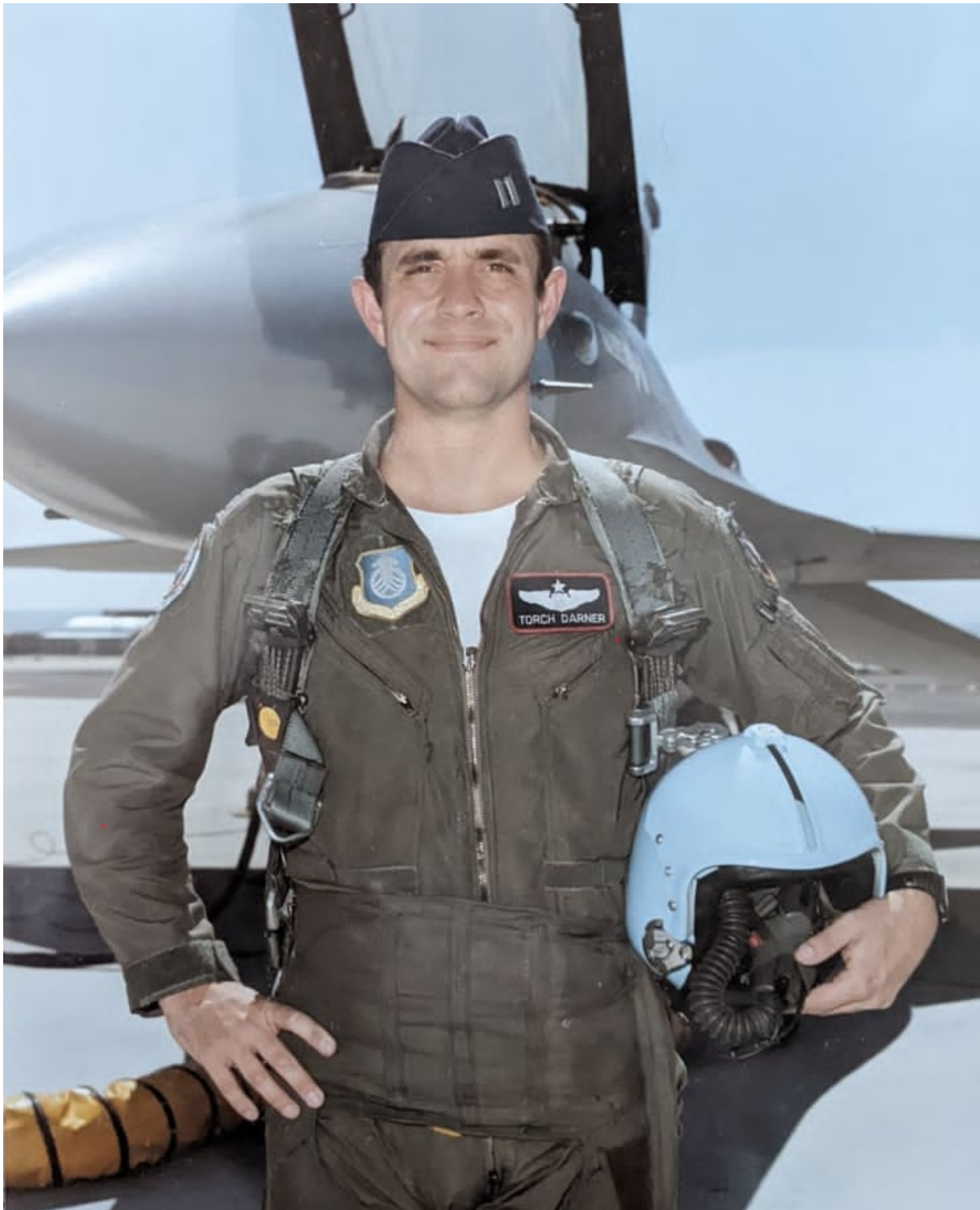


CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Colonel Thomas Lyman Darner, Retired

Call Sign "TORCH"



January 23rd, 1953 - July 19th, 2024

Significant Achievements



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY 1971 - 1975

HUSBAND since Feb 25, 1977

PILOT since 1977

DAD since 1980, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1988

LEGEND since 1982 Earning the moniker, "TORCH" by safely landing the F-106 while in a burst of flames

TEST PILOT SCHOOL 1983-1984

TEST PILOT for the F-117 "Nighthawk" Stealth Fighter

SENIOR ENGINEER for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) 2001 - 2005

SENIOR PRINCIPAL ENGINEER for MITRE Corporation developing military programs 2005 - 2019

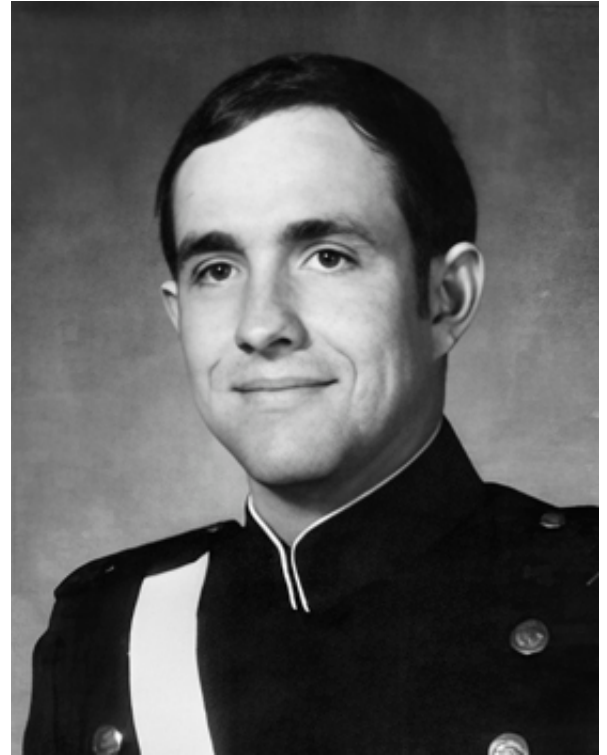
HELPED INVENT the network that ultimately evolved into what we now know as the Internet, GPS, Drones, Stealth Technology, Optic Fiber, and more

Life & Legacy

Article written by Maj.Gen. Perry Lamy (Retired) & Col. Kevin Burns (Retired)

Tom graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1975 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering, and then Michigan State University where he graduated in 1976 with a Master of Science Degree in Metallurgy. Tom then traveled to Columbus AFB, MS where he completed Undergraduate Pilot Training and received his coveted USAF Pilot wings in 1977. He operationally flew T-33 and F-106s for Air Defense Command at Griffiss AFB, NY. It was during this time that he acquired his call sign, "Torch," successfully performing a harrowing engine out landing from 15,000 feet in an F-106B, with the Brigadier General commander of the 21st NORAD Region and the 21st Air Division on-board, no less.

From July 1983 to June 1984, he attended the world's premier Test Pilot School at Edwards AFB, CA where he graduated as a member of Class 83B. He was then assigned to the Test Operations Squadron at Edwards AFB. Additionally, he accomplished A-10 Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS) testing, where he helped develop a mission sensitive algorithm using radar altimeter inputs to compute and announce safe aircraft ground recovery altitudes.



This GPWS testing was one of the first of its kind accomplished on any USAF operational fighter/attack platform. As A-10 testing wound down, Tom was soon "promoted" to the F-16 Combined Test Force. His test efforts included F-16 LANTIRN Pod performance and turbulence testing, F-16C/D engine bay loads testing, and F-16 C/D PW-F100-220 propulsion testing.

He was also assigned as project test pilot for the Israeli "Peace Marble III" program. In Tom's words, *the most memorable and treasured highlight of his aviation career was delivering a brand-new production Peach Marble III jet to Israel.* He left the [then] General Dynamics plant at Fort Worth, TX, flew eight hours to the Azores with four wingmen and a tanker, and continued across the Med to Israeli airspace where the flight was intercepted by Israeli F-16 escorts who provided navigation and protection all the way to a 450-knot initial to landing.

In 1987, Tom attended the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, VA and then served a one-year tour on the CJ-5 staff of the Combined Forces Command, Seoul, South Korea. In 1989, he was selected as program director and project test pilot for the F-117 Combined Test Force where he worked tirelessly on a variety of national importance classified test programs. Tom's work was instrumental in maturing the capabilities essential to the "black jet's" operational unveiling. Tom then attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in 1995 and completed his 26-year Air Force career in Washington, DC with assignments at the National Reconnaissance Office and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. He retired from Active Duty on 30 September 2001. Following military retirement, he was a Senior Principal Engineer at The MITRE Corporation and was involved in myriad military R&D programs.



But Tom's greatest accomplishments were not in his professional career, but in the fierce dedication he provided to his wife, Patty, and their five children in their often-challenging collective life journey. He always knew what was most important. As Patty recounted after his passing, "Tom was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia with Parkinson's in December 2020. All dementias are miserable, but for those familiar with Lewy Body, it normally brings a horrific death. Our prayers were answered when Tom passed peacefully from Life to LIFE. I

cherish the closeness I shared with Tom throughout this difficult journey. Being at Tom's side during his last few hours was sweetly sacred. In the face of this dreadful disease, Tom was completely serene. Per John 14:6, each one of us is invited to have peace that goes beyond all understanding through Jesus as Lord and Savior. Our free will is respected, so choose wisely!"

“United States Air Force Hymn”

*Lord, guard and guide the men who fly
Through the great spaces of the sky;
Be with them traversing the air
In dark'ning storms or sunshine fair.*

*Thou who dost keep with tender might
The balanced birds in all their flight,
Thou of the tempered winds, be near,
That, having thee, they know no fear.*

*Control their minds with instinct fit
What time, adventuring, they quit
The firm security of land;
Grant steadfast eye and skillful hand.*

*Aloft in solitudes of space,
Uphold them with Thy saving grace.
O God, protect the men who fly
Through lonely ways beneath the sky.*

Amen.

Itinerary of Events

June 27th, 2026 - June 29th, 2026

June 27, 8:00 PM

Nighttime Tour of Our Nation's Monuments

June 28, 12:00 NOON

Mass at The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

400 Michigan Ave NE, Washington, DC 20017

June 28, 1:30 PM

Lunch @ Museum of the Bible

Tour Available

400 4th St SW Washington, DC 20024

June 29, 10:15 AM

Graveside burial with full military funeral honors

Arlington National Cemetery

1 Memorial Ave, Fort Meyer, Virginia

** Drive to the main gate. A guard will direct you to the queuing lane marked DARNER for parking.*

***NOTE:** Anyone over the age of 18 entering the cemetery, both driver and passengers, must present a REAL ID compliant identification.*

June 29, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Celebration of Life Banquet

Embassy Suites, Crystal City

1393 S Eads St Arlington, VA 22202

** Questions or Updates TEXT Patty Darner @ 703-595-7532 **