



### **Colonel (ret) Richard Graham**

After receiving his commission from Air Force ROTC he entered pilot training at Craig AFB, Alabama. In 1965 he graduated from pilot training and remained at Craig AFB as a T-37 instructor pilot and flight examiner. In August 1970 he began F-4 training. Upon completion of his training he was assigned to the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron ("Triple Nickel") at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. During that time he flew 145 combat missions over North Vietnam and Laos in the F-4C/D aircraft.

Later he joined, the 67th Tactical Fighter Squadron as an F-4C "Wild Weasel" pilot. In September 1972, until February 1973, Colonel Graham was deployed with his squadron to Korat RTAFB, Thailand, to augment suppressing enemy surface-to-air missile sites in North Vietnam. During Christmas 1972 he participated in six Linebacker II sorties over Hanoi.

Colonel Graham entered the SR-71 strategic reconnaissance program in 1974 at Beale AFB, California. After several years as a crew member, he became an instructor pilot, and in 1978 was selected as the Chief, Standardization/Evaluation Division. In 1980 he was selected to be the SR-71 Squadron Commander, where he served until his assignment to Air War College, in 1981. In June of 1982, he was assigned to the Pentagon to work as a strategic force programmer.

In 1987 he was selected to become the Wing Commander of the 9th SRW, where he remained until November 1988. Colonel Graham was a command pilot with more than 4,600 military flying hours. His military decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with three oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with 18 oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with "V" device and one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, Combat Readiness Medal with one oak leaf cluster, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with four service stars, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with palm, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Upon retirement from the Air Force he joined American Airlines in Dallas, Texas. He flew with them for 13 years, and in August 2002 he retired as a Captain on the MD-80 aircraft amassing 7,500 hours. His wife's name is Pat and they have five children and four grandchildren.