



Charles H. Holden “Brows”

Colonel Chuck “Brows” Holden, USAF (Ret), Flew West 10 February 2021 due to Covid and subsequent organ failures. Born 06 Feb 1940 in Houston Texas to Horace and Dorothy Holden, Brows always had a dream...to FLY and that single thought drove most of his decisions from the age of 19. He enlisted into the Aviation Cadet program and was sent to navigator school in Harlingen, TX. Following graduation, his first assignment was to Otis AFB, Mass on a RC-121D providing Airborne Early Warning and Control over the east coast. There, he met and married the love of his life, Rose Phillips. Chuck’s skill, dedication and “aggressive” nature led him to Hurlburt Field, the Air Commandos, and the B-26B Invaders. Operation “Jungle Jim/Farmgate” was about to kick off and Chuck volunteered to go to Bien Hoa AB, SVN to serve his country. On 19 October 1963, while covering helicopter landings and friendlies who were pinned down by heavily entrenched V.C., Chuck and his pilot made 4 passes in support but their guns had malfunctioned. They took 12 AAA hits in the aircraft, one through Chuck’s left foot. He earned the Purple Heart and 2 DFC’s that tour while flying 51 combat missions.

After being shot at, Chuck figured if he was going to keep doing this combat crap, he’d feel much better in the pilot seat. Although it took two attempts, his determination prevailed and he was selected to attend pilot training at Laredo AFB, TX and earned his pilot wings. His initial assignment was to the 429th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Cannon AFB, NM flying the North American F-100D “Super Sabre.” Next was to the 612th Tactical Fighter Squadron and 416th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Phu Cat, SVN. Chuck’s airmanship and tactical experience earned him the chance to volunteer for Operation “Commando Sabre.” As Misty 75, he performed high speed, forward air control missions, in North Vietnam and Laos in the F-100F. Brows earned a Silver Star for a SAR mission which he lead, where he flew 9 hours one day and 5 hrs the next. Brows flew 80 missions as a Misty FAC.



After his return from South East Asia, Chuck headed to the 353 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Torrejon AB, Spain, still flying the F-100. The following year, the squadron was re-equipped with McDonnell-Douglas F-4E “Phantom.” Chuck volunteered again for combat duty and was selected for Project Rivet Haste, the speedy introduction of the leading-edge slat, TISEO equipped F-4E’s into combat. After a brief TDY to Nellis AFB, NV to form and train the squadron, Chuck flew with the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron (Rivet Haste) at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand as flight commander and instructor pilot.

He was next assigned to the Tactical Fighter Weapons Center, Nellis AFB, NV as the F-15 Tactics Officer, Deputy of Tactics and Analysis. During this period, he worked on tactics development “projects” for the F-15, Aim-9L, Aim-7F and “other” evolving weapon systems. In Sep 1977 he attended Park College, Kansas City, MO under “Operation

Bootstrap” to finish his degree and earned his B.S. in Business. Upon his return to Nellis, Col Holden was appointed Director, Air Superiority Tactics, Tactical Fighter Weapons Center, with the responsibility to manage and direct tactics development “projects” for all air-to-air weapon systems in the Tactical Air Force. In May 1979, Chuck was selected as Operations Officer of the 36th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Osan AB Korea. During his tour, he also served as the Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations of the 51st Composite Wing. In Jun 1980, Browns took Command, 1st Test Squadron, Clark AB, Philippines. Known as “Combat Sage”, he ran the PACAF Weapon System Evaluation Program (WSEP) to determine the overall effectiveness of the fully integrated air-to-air weapon systems engaged in realistic scenarios while conducting training and to certify the combat capability of participating aircraft, air-to-air missiles, and aircrews. After a few staff tours at Ft Lewis as an ALO and Langley in XPJ, Chuck returned to Nellis as the Chief of Staff of the 57FW and retired in Oct 1989, after almost 29 years of service.

He loved flying. Everyday was about flying. Whether actually flying, or fixing his bonanza, or drinking coffee at the FBO or hand-flying in the bar...it all revolved around flying. Chuck was the “go-to” guy in Vegas for information, contacts, and advise on corporate and civilian flying/airplanes. Whether it was a Citation or a bonanza, big or small, Chuck knew the answer or could find it. His last flight was two days before he went to the emergency room. The man lived his dream...he flew!

Chuck is survived by his loving wife Rose; daughter Kathy; son Charles Jr; and his grandkids Sean, Nicole, Kjerstin, Charles III, and Evelyn. He will be interred at Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Boulder City NV on 27 May 2021.

AWARDS:

Silver Star
Purple Heart
Distinguished Flying Cross (1 Oak Leaf Cluster)
Air Medal (16 OLC)
Meritorious Service Medal (3 OLC)
Air Force Commendation Medal (1 OLC)
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor (5 OLC)
Vietnam Service Medal with 6 bronze service stars



FLIGHT TIME:

Combat Time -	740 hrs
Combat Sorties -	444
Total Fighter -	2357 hrs
Total Nav -	2339 hrs
Total Time -	5112 hrs