



James M. Hickerson, Captain USN (Ret.)
 “Jim”

Date of Designation: 6 December 1957

Dates of Active Duty: September 1956 - October 1986

Total Flight Hours: 4,655

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 446

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: VA-147, USS *Ranger*. Nailed by SAM on my 13th mission. POW 12/1967-3/1973

Total combat missions 13

Aviation Commands:

CO, VA-12 USS *Independence*. Med deployment
 CO, NAVAIRES, Pt. Mugu, CA.

Awards:

- Silver Star
- Legion of Merit with Gold Star
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Bronze Star with Gold Star
- Meritorious Service Medal
- Air Medal
- Purple Heart with Gold Star

Duty Assignment Chronology

- 11/56-3/58 Naval Flight Training.
- 3/58-9/59 Plowback, ATU-105/BTG-7, NAS Memphis, TN.
- 10/59-12/62 VA-125 & VA-155 NAS Moffett Field and NAS Lemoore, CA, (A-4). Two WestPac cruises on USS *Coral Sea*. VA-155 helped open NAS Lemoore.
- 12/62-1/64 Exchange Tour with VMA-311 at MCAS El Toro, CA (A-4E). Only USN pilot on the base. Needless to say, had a good time.
- 2/64-1/67 Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, MD.



First 10 months at Test Pilot School, Class 38 and the rest of the time as a Project Officer in Weapons System Test. Was the 7th USN pilot to fly the A7A.

2/67-12/67

First the RAG (I've forgotten it's number) and then helped form VA-147, the first A7 carrier squadron. We deployed in Nov. 1967 on USS *Ranger*. On my 13th combat mission (22 December 1967), a SAM nailed me and I spent the next 5 years, two months and some 20 days as a POW. Released on 14 March 1973. A Great Day!

12/67-3/73

POW

4/73-5/74

Spent several months at Oakland Naval Hospital, then back to NAS Lemoore and VA-125 to get back up to speed.

6/74-2/75

VA-174 at NAS Cecil Field, FL for A7E training.

2/75-2/76

CO, VA-12. Left in August 1975 on USS *Independence* for a Med cruise.

3/76-4/77

Operations Officer, USS *America*. After “Blackshoe” training I reported to the *America* which relieved USS *Independence* in the Med.

5/78-10/78

U.S. Army War College, Class 78. While there, earned an MS Degree in Public Admin. From Shippensburg State College. Pacific Missile Test Center, Weapons System Test Officer and then the PMTC Range Director.

5/82-5/84

CO, NAVAIRES Pt Mugu, CA.

6/86-10/86

Vice Commander, Pacific Missile Test Center.

Post USN Retirement

11/86-9/04 Program Manager for CSC (9 years) and Anteon Corp. (8+ years).

11/86-Current Carole is my wife of 42 years with 3 children and 6 grandchildren. Member: Navy League (National Director); Pacific Aviation

- Continued -

Post USN Retirement continued

Museum (Board of Directors); Tailhook Association; Quiet Birdman; Presbyterian Church (Elder & Deacon); Society of Experimental Test Pilots; AFCEA (Board of Directors); Daedalians and the best to last, Golden Eagles

Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) Three generations of Naval Aviators – my father (WWII, me and my oldest son, Todd (A-6 driver)).