

F-111 Combat Losses

Courtesy of www.f-111.net



474th Tactical Fighter Wing Operations Constant Guard V and Linebacker II

The 474th Tactical Fighter Wing (Deployed), equipped with 48 F-111A aircraft assigned to the 429th and 430th Tactical Fighter Squadrons arrived at Takhli RTAB on TDY from Nellis AFB, NV on 27 Sep 1972. This movement was part of **Operation Constant Guard V**.

The 474th was sent there to participate in combat operations when the United States resumed large scale bombing of North Vietnam. Their first combat mission was flown only hours after their arrival at Takhli, resulted in the disappearance of aircraft 67-078, Ranger 23, Coltman/Bret) and a temporary cancellation of further F-111 missions. Despite this bad start, F-111s gave a great accounting of themselves over the next few months with exceptional bomb damage assessments while often operating in conditions when other aircraft types could not strike.

Unfortunately, the wing lost three more aircraft in the first 60 days of the deployment (17 Oct 72, Coach 33, 67-066 Hockridge/Graham; 7 Nov 72, Whaler 57, 67-063 Brown/Morrissey and 20 Nov 72, Burger 54, 67-092, Stafford / Cafferelli).

During **Linebacker II**, the intensive bombardment of North Vietnam (18 to 29 Dec 72), the wing flew 154 combat sorties, all night, single ship and low level with excellent BDA. Two aircraft were lost (18 Dec, Snug 40, 67-099, Ward / McElvain and 22 Dec, Jackal 33, 67-068, Sponeybarger / Wilson) but fortunately the crew from Jackal 33, survived and were returned with the POW prisoner release in April of 1973.

In early 1973, due in-part to the superb efforts of the 474th TFW, the North Vietnamese government agreed to a resumption of peace negotiations. This resulted in a suspension of Linebacker II bombing operations and the beginning of a long process to bring the costly conflict in SEA to a conclusion.

On 22 Mar 72, the 430 TFS (without aircraft) was returned to Nellis AFB and replaced by the 428 TFS.



347th Tactical Fighter Wing and Operation Palace Lightning

On 30 July 1973 the TDY status of the 474th TFW ended. The 428th and 429th TFS were assigned to the newly activated 347th Tactical Fighter Wing (previously assigned to Mt. Home AFB, ID, but had been deactivated there in Oct 72.) The aircraft tail code was changed from NA to HG with a red tail fin for the 428 TFS and a yellow tail fin for the 429 TFS.

For a brief two-week period, the 347th flew combat operations into Cambodia until 15 Aug 1973 when the last wartime mission of the Vietnam Era was flown. After the cease-fire, the wing was maintained in a combat-ready status for possible contingency actions.

During the period Sep 1972 to Aug 1973, the F-111s flew more than 4,000 combat sorties with the loss of seven aircraft (six discussed above plus 67-072 which was involved in a takeoff accident on 20 Feb 73). During January 1974 the Secretary of Defense announced a realignment of Thailand resources, with the final pullout of air resources by the end of 1976. In June 1974, four F-111s from the 347th TFW flew from Takhli to Osan Air Base South Korea and conducted live weapons demonstrations for Republic of Korea and US officials at Nightmare Range.

The USAF left Takhli under Operation Palace Lightning when the 347 TFW's F-111s were transferred to Korat RTAFB on 12 Jul 74. On 14-15 May 75, F111s from the 347 TFW participated in the rescue of the SS Mayaguez which had been captured by Cambodian Communist forces.

The wing was deactivated on 30 Jun 75 and the F-111s returned to the 474 TFW at Nellis AFB, NV.

Prepared by: Rick Sine, 474th TFW Roadrunner Historian

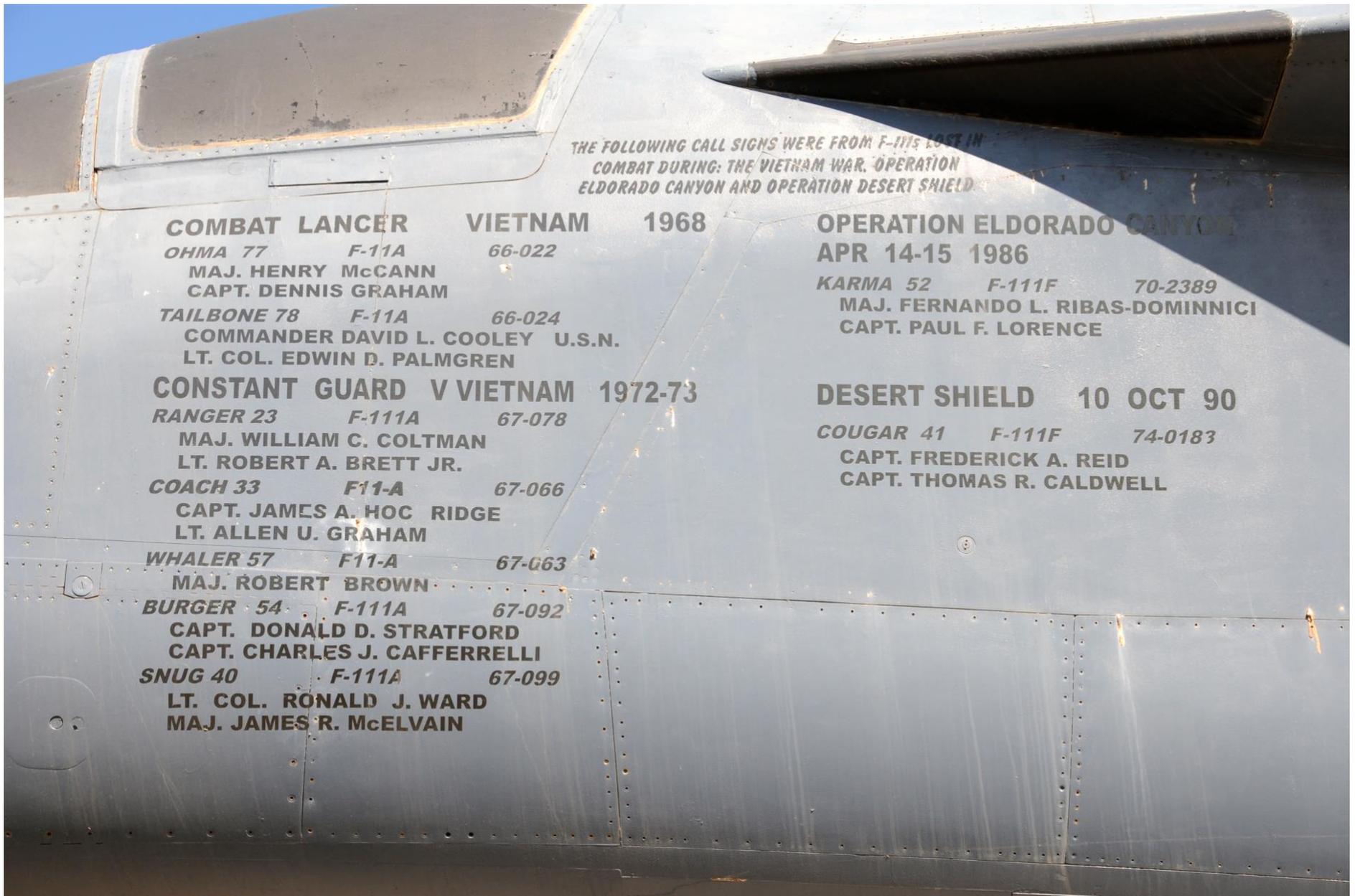
F-111 Combat Losses

Operation	Theatre	Dates	Combat Losses
COMBAT LANCER	Vietnam	1968	2 x F-111A
CONSTANT GUARD V	Vietnam	1972-73	5 X F-111A
EL DORADO CANYON	Libya	1986	1 x F-111F
DESERT SHIELD	Iraq	1990	1 x F-111F
DESERT SHIELD	Iraq	1991	1 x EF-111A

F-111A	66-0022	<p>Assigned 428th TFS. HARVEST REAPER jet. (Ref: Official 474th COMBAT LANCER History Vol 1) Destroyed 28 March 1968 three days after COMBAT LANCER operations started. Killed were MAJ Henry Elmer (Hank) MacCann and Capt Dennis Lee Graham (PWSO) POW/MIA REFERENCE #'S - 1107-0-02 / 1107-0-01 Mission target was Chan Hao Truck Park at N17 32 11 E 106 29 12</p>
F-111A	66-0024	<p>Assigned 428th TFS. HARVEST REAPER replacement jet. In theatre 1 April 1968. (Ref: Official 474th COMBAT LANCER History Vol 1) Crashed and destroyed 22 April 1968 during Operation COMBAT LANCER, becoming the third and last jet lost during that operation. Neither the aircraft nor crew, (Commander David "Spade" Cooley USN, and Lt. Col. Ed Palmgren), were ever found. Some Combat Lancer crews believed the loss was due to failure of the horizontal stabiliser weld failure (same as the cause of the loss of 66-0022). (Don Logan from 474th TFWG Roadrunner Reunion) Other crews believe that 024 was flown into the ground as the crew of 024 believed they could fly lower at night using 'manual TF' instead of the auto TF. Although 200 feet is the lowest TFR setting, anecdotal evidence suggests that attempts were made to manual TF at 50 feet by interpreting the TF E Scope. Callsign: TAILBONE 78 (Jeff & Doc Servo) Loss co-ordinates: 17 28N 106 37E. POW/MIA Reference # 1139-0-01 / -02 Presumptive finding of death. (Library of Congress POW/MIA)</p>
F-111A	67-0078	<p>Assigned to 429th TFS. First CONSTANT GUARD V aircraft loss. Crashed and destroyed 28 September 1972 in South East Asia. Callsign: RANGER 23 Crew Maj. William Clare "Bill" Coltman and 1LT Robert Arthur "Lefty" Brett Jr (Reference: memorial 68-140). Aircraft lost on the first night of F-111 operations, only hours after deploying to SEA. Target was in Route Pack 1. Major Coltman was promoted twice to the rank of Colonel whilst listed as missing before being pronounced presumed killed in action. SOURCE: (Jeff & Doc Servo - 474th history) (474th Reunion) Loss co-ordinates: 21 35 51N 104 59 21E . POW/MIA Reference # 1929-0-01 / -02 Presumptive finding of death. (Library of Congress POW/MIA) Aircraft wreckage found in Laos? See Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Remains finally laid to rest Arlington Cemetery 3 April 2002</p>

F-111A	67-0066	<p>Delivered 6 February 1968. Assigned to 429th TFS, 474th TFW Nellis AFB. Transferred to the 57th FWW aircraft had "WA" tail code in 1970-1971. Reassigned to 429th TFS. Destroyed 16 October 1972 in South East Asia. Deployed to RTAFB Takhli Thailand for CONSTANT GUARD V phase two, cell one 27 September 1972. Assigned to the 347th TFW tail code "HG" at Takhli. 7 October 1972 had an engine flameout and diverted to RTAFB Udorn. On 16 October 1972, became the second CONSTANT GUARD V aircraft lost. Callsign: COACH 33 Crew CAPT James A. Hockridge and 1LT Allen U. Graham POW/MIA reference # 1939-0-01 / -02 (Library of Congress POW/MIA) (although incorrectly also assigned ref # 1107 in some documents found in the US Library of Congress) (Reference: memorial 68-140)</p> <p>Possibly hit by a SA-2 Guideline SAMs after being acquired by Fansong radars due to necessary climb to MSRH for Mk-84 LDGP delivery whilst attacking the Phuc Yen airfield. Reported as having been found dead in module by NVN. (Reference: F-111 Aardvark)</p> <p>Loss co-ordinates: 21 15 26N 105 41 35E . POW/MIA Reference # 1939-0-01 / -02</p> <p>Remains returned 30 September 1977.(Library of Congress POW/MIA)</p>
F-111A	67-0063	<p>Assigned to 429th TFS destroyed 7 November 1972 in South East Asia. Third CONSTANT GUARD V aircraft lost. (Ron VanDerWarker).</p> <p>Callsign: WHALER 57 (Jeff & Doc Servo) Crew MAJ Robert M. Brown and CAPT Robert D. Morrissey killed. (Reference: memorial 68-140)</p> <p>Loss co-ordinates: 17 08 52N 106 45 57E .</p> <p>POW/MIA Reference # 1945-0-01 / -02 Presumptive finding of death. (Library of Congress POW/MIA)</p>
F-111A	67-0092	<p>Assigned to 430th TFS. Fourth Combat Loss in Operation CONSTANT GUARD V; crashed and destroyed on 21 Nov 1972, post target, going "Feet Wet" into the Gulf of Tonkin, off the N. Vietnamese coast, Crew lost and never recovered (as of Feb 2000)</p> <p>Callsign: BURGER 54...."RIP"...F-111 Memorial Combat Crew: Capt. Donald Dean Stafford and Capt Charles Joseph Cafferrelli (Jeffery Hyre & Doc Servo) (Reference: Mighty Vark CD Rom and the F-111 Memorial 68-140) Loss co-ordinates: 16 24 42N 107 51 55E. POW/MIA Reference # 1948-0-01 / -02 Reported KIA, bodies not recovered.</p> <p>Three witnesses described 'shooting down' of F-111 aircraft which crashed off coast near Hai Trach village. Reel: 472, Reference Number: 1948-0-01, Page: 596-600, Type of Document: Miscellaneous, Date of Report: 98 08 04, Date of Information: 97 05 28</p> <p>(Library of Congress POW/MIA)</p>

F-111A	67-0099	Assigned to 430th TFS. Fifth CONSTANT GUARD V combat loss. Crashed and destroyed post target going 'feet wet' 18 December 1972 in South East Asia. Callsign SNUB 40 (Jeff & Doc Servo) SNUG 40 (Reference: memorial 68-140) Crew LTCOL Ronald J. Ward and MAJ James R. McElvain killed. Loss co-ordinates: 20 17N 106 36E. POW/MIA Reference # 1952-0-01 / -02 Presumptive finding of death. (Library of Congress POW/MIA)
F-111F	70-2389	Crashed and destroyed during Libyan Raid 14/15 April 1986. This F-111F was piloted by Major Fernando Ribas Dominici (AC) and Capt. Paul Lorence (WSO). Pilots who flew on the mission (Operation EL DORADO CANYON) reported seeing a fireball fall into the sea during the raid, and in the light of a lack of any other evidence, the USAF concluded that the plane was lost to a SAM or AAA. After years of denying that they had the bodies of the two crew members, the Libyan authorities returned the remains of Fernando on request from the Pope. He was identified by dental records. Paul Lorence has never been returned. (source: Steve Davies). Callsign: KARMA 52. In respect for the crew, the last F-111F flown to AMARC was with the same callsign.
F-111F	74-0183	Participating in Operation DESERT SHIELD this F-111F, Callsign: COUGAR 41, crashed during a practice loft-bomb manoeuvre at 0130 hrs on 10 October 1990 at the Askr Range, Saudi Arabia. Pilot, Capt. Frederick A. Reid and WSO, Capt. Thomas R. Caldwell were killed. Doc Servo – This aircraft was one of 19 F-111F aircraft deployed to Taegu AB, South Korea with 12 hours' notice after the so-called 'Tree Chopping Incident'; where North Korean troops murdered a US Army officer on the De-militarised Zone (DMZ) on 16 August 1976.
EF-111A	66-023	Assigned 428th TFS. Assigned 442nd TFTS. Assigned 390th ECS. (info JD Hass) Participated in Operation DESERT SHIELD . Crashed and destroyed 13 February 1991 in Saudi Arabia after believed to be avoiding threat indications upon entering Iraqi airspace during an operational mission. Callsign: RATCHET 75. Pilot, Capt. Douglas L. Bradt, 29 of Houston and WSO, Capt. Paul R. Eichenlaub, 29 of Bentonville, Arkansas were killed. An ejection was attempted. Both Capt. Bradt & Capt. Eichenlaub received Distinguished Flying Crosses and Purple Hearts for "their gallantry in combat". (DFC citation) The EF-111 (66-0016) on static display at Cannon AFB has the names: Capt. Douglas L. Bradt (Aircraft Commander) and Capt. Paul R. Eichenlaub (EWO) adorning the cockpit as a memorial to their heroism (Jeff Ferguson). Mentioned briefly in Tom Clancy's and Gen C Honer (Ret) non-fictional "Every Man A Tiger".



F-111 Combat losses annotated on F-111D 68-0140 @ Vark Memorial Park, Clovis, NM



27TH FW



USAF



CITY OF CLOVIS

F-111 "VARK" MEMORIAL PARK
"DEDICATED TO THE F-111 AIRCREWS WHO GAVE
THEIR LIVES IN DEFENSE OF OUR NATIONS FREEDOM"
F-111D 68-0140

Aircraft 68-0140 was the 56th of 96 F-111D Models produced by General Dynamics Corp. Ft. Worth, Texas. It was the 67th "D" Model delivered to the U.S. Air Force on 29 November, 1972. This Aircraft spent its entire operational service life here in New Mexico with the 27th Fighter Wing at Cannon AFB.

The F-111 "AARDVARK" featured several firsts in aviation history, among them were; Variable Geometry Wings, Ejectable Crew Module, Automatic Terrain Following Radar and Afterburning Turbo-fan Engines. 562 F-111'S Were Manufactured from 1964 through 1976 seeing service with the U.S. Air Force (F-111A / FB-111A / F-111D / F-111E / F-111F), U.S. Navy (F-111B) and the Royal Australian Air Force (F-111C).

Aircraft Specifications

LENGTH	75 FT 6 1/2 IN	HEIGHT	17 FT 1/2 IN
WINGSPAN AT 16 DEGREES	63 FT 0 IN	WINGSPAN AT 72 DEGREES	31 FT 11 1/2 IN
EMPTY WEIGHT	46,631 LB	MAX TAKEOFF WEIGHT	100,000 LB
FUEL INTERNAL	4,191 GAL	FUEL EXTERNAL	2,000 GAL
ENGINE TYPE	TF30-P-9	MAX THRUST	20,840 LB
MAX ALTITUDE	60,000+ FT	MAX SPEED	MACH 2.5+
MAX RANGE	2,500 NM	MAX RANGE EXTERNAL FUEL	3,100 NM
INTERNAL FUEL			
MAXIMUM ORDNANCE PAYLOAD	16,000 Lbs		

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