



Col. James Troy Johnson, USAF retired, passed away in New Hanover Regional Medical Center, Wilmington, NC on March 6, 2017 at the age of 96.

Col. Johnson, also known as "JT", was preceded in death by his wife Mattie Belle Johnson, who passed away in May, 2016.

Born March 20, 1920 in Bladen County, North Carolina, JT was the youngest of five brothers and one sister. His father was a preacher, farmer, logger, and businessman.

In his teens, JT worked on the railroad and began to pursue his passion for flying.

After pilot training in Norfolk, VA, he entered WWII with the 316<sup>th</sup> Hells Belles fighter squadron, flying P-40s in North Africa. He saw action in Italy and flew P-47s in France and Germany until the end of the war. After the war, JT continued his military career in the USAF until 1968.

JT also served as System Manager (1965-67) for the F-105 Thunderchief aircraft flying in Vietnam. For his leadership in critical system testing and modification, JT was honored with charter membership #4 in the Wild Weasel Society.

His service awards include: Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Three Purple Hearts, Air Medal (with ten clusters), French Croix de Guerre (Ordre de la Palme), and a Ballistic Missile Badge.

After he left the Air Force, JT made an unsuccessful bid for political office in North Carolina and then managed Bradley Creek Marina in Wilmington for 10 years. He retired to Hampstead, where he and Mattie Belle organized and hosted squadron reunions for more than 20 years.

JT is survived by his two sons, James Troy Johnson, Jr. and Daniel Corley Johnson.

Services will be held at 11:00 am Monday, March 20, 2017 at Andrews Mortuary Hampstead Chapel, 17730 Highway 17 North, Hampstead, NC. Entombment will follow in Sea Lawn Memorial Park Mausoleum with military honors.

Flowers may be sent directly to Andrews Mortuary.