



RADM Robert S. Owens, USN (Ret.)

"Rupe"

Date of Designation: 10 May 1957 NA#: T-6081

Dates of Active Duty: 17 Nov 1955 – 01 Dec 1985

Total Flight Hours: 5,054

Carrier Landings: Fixed Wing 679

Approximate Flight Hours: Jet: 4,560; Prop: 492;
Helo: 2; VF/VA: 4,560

Combat Tours:

- VietNam: 6/15-11/09/66 VA-65/CVW-15/USS *Constellation* (A6A) - 91 combat flights SVN, NVN,
- VietNam: 6/15-6/29/67 VA-65/CVW-17/USS *Forrestal* (A6A) - 4 combat flights NVN
- VietNam: 1/29/68-2/03/68 VA-65/VMA-242/ MCAS DaNang/VietNam (A6A). Ferry. Return A6 took a rocket in the canopy and burned.
- VietNam: 3/24/71-5/18/71 VA-145/CVW-2/USS *Ranger* (A6A, A6B, A6C, KA-6D) - 32 combat flights SVN, Laos, NVN, Cambodia
- VietNam: 11/30/72-5/13/73 VA-145/CVW-2/USS *Ranger* (A6A, A6B, A6C, KA-6) - 40 combat flights NVN, SVN, Laos

Total combat missions - 167

Aviation Commands:

- 2/19/72-6/1/73 VA-145
- 12/12/75-11/1/76 VA-128
- 5/6/78-8/31/79 AFS-4
- 2/17/81-8/21/82 CVA-41
- 10/1/84-8/6/85 CCG-2

Combat Awards:

- DFC – 6 Awards
- Bronze Star Medal
- Air Medal – 2 Awards and 16 Strike Flight Numerals



Combat Awards continued:

- Navy Commendation Medal w Combat "V" - 3 Awards
- Navy "E" Ribbon – 4 Awards (2 for Combat)
- Navy Unit Citation
- Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation – 4 Awards

Chronological List of Duty Stations

- 11/55–9/57 CNATRA/ Pensacola, Memphis/Training Command (T-34, T-28, SNJ, TV-2, and F9F-2).
- 10/87–3/59 USNAVCIC SCHOOL, NAS Glynco/AIC Instructor, VF Pilot (F2H-2, 3, 4 and AD-5N).
- 4/59–3/62 VA-66, NAS Oceana and USS *Intrepid*/ 2 Med Deployments/Weapons Training, Ordnance, Safety, LSO, Airframes(A4D-2, -2N)
- 4/62–12/62 VA-43, NAS Oceana/LSO, Airframes, Av. Equip (A4D-2, -2N).
- 1/63–3/65 VA-42, NAS Oceana/Training Officer, LSO (A-6A, AD-6, T-28).
- 4/65–3/68 VA-65, NAS Oceana, USS *Constellation* and USS *Forrestal*/2 WestPac Combat Deployments/LSO, Flight Officer, Operations. Visited VMA-242 in DaNang for Tet '68 (A-6A). Squadron awarded Battle "E" 1966.
- 4/68–12/68 VA-42, NAS Oceana/LSO, Weapons Training (A-6A).
- 1/69–8/70 NAVPGSCHOOL, BS Program (TV-2, A-6A, S-2).
- 9/70–1/71 NWC China Lake/ AAW Advisor/ (A-6A).
- 2/71–3/73 VA-128 RTS, NAS Whidbey Island, WA/ Under Instruction (A-6A).
- 4/71–6/73 VA-145, NAS Whidbey Island and USS *Ranger*/ XO and CO (A-6A, A-6B, A-6C, KA-6D). Two WestPac combat deployments. Squadron awarded Battle "E", 1973.

- Continued -

Chronological List of Duty Stations continued

7/73–7/74 Air War College, Maxwell AF/ Under Instruction (A-6A). MBA Degree.

8/74–11/75 OPNAV, OP-506F1, Air-to Ground Guided Weapons Coordinator (A-6A).

12/75–11/76 VA-128, NAS Whidbey Island/CO, VA-128 (A-6A, A-6E).

12/76- 2/78 USS *Coral Sea*/XO (A-6E).

3/78–9/79 USS *White Plains*, Yokosuka, Japan, CO, (A-6E, H-46).

10/79–5/80 COMNAVAIRPAC, San Diego/Ship's Training Officer (A-6E)

6/80–1/81 SOSMRC, Idaho Falls /Under Instruction

2/81–9/82 USS *Midway*, Yokosuka, Japan - CO (A-6E)

10/82–9/84 USCINCLANT/CINCLANTFLT, NAS Norfolk /DCOS Operations, Command and Control (A-6E).

10/84-9/85 Commander Carrier Group TWO, NAS Norfolk, USS *Coral Sea*, USS *Americal* Commander (A-6E).

10/85-11/85 CINCLANTFLT, NAS Norfolk.

following ditching and then accomplished an open-ocean recovery of the helo for return to owners. Ship's nominee for CNO Sailor-of-the Year award selected in 1981; Ship's nominee selected for CinCPacFleet's Sailor-of-the –Year, 1982.

Summary of Significant Career Events

1. Entered NAVCAD training in November 1955
2. Received an individual Battle E for High Altitude Dive delivery while a student in the A-4 RAG.
3. First (maybe only) A4 pilot to write SecNav requesting assignment to an A6 squadron.
4. First A6 Pilot to recover aboard an aircraft carrier with the crew member's personal parachute deployed outside the aircraft.
5. As a wingman, successfully employed a new A6 night coordinated attack tactic to destroy NVN's Uong Bi Thermal Power Plant in a three-plane simultaneous strike.
6. Led the first Navy Laser Guided Bomb Alpha Strike employing the Navy PAVEKNIFE airborne Laser Designator on January 16, 1973 and destroyed 14 bridges in a single mission.
7. As CO, USS *White Plains* (AFS-4), received consecutive Golden Anchor retention awards, 1978 and 1979. COMNAVSURFPAC selected ship for Battle "E" award 1978.
8. USS *Midway* (CV-41) earned consecutive Golden Anchor awards, 1981 and 1982; earned the Commander, Naval Air Pacific Fleet Aircraft Carrier Battle "E" award, 1981; Ship awarded the SecNav Aircraft Carrier's Captain Edward F. Ney Memorial Award for Outstanding Food Service, 1981. *Midway* rescued 26 "PUMA" civilian helicopter passengers and crew