



**1st Lt. Emmett L. Herron,
531st Fighter Bomber Squadron
Chambley Air Base, France
January 1956 to November 1957**

1st Lt. Emmett L. “Sam” Herron received his wings and commission through the Aviation Cadet program in 1954. After training at Nellis Air Force Base he was assigned to the 452nd Fighter-Day Squadron of the 450th Fighter-Day Wing at Foster Air Force Base where he flew the F-86 supporting Tactical Air Command’s defense of the radar stations along our southern border. It was at Foster that he picked up the nickname “Sam”.

Sam volunteered for an assignment to Europe. He arrived at Chambley in January 1956 and flew the F-86 with the 531st Fighter Bomber Squadron. In the summer/fall of 1956 he had an opportunity to ferry an F-86 from the Warner Robins Air Force Base to Madrid, Spain.

In 1958, Sam was assigned to James Connally Air Force Base where he trained Radar Intercept Officers in the F-89. He also was an instructor and flight examiner in the T-33 and F-89 and flight test pilot in the F-89. He attended the Squadron Officer School and the Air Training Command Supervisor School.

When that training closed in 1963, Sam went to Laughlin Air Force Base and instructed undergraduate pilots in the T-37.

His next assignment was to Wheeler Air Force Base, Hawaii in 1964. This included acting as a Forward Air Controller with the 25th Infantry Division, at Schofield Barracks. After a short time, there was an opportunity to move to Hickam, Air Force Base. This turned into a “hardship tour” as his duty consisted of flying the T-33 as an instructor, flight examiner and flight test pilot.

As things in South East Asia heated up Sam decided to volunteer for the Tactical Reconnaissance field, specifically the RF-4C. His tour at Hickam was shortened and he reported to Bergstrom Air Force Base in 1967. There was a need for an additional squadron of RF-4Cs in South East Asia and this squadron was formed at Bergstrom. After all the crews finished upgrading, the squadron passed an Operational Readiness Inspection and deployed to Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. Sam flew 100 missions over North Vietnam.

Sam couldn't break the Air Training Command cycle and in 1968 was assigned to Randolph Air Force Base and the United States Air Force Instrument Pilot Instructor School (IPIS), flying T-39 aircraft. Eventually Sam became the Standardization/Evaluation pilot for IPIS, administering all required flight checks. When IPIS evolved into the United States Air Force Instrument Flight Center, Sam became Chief, Flight Standards Division. His division was responsible to USAF in preparing all regulatory documents pertaining to instrument flight of all aircraft.

Sam retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1973 with 21 years service.

Sam was hired by the Bunker Ramo Corporation to join the staff at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Bunker Ramo's contract called for providing pilot factors support to the Flight Dynamics Laboratory, conducting simulator evaluations of advanced flight systems.

After nine winters in Ohio, there was an opportunity to "come home" to Texas. Sam was hired by General Dynamics doing much the same job as he did at Bunker Ramo. Then came the dreaded downsizing and after nine years he retired again.

Sam had tried complete retirement a couple of times over the years and this time was no different. He soon tired of the situation and went to American Airlines and became a ground school instructor covering the entire 757/767 fleets. After two years, there was a furlough for more than two years. Then Sam was recalled and became a simulator instructor on the MD-80 fleet.

He finally decided it was time to retire for good and did on January 1, 2005.