



**CAPT Robert Gibson, USN (Ret.)**  
 "Hoot"

Date of Designation: 29 January 1971

Active Duty: June 1969-August 1996

Total Flight Hours: 13,837

Carrier/Shipboard Landings: Fixed: 309

Approx. Flight Hours:

Jet: 11,563 Helo: 26 VF/VA: 1,005/220  
 Prop: 1,380 (including 706 Experimental) Rocket: 868  
 VT: 3,447 (predominantly NASA T-38)  
 Of total time, 6.899 hours as Southwest Airline pilot

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: USS *Coral Sea*, VF-111, April-Jun 1972,  
 56 combat missions  
 Vietnam: Apr 1975, VF-1 evacuation of Saigon,  
 1 combat mission  
 Total Combat Missions: 57

Commands:

Commander, STS 61-C aboard Columbia, 1986  
 Commander, STS-27, aboard Atlantis, 1988  
 Commander, STS-47, aboard Endeavour, 1992  
 Commander, STS-71, aboard Atlantis, 1995  
 Chief of Astronaut Office, Dec 1992-Sep 1994

Combat Awards/Flight Performance Awards:

Distinguished Flying Cross Medal  
 3 Air Medals  
 Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V"  
 Vietnam Service medal (One Bronze Star)  
 Six Aviation & Three Space World Records  
 Konstantin Tsiolkovsky Medal  
 Yuri Gagarin Gold Medal  
 2 FAI Louis Bleriot Medals



Other Awards:

Defense Distinguished Service Medal  
 Defense Superior Service Medal  
 Legion of Merit  
 Defense Meritorious Service medal

**Duty Assignment Chronology**

6/69-1/71	Flight Training (T-34B, T-2, TA-4)
2/71-4/72	F-4 RAG VF-121/VF-126 (F-4J, TA-4)
4/72-10/73	VF-111 Weapons Training
10/73-12/73	F-14 RAG Student VF-124
1/74-8/75	VF-1 Personnel, Avionics, AME/PR
9/75-5/76	F-14 RAG Instructor VF-124
7/76-6/77	U.S. Naval Test Pilot School
7/77-6/78	Strike Aircraft Test Directorate
7/78-8/96	NASA Astronaut
8/96	Retired from the United States Navy

**Summary of Significant Career Events**

- (1) F-14 Fleet Project Team 1971.
- (2) Combat tour aboard USS *Coral Sea* during Operations Freedom Train and Linebacker in the F-4B, 1972.
- (3) Transferred from VF-111 after 2 cruises into VF-1 to make the first cruise of the F-14A.
- (4) Supported Saigon evacuation Operation Frequent Wind in F-14A, April 1975.
- (5) Made first flight, envelope expansion and structural clearance of F-14A TARPS.
- (6) Selected as one of 15 pilot astronauts in the first Space Shuttle Astronaut selection.
- (7) T-38A chase pilot for the first 2 Space Shuttle flights.

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Significant Career Events continued:

- (8) Flew as Pilot (Copilot) on the 10th Space Shuttle launch in 1984.
- (9) Flew as Mission Commander on 4 missions, 1986, 1988, 1992 and 1995.
- (10) First astronaut to command 4 Space Shuttle missions.
- (11) Trained in Russia on the “Mir” Space Station and “Soyuz” simulators to dock with “Mir”.
- (12) Performed the first-ever docking by a Space Shuttle, in 1995 with “Mir”.
- (13) My handshake with “Mir” Commander, Colonel Vladimir Dezero has been described as marking the end of the Cold War.
- (14) NASA’s Chief Astronaut 1992-1994.
- (15) Left NASA and retired from the United States Navy in 1996.