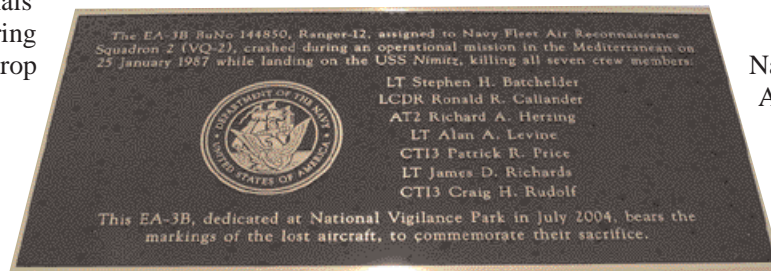


# EA-3B Skywarrior Dedicated to Cold War Memorial



Above, an EA-3B takes off from NS Rota, Spain, in 1971. Left, a VQ-2 Skywarrior lands on board *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN 69) in 1983. Below, left, RAdm. Joseph D. Burns, Commander Naval Security Group Command, spoke at the EA-3B dedication ceremony in the National Vigilance Park. Below, a Skywarrior bearing the markings of EA-3B BuNo 144850 *Ranger 12* joined two other military aircraft on display. Bottom, a plaque commemorates the original aircraft and its seven crew members who were lost during a landing aboard *Nimitz* (CVN 68) on 25 January 1987.

During a ceremony on 13 July, a Navy Douglas EA-3B Skywarrior joined an Air Force Lockheed C-130 Hercules and Army Beech RU-8D Seminole on display in the National Vigilance Park at Fort George G. Meade, Md. Dedicated on 2 September 1997, the park and its Aerial Reconnaissance Memorial honors all military crews who risked, and often lost, their lives performing airborne signals intelligence missions during the Cold War. The backdrop for the park is a semi-circle of trees, each representing the various types of aircraft downed during U.S. aerial reconnaissance missions.



National Museum of Naval Aviation, Pensacola, Fla. Supporting the fleet with aerial reconnaissance remained a dangerous business throughout the Cold War. The Skywarrior served for

The C-130, reclaimed from storage at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., was refurbished to resemble a reconnaissance-configured C-130A (#60528) that was downed by Soviet fighters over Soviet Armenia on 2 September 1958. The RU-8D, restored and donated by the Transportation Museum, Fort Eustis, Va., pays tribute to the service of soldiers performing aerial reconnaissance and cryptologic intelligence-gathering missions during the Vietnam conflict.

The Navy's contribution to the National Vigilance Park bears the markings of EA-3B *Ranger 12* (BuNo 144850) assigned to Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron (VQ) 2. The original aircraft and all seven aircrew members were lost during an operational mission in the Mediterranean on 25 January 1987 while attempting to land on board *Nimitz* (CVN 68). The aircraft is on loan from the

more than three decades in the Navy's secret reconnaissance war against the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. Conceived at the beginning of the Cold War as an aircraft carrier-based nuclear bomber, the A-3 was the largest plane ever designed to operate from a carrier. Its size earned it the nickname, the "Whale." The EA-3B, with specialized electronic countermeasures, and its crew offered the fleet unique reconnaissance capabilities for numerous Cold War-era conflicts and crises, including the Vietnam War. The EA-3B remained in frontline service with VQs 1 and 2 until the Navy retired the Skywarrior in October 1991, after serving in the intelligence role during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. ✈

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