

MICHAEL DANIEL HORNSBY

Michael D. Hornsby, one of our most popular and talented classmates and captain of the golf team first year (as well as Texas Amateur Champion in 1959) reported for flight training in Pensacola immediately after graduation leave. He earned his wings in November 1961 in Beeville, Texas, and then reported to an attack RAG in Florida to fly the A-4 Skyhawk. Upon completion of RAG, Mike was assigned to fleet light attack squadron VA-34 in Jacksonville, Florida, flying the Skyhawk. In the summer of 1963, Mike was selected for training in the RA-5 Vigilante, subsequently joining VAH-7 at Sanford Naval Air Station, Sanford, Florida. On 6 January 1965, he was severely injured in the crash and explosion of his Vigilante and died two days later on 8 January 1965 as a result of his injuries. He was laid to eternal rest in his hometown of Austin, Texas. Mike married Mary Mon-is on 29 December 1961. They had two sons, Mike and Truman, at the time of his death.

Anonymous
30th Year Book

I didn't really know Mike Hornsby until we ended up together for certain phases of the naval aviation training program. We received our wings about the same time; he finished jet training at Kingsville, TX and I finished at Beeville, TX. Both of us were ordered to the A-4 RAG, VA-44, in Jacksonville, FL. Although Mike was engaged, we lived in the BOQ and spent time together looking for a place for Mike and his wife-to-be, Mary, to live. After finishing the RAG, I received orders to VA-76 at Oceana, VA and Mike was ordered to VA-34 (I believe) at NAS Cecil Field, FL. About six months later, Mike and his squadron joined our air group aboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVAN-65) as we headed south on an emergency deployment for the Cuban crises in 1962. I didn't see Mike again until ENTERPRISE was working up for a Med deployment and Mike flew aboard in an A-5 as the most junior pilot in the heavy attack squadron, VAH-7. Because of his great flying ability, Mike had been selected as a LTJG to transition to the A-5. He had a super first deployment in the A-5 and we all took great pride in being part of Nuclear Task Force ONE which was the name given the three nuclear powered ships that made an around the world deployment without replenishing in 1964. Although I have only second-hand knowledge from his Skipper of how Mike died, I believe the details are correct. He was asked to do a brake test on an AS at their homebase, Sanford, FL. While testing the brakes on the runway at a relatively low speed, the brakes failed and the aircraft ran off the runway, hit a fuel storage area, and burst into flames. Mike survived a few days but died on 8 January 1965.

Gene Gasser, 7th Co
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