



Robert E. Galer, BGEN, USMC (Ret.)
"Bob"

Date of Designation: 6 April 1937

Dates of Active Duty: 1 June 1935 - 1 July 1957.

Total Flight Hours: 6,000* (* is estimated)

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 100*

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 500 Prop: 5,500 VF/VA: 3,000*

VR/VP: 1,000* Other: 1,000*

Combat Tours:

WW II: Dec.7, 1941, Pearl Harbor; June 1-10 Kawaii (Midway); VMF-224, Aug. 1942 - Nov. 1942, Guadalcanal - 50 combat missions.

Jan 1945 to May 1945, Iwo Jima, Philippines and Okinawa (D-Day to approximately D+20 in each place), attached to 10th U.S. Army.

Korea: CO, MAG-12, May 24 - Aug. 5, 1952, approximately 20 combat missions.

Aviation Commands:

CO, VMP-224, May 1942 - Nov. 1942.

Commandant of Cadets, Corpus Christi, Jun. 45 - May 47.

CO, MAG-12, K-6 Korea, 1952.

Combat Awards:

Congressional Medal of Honor

Legion of Merit with Combat "V"

Distinguished Flying Cross with one Gold Star

Distinguished Flying Cross (British Award)

Air Medal with 4 Gold Stars

Purple Heart



Duty Assignment Chronology

6/35-6/37 Flight Training (NAS Sandpoint, Seattle and NAS Pensacola). Aviation Cadet 2nd Lt. in 1936.

12/36-6/36 VMF-2, Quantico, VA.

6/37-6/38 Basic School, Philadelphia (Aircraft Factory).

6/38-5/40 VI VMS-III, St. Thomas, VI.

5/40-1/41 Coronado, CA.

1/41-8/42 VMF-211, Ewa, Hawaii and 1st CO, VMF-224, March 1942.

8/42-11/42 CO, VMF-224, Guadalcanal .

12/42-4/43 Operations Officer-Air, FMFPAC, NAS San Diego, CA.

4/43-8/43 Army Command and Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas.

9/43-1/45 Ewa, Hawaii, Staff.

2/45-3/45 LFASCU D-Day , Iwo Jima, 10th Army.

3/45-4/45 LFASCU D-Day, Philippine Islands, 10th Army.

4/45-6/45 LFASCU D-Day, Okinawa, 10th Army.

6/45-6/47 Commandant of Cadets, NAS Corpus Christi, TX.

1947 Command and Staff School, Norfolk, VA.

1948 MAG Executive Officer, Cherry Point, NC.

6/49 Special Service Officer, Cherry Point, NC.

1959 Plans Officer, COMNAVAIRPAC, San Diego, CA.

1951 Staff- Korea, K-3.

1952 CO, MAG-12, Korea K-6.

1953 Wing Operations Officer, MCAS El Toro, CA.

1954 U. S. Air Force Command and Staff School, Montgomery, AL.

1955-57 Director of Guided Missiles, BuAir, Washington, D. C.

1957 Retired from active duty.

Summary of Significant Career Events

(1) Congressional Medal of Honor.

- Continued -

Summary of Significant Career Events continued

(2) Picture at upper left - Poor "Barbara Jane". This is a picture taken at Guadalcanal in September, 1942, of my favorite airplane, "Barbara Jane." A week after this picture was taken, we got in a big fight with about 20 Jap fighters plus 20 Jap bombers. "Barbara Jane" and I shot down 2 Jap planes before we were shot down. As a result, we landed in the water near Florida Island, about 25 miles from our landing field at Guadalcanal. "Barbara" immediately began to sink (she could not swim) and I had to swim off and leave poor "Barbara Jane." As I reached the shore, I could see three men with rifles heading my way. I crossed the beach and got behind a log and tried to dry off my weapon.

When the three natives reached me, I said, "Drop your weapons." They laughed and said, "Me friendly, me Christian", but did not drop their weapons. Three times I ordered, then decided they were Christians.

So having captured (?) them, I let them take me back to their village. They actually were part of the "Australian Coast Watcher Team". That afternoon by canoe (native boat with paddles) they took me back to the nearest place with Marines. The next morning, my group sent over an Amphibian to pick me up.

Poor "Barbara Jane" still rests on the ocean floor.

(3) Lost an F3F requalifying on a carrier off San Diego in 1939. A submarine found it and the Navy brought it up a couple of months later. My wife Sharon and I met it at the dock in San Diego. The museum in San Diego restored it and it is now in the Pensacola museum.

(4) My oldest son, U. S. Air Force retired fighter pilot says, and I quote, "If you count the F3F, and you were shot down four times, that makes you an Enemy Fighter Ace - you lost five airplanes."