Departed Norfolk, Virginia, for Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.
- 1 MAY 69 Arrived Guantanamo, Cuba for Fleet Training Exercise.
- 13 MAY 69 Departed Guantanamo, Cuba.
- 17 MAY 69 Arrived Montego Bay, Jamaica.
- 19 MAY 69 Departed Montego Bay, Jamaica for Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range.
- 23 MAY 69 On station off the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range.
- 27 MAY 69 Departed Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range for Norfolk, Virginia.
- 29 MAY 69 Arrived Norfolk, Virginia.
- 24 JUN 69 CDR Patrick P. MARSHA, Jr., USN, relieved CDR Frederick G. FELLOWES, Jr., USN, as Commanding Officer of Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO.
- 1 JUL 69 Celebrated 14th Birthday of VF-102.
- 7 JUL 69 Departed Norfolk, Virginia for Operational Readiness Inspection.
- 16 JUL 69 Arrived Norfolk, Virginia.
- 13 AUG 69 Aircraft and crews departed for Key West, Florida for a defense commitment.
- 27 AUG 69 Departed Norfolk, Virginia.
- 2 SEP 69 LT William BENDINGER and Radar Intercept Officer LTJG Terrrell R. YOUNG were killed on take-off from NCAS Cherry Point.

9 SEP 69 Departed CONUS to participate in NATO cruise.
23 SEP 69 Arrived Portsmouth, England.
30 SEP 69 Departed Portsmouth, England.
8 OCT 69 Arrived Norfolk, Virginia.
28 DEC 69 Aircraft and crew departed for Key West,
Florida, for air defense commitment.

PART II

During the month of January, under the leadership of CDR Frederick G. FELLOWES, Jr., following a deployment to Southeast Asia; the squadron regrouped its officers and men. The peace and security enjoyed at Oceana was abruptly ended on the 31st of January when the Executive Officer, CDR John E. FLORANCE and His Radar Intercept Officer, LTJG Michael M. JOSLIN, met a tragic end while on a routine air combat maneuvering flight off the Virginia Capes. The joyous beginning of the New Year had tragically changed into a somber one.

In the following months, flight operations were keyed on intercepts and air combat maneuvering. During this period, new pilots and RIO's were taught fleet tactics, while the veterans sharpened old skills.

Spring came early to some, when the squadron sent aircraft and crews to Key West, Florida, on 2 March. This air defense commitment gave the crews and maintenance support personnel a welcome relief from the wind-whipped air of Virginia. At the same time, the maintenance crews at Oceana were busying themselves repainting squadron aircraft with the "Alfa Gulf" designation of CAG-7 and removing the "Alfa Echo" of CAG-6. The change of CAG's on 15 March also meant a change in ships. The squadron moved from the USS AMERICA (CVA-66), the ship which carried the Diamondbacks around the world, to the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62).

On 28 April, VF-102 deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. This was the squadron's first meeting with the INDY. Three days later the ship arrived

at Gitmo for Flight Training Exercises. While operating out of Gitmo, intercepts, conventional weapons, and day/night carrier qualifications were stressed. The intercept training would prove invaluable in the upcoming missile shoot. Following the refresher training, the ship departed Gitmo on 13 May for Montego Bay, Jamaica. While the ship steamed toward Montego Bay, five aircraft detached to Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, for the AIM 7 and AIM 9 missile shoot. Early on 19 May, CVA-62 departed Montego Bay for the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range. The five aircraft participating in the missile shoot joined the ship enroute. At the Weapons Range, the Deadly Diamondbacks participated for four days in "Operation Exotic Dancer", a joint service operation. On 27 May, mission complete, CVA-62 departed the operating area for Norfolk and home base - NAS Oceana, arriving in port on 29 May.

The month of June was a big one for Fighting 102. Carrier qualifications aboard the INDEPENDENCE for new pilots, and a change of command were the events of note. Commander Patrick P. MARSHA, Jr., relieved Commander Frederick G. FELLOWES, Jr., as commanding officer of Fighter Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWO at Naval Air Station Oceana, on 24 June 1969. CDR MARSHA thus became the fourteenth "skipper" of the Diamondbacks. With his new position, CDR MARSHA brought six years of F-4B/J experience.

The Diamondbacks celebrated their fourteenth birthday on 1 July with a ceremony in Hangar 500. Launching into its fifteenth year of service to the fleet, the squadron went aboard the INDEPENDENCE on 7 July for the first time under their new skipper. The ship journeyed down to Florida for an Operational Readiness Inspection. After the Diamondbacks made their expected impressive showing, attaining the top grade in the air-wing, the ship and CAG returned to Norfolk and Oceana, respectively on 16 July.

Fighting 102 was again called upon, on 13 August, to send aircraft and personnel to Key West, Florida, for an air defense commitment. Once again the Diamondback team was divided. While a portion of the squadron was operating at Key West, the remainder of the Diamondbacks went aboard the INDEPENDENCE on 27 August to participate in NATO exercises off the Virginia Capes, under the watchful eye of President Richard Nixon. On the afternoon of 2 September, tragedy again struck VP-102. The squadron received word that LT William BEDINGER and his Radar Intercept Officer, LTJG Terrell E. FOUNG, had fatally crashed on takeoff from MCAS Cherry Point, North Carolina. Mindful that inactivity stimulates thought, the NATO deployment was very timely, requiring a maximum effort from all hands, leaving little time for idle thoughts.

The INDY departed CONUS on 9 September for the North Atlantic to complete the NATO exercise.

While in the North Atlantic, VP-102 participated in "Operation Peacemaker", a joint exercise with other NATO powers. At the completion of "Operation Peacemaker", the ship arrived in Portsmouth, England, on 23 September for six days of well-deserved liberty. As dawn broke on 30 September, CVA-62 and the Diamondbacks departed the friendly shores of Great Britain and arrived home on October 8th.

The months to follow were devoted to Air Combat Maneuvering. This was the bulk of flight operations with the exception of a brief carrier qualification period aboard the USS AMERICA. The carrier qualification period served a dual purpose: qualifying new pilots and RIO's, and aiding the training of AMERICA's new flight deck crews. For the old-timers in the squadron, returning to the AMERICA was a return to memories of past cruises.

The year ended with the Diamondbacks sending aircraft, crews and maintenance support personnel to Key West, Florida, on 28 December. This was our third air defense commitment of the year.

The Operations Department closed their log books for the year, after having flown 2,296 sorties for a total of 2,787 hours and 1,072 arrested landings.