

# Maj Gen (Ret) Joe Anderson: Versatile Test Pilot, Aerial Combat Vet

Detroit native Joe Anderson is a 1968 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, where he majored in engineering and played varsity baseball. Upon graduation he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Following infantry training—every Marine Officer is an infantry officer before becoming an aviator—Joe graduated from Undergraduate Pilot Training in the U.S. Air Force at Craig Air Force Base, Selma, Alabama. Upon receiving Air Force Silver Wings, he reported for duty to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona, earning his U.S. Navy Wings of Gold and becoming combat qualified in the F-4 “Phantom.”

He remains one of the very few pilots to be awarded both Air Force and Navy pilot wings.

Joe then deployed to the Republic of Vietnam where he flew 219 combat missions in the F-4 “Phantom.” Upon returning stateside, he was assigned Marine Attack Squadron 231 at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C.

While at Cherry Point, Joe carrier-qualified in the AV-8A (“Harrier”) aboard the USS Iwo Jima, LPH-2. He was later selected to attend the U.S. Navy Test Pilot School at NAS Patuxent River with over 1,500 total flight hours.

Joe remained at “Pax River” and participated in the shipboard certification of the AV-8A. He also participated in the “ski

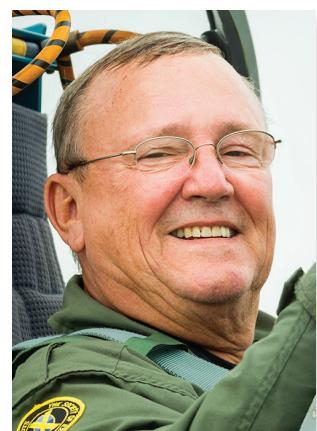
jump” takeoff device evaluation at the 1978 Farnborough International Airshow. He then flew the Navy preliminary evaluation of the YAV-8B prototype aircraft, a highly-modified “Harrier” with a much larger wing, a double row of intake doors, and large, automated flaps. These remain many of the physical characteristics of the airplane flown today by the U.S. Marine Corps as the AV-8B “Harrier II.”

Joe’s experience with “Harriers” is legendary: He flew his first “Harrier” in September 1973, and his last Marine “Harrier” in 2000. He has flown nine different “Harrier” models over a span of 36 years. Joe also has flight time in approximately 60 different type, model and series of military and civilian aircraft in addition to the “Harrier.” Most of the active-duty pilots flying the Harrier in the Marine Corps today were not even born when Joe had his first Harrier flight.

Joe’s most exciting Harrier moment was losing his canopy after takeoff in 1995. He recovered safely but reported a somewhat elevated noise level in the cockpit.

Joe retired from the Marine Corps as a Major General in 2001. He served as Associate Director for the National Air and Space Museum’s Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center, and currently sits on several corporate boards.

Joe remains active flying both the “Sea Harrier” and the L-39. He has aerobatic ratings in both aircraft.



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