



Robert A. Johnson, Commander, USN (Ret.)
 “Bob”

Date of Designation: November 21, 1958

Dates of Active Duty: June 1957 – August 1977

Total Flight Hours: 4,182

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 461

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 3,751 Prop: 287 VF/VA: 3,377

Turboprop: 139 Helo: 3 Glider: 3 Total of 45 types

Combat Tours:

Vietnam: RVAH-13, USS Kitty Hawk, 12/66-05/67,
 48 missions

RVAH-13, USS America, 05/68-10/68,
 61 missions

Total Combat Missions: 109

Aviation Commands:

Head, Carrier Suitability Branch, Flight Test Division,
 NATC, Patuxent River MD 10/69-7/72.

CO, RVAH-7, 12/73-12/74

Director, US Naval Test Pilot School, 1/75-8/77.

Combat & Other Flight Performance Awards:

10 Air Medals (Bronze Star and nine Strike/Flight Awards)

3 Navy Commendation Medals (with Combat “V”)

Vietnam Service Medal (two Bronze Stars)

Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Meritorious Unit
 Citation

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

Other Awards:

Meritorious Service Medal

Navy Expeditionary Medal



Duty Assignment Chronology

- 6/57-4/58 Flight Training, NAS Pensacola FL. (T-34B and T-28B/C).
- 4/58-11/58 Advanced Flight Training, NAS Beeville TX. (F9F-8/8T).
- 1/59-7/59 A-3D Maintenance Officer Training NAS Alameda CA. (T-33).
- 6/59-2/63 VAH-123 and VAH-4, (A-3D) NAS Whidbey Island WA. USS *Oriskany* (CVA-34) and USS *Lexington* (CVA-16).
- 2/63-6/65 US Naval Postgraduate School, Monterrey CA (T-2A).
- 6/65-1/69 RVAH-3 and RVAH-13, (RA-5C), NAS Sanford FL./USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63) and USS *America* (CVA-66).
- 1/69-10/69 US Naval Test Pilot School, NATC Patuxent River, MD.
- 10/69-7/72 Carrier Suitability Branch, Flight Test Division, NATC Patuxent River MD.
- 7/72-12/74 RVAH-3 and RVAH-7 (RA-5C.) CO/XO. NAS Albany GA. and NAS Key West FL. USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63).
- 12/74-8/77 US Naval Test Pilot School, Director. NATC Patuxent River MD.
- 8/77 Retired from the United States Navy.

Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) Had orders to be the first “Nugget” pilot of the A-3D but due to the loss of one class of B/N’s in a training crash and the loss of another class due to “DOR’s” after they observed the crash, I trained and flew as a B/N until the pipeline caught up. While a B/N I set a record for qualifying in high altitude nuclear RBS bombing in the minimum three flights.
- (2) Made my first carrier landing ever in an A-3D on the USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63). During flight training my CARQUALS were canceled in both the T-28C

- Continued -

Summary of Significant Career Events continued

and F9F-8 due to hurricanes. So my log book was stamped "FIELD QUALIFIED" and I continued on.

- (3) Made my first cruise to WESTPAC flying the A-3D aboard the USS *Oriskany* (CVA-34). During the Quemoy-Matsu islands crisis we flew numerous sorties as the US military presence in support of the Taiwan government.
- (4) Made my second cruise to WESTPAC flying the A-3D aboard the USS *Lexington* (CVA-16). When South Vietnam President Diem's palace was bombed we again flew numerous sorties as the US military presence in support of the South Vietnam government.
- (5) The whole *Lexington* cruise we had to use a field landing mirror system chained to the deck on the "STARBOARD" side of the landing area so we lost sight of it in our approach when we could still see "blue water". In those days we were also still flying and landing "NIGHT VFR".
- (6) Earned an MS in Aeronautical Engineering at the US Naval Postgraduate School.
- (7) Made my third cruise (combat) to WESTPAC and NVN flying the RA-5C aboard the USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63).
- (8) Made my fourth cruise (combat) to WESTPAC and NVN flying the RA-5C aboard the USS *America* (CVA-66). Took the first photos of the suspected pontoon bridge in VINH on the first operational flight of the AAS-21 IR sensor in heavy weather and under extreme radar directed AAA fire.
- (9) Attended the US Naval Test Pilot School.
- (10) Following USNTPS I was assigned to Carrier Suitability Branch of Flight Test and was subsequently made the Branch Head as a LCDR in a CDR's billet.
- (11) Flew carrier test flights in the A-3B, RA-5C, A-6, EA-6B (Initial Sea Trials), A-7, F-4 and C-2A.
- (12) Flew the ACLS Deck Motion Compensation Trials aboard the USS *Coral Sea* (CVA-43) where the swells were so long and high that on occasion both the bottom of the bow and the four screws turning could be seen at the same time.
- (13) Set a record for carrier landings in one day by making 50 traps aboard USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63) in support of a very high priority test program to clear the C-2A for carrier operations after two fatal crashes.
- (14) Made my fifth and last cruise flying the RA-5C as Commanding Officer of RVAH-7 to WESTPAC and the Indian Ocean aboard the USS *Kitty Hawk* (CVA-63) where we put on an air show for the Shah of Iran.
- (15) Became the 18th Director of the US Naval Test Pilot School as the most junior Director ever. I was a junior Commander in a senior Captain's billet. My directions were to correct severe safety and morale problems and reorganize the school, which with my wife's help, I was able to do.
- (16) In my 20 year career I was always assigned duty involving flying and never had an accident and in my command tours I never lost a pilot or airplane and never had an accident.