

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN H. ALVIS, UNITED STATES NAVY

John Hubbard Alvis was born in Rochester, Texas, on April 29, 1926. He attended Rochester High School and Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University at College Station, prior to enlisting in the U. S. Naval Reserve in July 1944. Under the V-12 Program, he attended Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, from August 1944 to September 1945, then entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from his native state. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 3, 1949, he subsequently advanced in rank to that of Captain, to date from July 1, 1969. His selection for the rank of Rear Admiral was approved by the President on January 30, 1974.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1949, he joined the USS ORLECK (DD-886) and while on board that destroyer participated in an eight month Western Pacific deployment. Detached from that vessel in August 1950, he next had flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida. Designated Naval Aviator on October 31, 1951, he continued training until August 1952, then reported as a Pilot with the Night Fighter Detachment of Composite Squadron FOUR, which from January to August 1953, based on the USS TARAWA, took part in a Mediterranean Cruise.

In July 1954 he reported for instruction at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, from which he received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering in August 1956. He continued his instruction, specializing in nuclear propulsion, at Oak Ridge (Tennessee) School of Reactor Development and in August 1957 received the degree of Master of Science from the Naval Postgraduate School. He next served as a Weapon Delivery Instructor with Special Weapons Unit, Pacific and in April 1958 joined Attack Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE for similar duty.

From August 1960 to June 1961 he attended the Command and Staff Course at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, after which he served as Maintenance Officer and Operations Officer of Attack Squadron TWO HUNDRED TWELVE, participating in two Western Pacific deployments. Assigned in September 1963 to the Bureau of Naval Weapons, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., he headed the Probes Branch in the Astronautics Programs Office until March 1965. He received the degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs from George Washington University, Washington, D. C., in 1965. He next reported as Executive Officer of Attack Squadron ONE HUNDRED TWELVE, which deployed to the Mediterranean on board the USS FORRESTAL and in July 1966 assumed command of that squadron. Under his command, that squadron transferred to the Pacific Fleet and deployed off Vietnam in the USS KITTY HAWK. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V". The citations follow in part:

Bronze Star Medal: "For meritorious service from July 7 to December 31, 1966...in connection with operations against enemy aggressor forces in Vietnam. Through his outstanding leadership, tireless efforts and resourcefulness, Commander Alvis was responsible for the transformation of an inexperienced squadron into an efficient combat unit during a short training cycle. His successful accomplishment of this task was proven by his squadron in combat during the latter phase of his command when it made a distinct contribution to the effort of the SEVENTH Fleet Carrier Striking Force..."

Distinguished Flying Cross: "For extraordinary achievement...while participating in an Air Wing strike against the Van Dien Vehicle Depot near Hanoi, North Vietnam on December 13, 1966. In marginal weather conditions Commander Alvis led a surface-to-air missile suppression flight... into the heavily defended Hanoi area. Escorting a large group of aircraft, his flight, in order to accomplish its mission, was forced by weather to fly the entire route to and from the target area at altitude below 1,500 feet exposing him to intense small arms, automatic weapons and medium and heavy anti-aircraft fire. In the face of heavy anti-aircraft fire and numerous surface-to-air missile firings in the target area he demonstrated the highest degree of skill and courage in diving on known surface-to-air missile sites. Leaving the target area he jeopardized his own personal safety in order to cover the retirement of two damaged aircraft to the coast. Arriving over water he had just enough fuel to reach the airborne tanker..."

Navy Commendation Medal: "For meritorious achievement...on December 22, 1966...As the leader of a division...operating deep in enemy territory ...All members of the flight executed their initial attacks with precision and accuracy, resulting in secondary explosions and fires. Through his singular weapons delivery proficiency, (he) set the example for his flight which destroyed six trucks and left two POL storage areas engulfed in flames..."

He was also awarded the Air Medal with two Gold Stars in lieu of the Second and Third Air Medals for completing thirty strike missions against the enemy during the period December 4 to 31, 1966. In addition he is entitled to the Ribbons for the Navy Unit Commendations awarded the USS KITTY HAWK AND USS ENTERPRISE.

In December 1966 he reported for instruction at the Naval Nuclear Power School, Mare Island, Vallejo, California and from July 1967 to January 1968 had further training at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit, Schenectady, New York. In January 1968 he reported as Executive Officer of the USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65), which operated in the Korean area during the periods January 23 to March 22, 1968 and April 20 to May 11, 1969. For meritorious service, in that capacity, from June 1968 to June 1969 he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Bronze Star Medal. In June 1970 he assumed command of the USS OGDEN (LPD-5)

and in April 1971 became Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station, Lemoore, California. "For exceptionally meritorious conduct...(in the latter command) from April 1971 to August 1973..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit. The citation further states in part: "An extremely capable, resourceful and dedicated naval officer, Captain Alvis vigorously directed the efforts of his command to the complete support of the fleet squadrons in their own preparation and training for combat operations in Southeast Asia..."

In August 1973 he was assigned to the Naval Air Systems Command Headquarters, Washington, D. C., where he served until December of that year as Director of the Programs Division, and is now Project Manager of the F-14/PHOENIX Project.

In addition to the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal with Gold Star and Combat "V", Air Medal with two Gold Stars, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" and the Navy Unit Commendation Medal with Bronze Star, Rear Admiral Alvis has the China Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Europe and Asia Clasps; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Korea); Vietnam Service Medal and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device. He also has the Navy Distinguished Service Order Second Class awarded by the Republic of Vietnam.

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