



**PR-24 AT TAIPEI, TAIWAN, 4 JANUARY 1961 AFTER LOSING UPPER RADOME
DIVING AWAY FROM CHICOM FIGHTERS**

1961

Ron Schneider writes :

I was a CTI2 from Kami Seya and flew with the Squadron during my tour. One day my Chief asked me if I wanted a TAD trip to Shu-Lin-Kou via VQ aircraft. I said, "Sure," so off I went. Landing in Taipei, the CO at Shu-Lin- Kou had a vehicle waiting to bring me out to the base. When I arrived he welcomed me and directed me to spaces filled with electronic equipment that needed repair. I responded that I was not a maintenance man; surely some mistake had been made along the line.

Well, the deployment was to be for about 10 days as I recall, and I discovered that I had no funds as the U.S. personnel in Taiwan used some sort of coupons. The CO loaned me some "money" and turned me over to a Chief Garrity. I think the man was half Chinese, he had been in the Far East for years, spoke dialects, ate and drank nothing but fried rice and Scotch or so it seemed. He took me to his home to meet his wife and

adopted Taiwanese son. We had a grand time, and then he took me to a BEQ downtown somewhere. The next day I was asked to ride on PR-24 (135747) over the Gulf of Tonkin to search for information within my specialty.

Off we went with Chief Garrity in the supervisor's seat, me next to him (facing aft) and a Petty Officer (Chinese Linguist) named Plum and another Chinese linguist in seat four (facing forward) on the "CT" console. I was doing my job and monitoring the other positions when PO Plum reported to the Chief that he just discovered MiGs taking-off from Canton. Shortly thereafter, I observing the PO manning the fire control console throwing down his headset and running forward yelling, "They got us locked on!" and then a rapid descent of the aircraft. Chief Garrity reached up and unsnapped his parachute, and I immediately followed his action. By then I realized the Commander had the aircraft under control and I began monitoring the cockpit. They had requested assistance from VP-40 at Sangley Point (P5M's), Republic of the Philippines, to respond to our flight emergency and this request was cancelled as all systems were now under control and we were headed back to Taipei.

As we approached base the air traffic control asked the cockpit if we were that "Super Connie" that took-off several hours earlier. There was a positive response followed by "What in the world happened to that big radome you guys had on the top" which was followed by, "What do you mean?" from the aircraft. "Well, it's not there!" ATC replied. It was silence on the part of the crew! After we landed there was a lot of scrambling around including a large tarp being tossed over the top of the aircraft. The following day the VQ-1 XO flew down from Atsugi to evaluate the situation. We were all sworn to secrecy. I was asked by the Shu-Lin-Kou CO, CDR Carl Duberg, if I wanted to go out again. "Do I really have to?" I asked and he said, "No, you can go back to Kami Seya." Sayonara Taiwan!!

I loved flying with VQ-1. What a great squadron, especially the Willy Victor's!

Pete Dunbar, WV-2Q pilot, writes:

According to my log, the incident occurred on 4 January 1961. I flew down that evening on PR-22 with the XO, Howard Kenton. Only others I remember were Tom Maroldy, and Al Forbes, the Lockheed Rep. I took the next mission that we flew with PR-22, Phil Dahlby in command, on 7 January 1961.

The holes in the tail were actually on the leading edges and were from debris from the broken up radome. The aircraft log showed that it had lost the upper dome in a hurricane penetration with VW-4 several years prior. I came back to Atsugi on PR-24 after it had been "patched". It launched for KEEHI (a Lockheed rework facility in Hawaii) the next morning.

Member Inputs

The first of the two following stories is a recollection of the time when PR-24 (WV-2Q) was jumped by Chinese aircraft and follows on to a story written by CT2 Ron Schneider. Ron's story is on the Association Website under History. The second article illuminates a period in VQ-1.

I was the person reporting I had fire control and they were locked on, but I never ran up dropped my head set. I'm not sure who he means by the PO Plum quote. The CT's were near the front of the aircraft listening and all us AT's were in the rear of the aircraft and when I picked up the hostile aircraft fire control, we were already in a rapid descent and I called and reported I had picked up the signal there was no time to do anything. Petty Officer Plum confirmed what I said when I called in the hostile signal but there was no time to do anything about it. It was a matter of a few seconds and the bail out buzzer went off. As soon as they locked on there was an explosion and

the upper -radome was lost. When the bailout buzzer went off and, being in the last position in the aircraft, I immediately strapped on my Mae West and parachute and ran to the back door where chief Petty officer Larry Jacobs met me and said, “Carpenter we better throw out some garbage cans to take off some of the antennae’s or you are going to take them off!” I was getting ready to jump when Commander Dahlby came on and said to strap in, we’re going to ditch in the ocean. That’s when Plum sat on the floor next to me and I clearly remember him saying to me,” I hope we get killed I don’t want to be taken prisoner.” I think it was his first flight. I think back to the fact that I nearly jumped out and would I be the only one out of the aircraft. I was sure that was going to be my last day alive. Chief Jacobs was a great leader, a little guy (WW II Veteran), with a crusty demeanor. It was very noisy in the plane as all the crap up on top was banging against the aircraft. Commander Dahlby came on and said we were going to try to make it back to Taiwan. I don’t think anyone thought that was going to happen because it was so damn noisy in the aircraft from things banging against the aircraft. Chief Jacobs, who was the leader of all the ATs in the back, came back and said, “ this ain’t nothin, I landed upside down on an aircraft carrier in a PBV and survived. I was doing this stuff when you guys were crapping yellow.”



CREW PATCH MADE AFTER THE INCIDENT

He was a great leader we all loved him. Needless to say, when we landed in Taiwan, we celebrated that night. The celebration was short lived. The next morning, we were told they flew another aircraft down and we were going right back out where we flew the day before. As we walked out to the plane, I asked LT. Mitchell, our intelligence officer, if he was going to be on the scope that day and he said he was. Everything that happened that day happened so fast there wasn’t time to think about anything but surviving to another day. Being chased was nothing new

and happened all the time. I was only twenty years old when I went to Iwakuni to join VQ-1 and then we moved to Atsugi. I had many more reconnaissance flights after that.

Richard Carpenter AT3 VQ-1

My name is Bob Schmit and I was on the original flight crew on PR-21. Dick Carpenter is a friend of mine and I'm currently reading his correspondence with you. I've been member of the Association for a number of years and have read most of the literature on the VQ squadrons. Dick Carpenter and I were in Iwakuni and Atsugi during the same time period (59-61) operated and maintained all of the same equipment. In addition, I maintained additional equipment for the CT crew and in 1959, an active Jammer for the P4M's. I would like to address two areas that I've not seen in print.

* Conventional wisdom says that the P4M had only passive ECM and no defenses. When I joined the squadron, Chief Self pointed at me and said, "We have no one to maintain the ALQ-23 active jammer on the P4's and you are the man!" The ALQ-23 was a noise modulated jammer with a tunable magnetron that could jam multiple sources of fire control at the same time. I don't know if it was actually used, but during the final days of the P4's there was a defense measure available to them. I know it worked well, because I accidentally jammed the GCA at Iwakuni and caused quite an issue. We were suspected, but of course we didn't know anything about it.

* The other omission is that PR-21 and PR-24 did spend two different periods of time on Johnson Island in the South Pacific. We were there for extended periods of time recording telemetry in the splash down zone of the Russian ICM'S that were being shot out of Siberia. Of course, the Russians said it was off limits, but we ignored it. The information was extremely valuable, because we were behind the Russians in missile technology. We

did spend a lot of time waiting for the Russians to fire the missiles. We would get the word to scramble and off we'd go.