



## The Journey of EA-3B 146453

It's October 2015. Ranger 15 is 55 years old and starting her twilight tour as a museum piece in Fort Worth, Texas. Her new duties require small trips to various events at Meacham Field, and hosting visitors who routinely tour her crew compartment and cockpit. However, it wasn't always that easy for Ranger 15 (aka Ranger 8 and Ranger 003).

Assigned to VQ-2 in 1960, this EA-3B deployed aboard carriers world-wide to provide ELINT and COMMINT for the Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, Cold War, Lebanon evacuation, Desert Shield/Storm, and other hot-spots through the years. Ranger 15 retired after 31 years of service and spent the next 22 years in the hot and very dry town of Tucson, Arizona at Davis Monthan AFB (the Boneyard).

In June 2011, the A-3 group in Fort Worth relinquished all of its funding (\$15,000) in order to support delivery of the final flying A-3 to Pensacola NNAM. However, thanks to a timely donation by Williams-Pyro Inc., we were able to re-engage with NNAM and secure 146453 for the Vintage Flying Museum. Little did we know at the time, NAVSUP had already made plans to scrap the remaining A-3s at DMAFB, so Ranger 15 was spared.

In November 2012 after 10 months of intense research on the task of disassembly and movement of an A-3 Skywarrior, our team of 11 volunteers showed up in Tucson. For the next 12 days we toiled on top of and below the wings, disassembling engines, tails, probe, canoes, and wings. We then shipped all of those parts on three tractor trailers back to VFM and our awaiting A-3 restoration volunteers.

Three years later, our team of 38 volunteers are finally done with her restoration. The A-3 Association wishes to thank Helen Watson of the National Naval Aviation Museum for believing in us. We thank Chuckie Hospers of VFM who provided her a home. We thank Della Williams who gave us our initial funding to bring her to Fort Worth, Texas.



Once again, another A-3 Skywarrior has been saved and restored thanks to 153 donors who provided dollars, and 38 hard-working volunteers. This bird is finally at rest in Fort Worth where visitors to the museum from around the world have an opportunity to study one of the Navy's Cold War warriors.

Save the Whale. Fly A-3s. Fly Navy.



# DEDICATION of EA-3B 146453 to VINTAGE FLYING MUSEUM and A-3 ASSOCIATION BANQUET



## A-3 Skywarrior Specifications and Squadron History

**Manufacture:** Douglas Aircraft Corporation  
**First Flight:** October 28, 1952, Edwards AFB  
**Last Flight:** June 30, 2011, NAS Fort Worth  
**Length:** 78 feet **Wingspan:** 72 feet 6 inches  
**Weight Empty:** 44,500 lbs (EA-3B cleo wing)  
**Max Cat:** 73,000 lbs **Max Trap:** 50,000 lbs  
**Max Weight:** 84,000 lbs (KA-3B)  
**Engine:** (2) P&W J57-P-10 10,500 lbs thrust  
**Range:** 2100 miles unrefueled  
**Speed:** 520 MPH cruise, 610 MPH max  
**Ceiling:** 41,000 feet



### A-3 Skywarrior Squadrons

**Heavy attack nuclear delivery, conventional bombing, and in-flight refueling :**

**East Coast:** VAH-1, VAH-3, VAH-5, VAH-7, VAH-9, VAH-11, VAK-208

**West Coast:** VAH-2, VAH-4, VAH-6, VAH-8, VAH-10, VAH-13, VAK-308

**Airborne electronic countermeasures, tanking, jamming, and FEWSG:**

VAW-13, VAQ-129, VAQ-130, VAQ-131, VAQ-132, VAQ-133, VAQ-134, VAQ-135, VAQ-33, VAQ-34, VAQ-208, VAQ-308

**Airborne electronic and photo reconnaissance:**

VCP-63, VAP-61, VAP-62, VQ-1, VQ-2

**Training and VIP:**

NARU, VAH-3, VAH-123, VAQ-33, VR-1

**Systems evaluation and flight test platform:**

NMC/PMTC, NPTR, NADC, NASWF/NWEF, NATC, NOTS/NWC, NARF, ARMY, VX-5 Grumman, Hughes, Westinghouse, Raytheon, Chrysler Technologies, Thunderbird Aviation



**Guest Speaker— RADM Timothy S. Matthews (retired)**

Tim Matthews joined Lockheed Martin in June 2014 and currently serves as vice president, F-35 sustainment operations. Matthews' fleet operational tours include duty in ships, squadrons, and intermediate maintenance facilities. One of his squadrons was VQ-2 as AMDO. He also served aboard USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67), USS Saratoga (CV 60), and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70).

## Dedication/Reunion Program

*Friday, October 2, 2015*

**1600—1745**

**Museum Tour and Cockpit Viewing of the A-3**

**1745—1830**

**Dedication of EA-3B 146453 to Vintage Flying Museum**

Welcome and Introductions—Mark Swisher

Posting of the Colors—Honor Guard

Invocation—Al Murray

History of the Move—Mark Swisher

Transfer of EA-3B to VFM—Bill Mego

**1830—2000**

**A-3 Skywarrior Association Reunion Banquet**

Welcome and Introductions — Al Rankin

Bar-B-Que—Fill your plates and top off your drinks

Toast—Various Board Members

Introduction of Guest Speaker—Al Rankin

Keynote Address— RADM Tim Matthews

A-3 Skywarrior Presentations — Al Rankin

Retire the Colors and Benediction—Frank Cogdell

**2000—2200**

**Cockpit Tours of the A-3 and Photo Opportunities**

All personnel who crewed 146453

All A-3 Pilots, NFOs, EWOPs, EVALs, Crew Chiefs, PCs

Silent Auction Distribution

Return to the Hotel on Busses and Cleanup