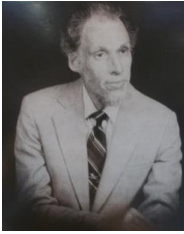


Thomas G. Smoak
Richmond, Virginia



Inducted in 1992, Thomas G. Smoak started flying after he joined the ROTC at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. After graduating from VPI, he joined the United States Air Force and became a co-pilot on B-47, the Strategic Air Command's six-jet engine bomber. In March 1960, his B-47 exploded over Little Rock, Arkansas. He was the sole survivor from this midair breakup. In 1962, he left the USAF to become a missionary pilot for the Jungle Aviation and Radio Service. For more than 20-years he flew in and out of dozens of jungle airstrips serving the remote areas of Colombia.