



William D. Houser, Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.)
 “Bill”

Date of Designation: 6 March 1946

Dates of Active Duty: 19 December 1941 - 1 May 1976

Total Flight Hours: 4,350 (approx.)

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 278

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 1,300 Prop: 3,000 Helo: 25 (demo flights) VF/
 VA: 3,500 (approx) Other: 25

Combat Tours:

WW II: Deck Officer in USS *Nashville* (CL-43) for three years, principally in the Pacific.
 Korea: CO, VF-44 flying F4U Corsairs from USS *Boxer* and *Lake Champlain*.
 Vietnam: CO, USS *Constellation* (CVA-64) in combat deployment in 1966 in the Tonkin Gulf.

Aviation Commands:

CO, VF 44, Nov. 1952 - Jan. 1954
 CO, VF-124, Sep. 1959 - Aug. 1960
 CO, USS *Constellation* (CVA-64), Jan. 1966 - Dec 1966 (selected for RAdm in middle of tour)
 COMCARDIV TWO, Jun. 1970 - Jul. 1972

Combat Awards:

Bronze Star with Combat “V”
 2 Air Medals (Korea)
 4 Legion of Merit (non-combat)
 2 Distinguished Service Medals (non-combat)



* Betty Lou passed away on May 16, 1997.

Duty Assignment Chronology

1/42-1/45 Shipboard officer aboard cruiser Nashville with duties in Gunnery and CIC departments. Participated in engagements from the Aleutians to the South Pacific and westward to the Philippines.
 2/45-8/46 Navy flight and operational training.
 9/46-6/48 Operations Officer and then XO of VF-58, (redesignated VF-11L) flying F6F's and F8F's, operating from CVL. Flew FD-1 (Later FH-1) Phantom I, the Navy's first jet, for two months before leaving squadron.
 7/48-8/51 Duty in OpNav with joint USN/USAF air target intelligence.
 9/51-1/54 XO and the CO of VF-44 with deployments to the Mediterranean and Korea, flying F4U-4's.
 2/54-2/56 Duty in OpNav.
 3/56-5/56 Fleet All Weather Training Unit jet instrument course in TV-1 and all weather jet intercept course in F-3D.
 6/56-7/58 Air Development Squadron 3 (VX-3). Engineering, Operations and Executive Officer. Developed tactics for new jet aircraft coming into the fleet: F3H, F8U, F4D, F11F and FJ3. Established and conducted Fleet Introduction Programs for the new aircraft for fleet squadrons. My speciality was in the F4D developing night and all weather tactics using rocket pods. Also had personal participation in the first fleet firings of the new Sidewinder missiles against live targets (KDU missiles) flying FJ3 and F4D aircraft. I shot down 3 or 4 during this period. Captain Bob Dosé, another Golden Eagle and then the squadron commander of VX-3, personally established the Sidewinder project, accelerating the introduction and acceptance significantly. Also, conducted the mirror landing project.

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Duty Assignment Chronology (continued)

8/58-6/59 Naval War College, Senior Course.

7/59-8/60 CO, VF 124, the fleet replacement squadron for the F8U Crusader and instrument training squadron for the Pacific Fleet. Had 40 F8U's and 32 F9F-8T's and 750 men.

9/60-2/62 Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Member of the Atomic Energy and Guided Missiles Branch.

2/62-8/63 Military Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

9/63-12/63 Advanced Management Program.

1/64-1/65 CO, USS *Mauna Loa* (AE-8).

1/65-10/65 Member of the Net Evaluation Sub-Committee Staff of the National Security Council.

1/66-12/66 CO, USS *Constellation* (CVA 64) with a combat deployment to the Tonkin Gulf. A tough year!

1/67-10/68 Director, Strategic Plans Division, Joint Staff, responsible for the short range and long range war plans for the JCS.

11/68-6/70 Director of the Aviation Plans and Requirements Division of OP-05, OPNAV. Responsible for developing the requirements, plans and budgets for all of naval aviation. New aircraft started: F-14, S-3, EA-6B, H-53 and others.

6/70-7/72 Commander, Carrier Division TWO, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. Had two major deployments to European waters and many lesser ones. Sent on an emergency sortie to the Mediterranean for the Jordanian crisis in 1970. Was embarked Flag Officer in 5 of the 6 Atlantic Fleet carriers with major deployments on *Kennedy* and *Independence*.

8/72-5/76 Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (OP-05). Principal deputy for all aviation matters. Established requirements and policies for aircraft, pilots, training, weapons, reserves, carriers and other aviation ships, and aviation bases. Aircraft started: A-6E, MH-53, T-2B and F-18. Major accomplishment and most difficult: saving the F-14 from its many enemies and detractors in the Congress, Office of the Secretary of Defense and within various offices of the Navy.

6/76 Retired status. Have served on various committees for the Navy and have been instrumental in getting some element of justice for Tailhook victims.

Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) All tours were good but were characterized by different things:

Best flying - VX-3 with its smorgasbord of new aircraft and interesting projects.

Most satisfying

- Leading VF-44 in combat in Korea. We were there through the closing days when the fighting heated up as each side fought to get the most advantageous territory for defenses.
- Saving the F-14 from cancellation. (See OP-05 above.)

Toughest but most rewarding - Commanding USS *Constellation* during the Vietnam War. Going without sleep for a year. Year of superlatives: tiredest, happiest, saddest, proudest, etc. Under direct orders from ComNavAirPac, had the first successful night and all weather combat cruise for the A-6. It was going to be discontinued by OSD if it served just as a big A-4. It had to be proven to be worth the big investment and large price differential between it and the A-4. We developed the combat operating procedures for it to prove its merit and thus saved it from cancellation.

Most pleasant - ComCarDiv. Dueled with the Russian Navy and Air Force and bested them on many occasions. Evaded their snoopers and sea going followers. Developed procedures for continuous single carrier operations. Demonstrated for 96 hours but could have maintained for much longer periods.