



Joseph Dean Black, Rear Admiral, USN

Date of Designation: 17 April 1933 NA # 3993

Dates of Active Duty: 4 June 1931 - 1 February 1965

Combat Tours:

WW II: Commander, Air Group 30. ASW Patrols, Gilbert Islands Invasion (Makin), and strikes against Nauru. Feb. 1943 - Jan. 1944.

WW II: XO, USS *Ommaney Bay* (CVE-79), Jan. 1945. Ship was lost to enemy air attacks in Sulu Sea, Philippines.

Aviation Commands:

Commander, Air Group THIRTY, Mar. 1943 - Dec. 1943
 CO, USS *Currituck* (AV-7), May 1953 - Mar. 1954
 CO, USS *Hancock* (CVA-19), Dec. 1955 - Jan. 1957
 Commander Carrier Division 17, Sep. 1959 - Aug. 1960

Combat Awards:

Silver Star Medal
 Air Medal with Gold Star in lieu of Second Air Medal
 Navy Commendation Medal

Duty Assignment Chronology

7/31-7/31 NAS, Hampton Roads, VA. (Student).
 4/32 USS Maryland (BB-46).
 4/32-5/33 NAS Pensacola, FL. (Student).
 5/33-6/35 Fighter Squadron SIX, USS Saratoga
 5/36 USS Texas (BB-35).
 5/36-5/38 Patrol Squadron THREE (PBV).
 5/38-10/41 XO, Fighter Squadron TWO, USS Lexington.
 10/41-4/42 NAS Corpus Christi, TX.
 4/42-3/43 CO, Carrier Pilots Training School, NAAS, Kingsville, Texas.
 3/43-12/43 Commander, Air Group THIRTY, USS Monterey. Attacks on Gilbert Islands.

12/43-2/44 Receiving Station, Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, WA. (CFO USS Ommaney Bay (CVE-79).
 3/44-2/45 XO, USS Ommaney Bay (CVE-79). Linguyan Gulf battles. Ship sunk after a Kamikaze hit off Mindoro.
 2/45-3/45 Bureau of Naval Personnel, Wash., D. C.
 3/45-1/46 Staff, Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet (Head of Officer Personnel Section).
 1/46-8/48 XO, NAS, Quonset Point, RI.
 8/48-1/49 Armed Forces Staff College (Student).
 1/49-6/50 XO, USS Coral Sea (CVA-43).
 6/50-6/51 Naval War College (Student).
 6/51-5/53 Office of Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff (Member, Joint Strategic Plans Group, Chairman Joint Advanced Study Committee)
 5/53-3/54 CO, USS Currituck (AV-7).
 3/54-12/55 Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet (Asst. Chief of Staff for Personnel).
 12/55-1/57 CO, USS Hancock (CVA-19).
 1/57-11/58 Office of CNO, Assistant Aviation Warfare Requirements (OP-55) and Director, Air Warfare Division.
 11/58-9/59 Commander Carrier Division FOUR (Chief of Staff and Aide).
 9/59-8/60 Commander, Carrier Division 17, USS Yorktown.
 8/60-8/63 Headquarters, Field Command, Defense Atomic Support Agency, Sandia Base, Albuquerque, NM. (Deputy Commander)
 8/63-1/65 Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Norway.
 2/1/65 Retired from active duty.

Summary of Significant Career Events

Joseph Dean Black was born in Macomb, Illinois, on January 8, 1909, son of I. W. and Jennie E. Black. He attended Western Academy in Macomb, and Marion Institute, Marion, Alabama, before his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, from the Fourteenth District of Illinois in 1927. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 4, 1931, he subsequently advanced in rank to that of Rear Admiral, to date from November 1, 1959.

After graduation, he Joined the USS Maryland on July 8, 1931, and had communications duty as a junior officer on board that battleship until May 1932. The next year he was a student (flight training) at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, where he was designated Naval Aviator on April 17, 1933. On June 1 that year he reported to the USS Saratoga, Flagship of Aircraft, Battle Force, as Assistant Gunnery Officer of Fighting Squadron SIX. He received commendatory letters from the Secretary of the Navy and the Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet, for attainment of the highest gunnery score by a fighter plane pilot in the U. S. Navy for the years 1933-1934.

Detached from the Saratoga on June 1, 1935, he served for a year as Gunnery Officer of the Aviation Unit on board the USS Texas, Observation Squadron ONE. From June 1936 until June 1938 he was Gunnery Officer of Patrol Squadron THREE of aircraft squadrons based on Coco Solo, Canal Zone, and during that tour of duty he received Letters of Commendation for the longest formation flight (thus far) from San Diego to Coco Solo in the Spring of 1937 (made by patrol Squadron THREE). These letters were from the Head of the Naval Affairs Committee in Congress, the Secretary of the Navy, Commander Aircraft, Scouting Force, and Commander Patrol Wing THREE.

He next served as Flight Officer and Executive Officer of Fighting Squadron TWO, based on the USS Lexington, and on September 1, 1941, he reported to the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas, for duty. There he commanded a Dive Bombing Training Squadron during the early months of World War II until February 1943. He subsequently fitted out and commanded Air Group THIRTY, until January 1944. During that period he flew two hundred and fifty-four hours, ten of which were on anti-submarine patrols, made twenty-two carrier landings and eighteen catapult shots. He participated in the Gilbert Islands Invasion (Makin) and the second Carrier Strike against Nauru Island, and was twice awarded the Air Medal for "meritorious achievement" while completing ten missions.

Returning to the United States, he assisted in fitting out the USS Ommaney Bay at Vancouver, Washington, and served as Executive Officer of that carrier escort vessel from her commissioning, February 11, 1944, until she was lost as the result of an enemy air attack on January 4, 1945, in the Sulu Sea, Philippine Islands. "For distinguishing himself conspicuously by gallantly and intrepidity in action in the North Sulu Sea while serving as Executive Officer of the USS Ommaney Bay on January 4, 1945...." he was awarded the Silver Star Medal. The citation further states: "When his ship was bombed and severely damaged during an enemy air attack, Commander Black remained on board despite fires, heavy smoke and extreme heat until all personnel had abandoned ship and, supervising the evacuation of the injured and wounded by a floatable means and directing the uninjured to care for the wounded in the water, contributed materially to saving the lives of many of the wounded..."

From February 1945 until February 1946 he served as Assistant Personnel Officer on the Staff of Commander Air Force) Pacific, then reported for a tour of shore duty as Executive Officer of the Naval Air Station, Quonset Point, Rhode Island. He attended the Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia, from August 1948 until January 1949, and on February 1, 1949, joined the USS Coral Sea (CVA-43) as Executive Officer. When detached on July 15, 1950, he was ordered to the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, for the senior course (Strategy and Tactics). A month after graduation on June 1, 1951, he became Chairman of the Joint Advanced Study Group, Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C., serving in that capacity until June 1, 1953.

Assuming command of the USS Currituck (AV-7) on June 15, 1953, he remained in that command until May 1, 1954, and during the next eighteen months he served as Assistant Chief of Staff for Personnel to Commander Air Force, Pacific. From January 8, 1956 until January 12, 1957, he commanded the USS Hancock (CVA-19), and in February 1957 was assigned to the Navy Department Washington, D. C., for duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. There he served first as Assistant Director, Air Warfare Division, and on March 13, 1958, he became the Director of that Division. In November 1958 he joined the Staff of Commander Carrier Division FOUR as Chief of Staff and Aide, and from August 1959 to August 1960 was Commander Carrier Division SEVENTEEN.

In September he became Deputy Commander, Field Command, Defense Atomic Support Agency, Sandia Base, Albuquerque, New Mexico and in August 1963 reported as Chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, Norway, with headquarters in Oslo. He served as such until relieved of active duty pending his retirement, effective February 1, 1965. "For exceptionally meritorious conduct...from August 1963 to January 1965 as Chief, Military Assistance Advisory Group) Norway..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit. The citation further states in part: "During this period, Rear Admiral Black exercised marked professional competence, sound leadership, and skilled diplomacy in performing varied and complex duties of great importance to the United States. Under his superior guidance, his staff effectively executed all aspects of the United States Military Assistance Program to the enhancement of the posture of the military forces of Norway and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In addition to the Silver Star Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Air Medal with Gold Star in lieu of the Second Air Medal, Rear Admiral Black has the Navy Commendation Ribbon and the following campaign and service medals: American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; National Defense Service Medal, and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon.

Admiral Black died 23 June 1997 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. His first wife Jane died in 1981 and his second wife Emily died in 1997. He is survived by a daughter Cheron Black Hargrave of Annapolis, six grand children and nine great grandchildren.