

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS TERRY C CAMPBELL

By Richard Long

During the War maintaining F-4 jets at readiness was a dangerous job. Veteran Terry Campbell knows first hand. In August, 1958 eighteen year old Terry was inducted into the US Navy and headed off to basic training at Naval Training Unit, San Diego, CA; followed by Aviation Structural Mechanical Schools in Norman OK and Memphis, TN. Unlike many veterans, his first assignment—Glynco Naval Air Station, GA—was where he stayed for the remainder of his enlistment.

During that approximately three year period, Terry advanced to Plane Captain on Flight Crews. That job entailed escorting pilots to the jet to assess it prior to each sortie. The fighter jets were parked in four rows with about 15 in each row. There were dozens of Captains and Pilots doing the same thing at the same time. Hence, there was always a certain amount of confusion as planes were taxied out for take-off for one of over 100 sorties each day. It was the intake and exhaust streams that created danger. With so many planes in one area, it required extreme caution to insure one didn't get caught in the intake stream or exposed to the heat from the exhaust.

Petty Officer Campbell also had experiences with other aircraft. Once while outside the hangar, he heard a PTV sputtering in for service. One engine had failed in landing. Unfortunately, the plane crashed into a lodge pole pine forest and burst into flame. Fourteen veterans lost their lives that day.

Petty Officer Campbell, we honor you and thank you for your service.