



James S. Russell, Admiral, USN

Date of Designation: May 1929 NA # 3495

Dates of Active Duty: 3 June 1926 - 1 April 1965

Duty Assignment Chronology

James Sargent Russell was born in Tacoma, Washington, graduated from High School there, and first went to sea in 1918 as a seaman in the Merchant Marine when the Navy would not accept his enlistment for World War I because he was too young.

He entered the Naval Academy in 1922. Upon graduation in 1926 he reported aboard the battleship *West Virginia* where he served until entering flight training at Pensacola. He was designated a Naval Aviator in 1929 and has been flying naval aircraft regularly ever since. There followed normal tours of aviation duty both aboard ship and ashore. The highlight during this period was his earning the degree of Master of Science in Aeronautical Engineering at the California Institute of Technology while in postgraduate training.

The beginning of World War II found Lieutenant Commander Russell in command of Patrol Squadron 42. During 1942, he led VP-42 in action against Japanese forces in the Aleutian Islands Campaign. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal for heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flights for leading his squadron against the enemy in the face of enemy opposition and in extremely hazardous weather conditions. Later, Commander Russell was awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious service in establishing advanced bases in the area and operating his squadron from them. His squadron was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation for its part in the Aleutian Campaign.

He returned to Washington for duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and the Bureau of Aeronautics. Captain Russell then returned to the Pacific area as Chief of Staff to Commander Carrier Division TWO, operating as a Task Group with the famed Task Forces 38 and 58. For his outstanding planning and coordination of the Striking Group in action against the Japanese he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Legion of Merit.

Captain Russell then commanded the attack carrier USS *Coral Sea* which functioned as a unit of the powerful SIXTH Fleet in the Mediterranean. Following this duty he again served in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral in 1953. Next he commanded, in succession an Anti-Submarine Carrier Division and an Attack Carrier Division in the far Western Pacific. In 1955 he assumed the duties of Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics. He was awarded the Collier Trophy for 1956, sharing that award with Mr. C. J. McCarthy of Chance Vought Aircraft, for the development of the supersonic CRUSADER Navy Fighter, the first ship based fighter aircraft to fly faster than 1000 miles per hour, the outstanding contribution to aviation in that year. He next served as Deputy Commander in Chief of the Atlantic Fleet With the rank of Vice Admiral. He reported as Vice Chief of Naval Operations on July 21, 1958, with the four star rank of Admiral and for "exceptionally meritorious service....(in that capacity) from July 1958 to November 1961.." he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

On January 2, 1962, he became Commander in Chief Allied Forces, Southern Europe and served as such until relieved of active duty pending his retirement, effective April 1, 1965. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Distinguished Service Medal for his "exceptionally meritorious service ..." during the period January 1962 to January 1965.

Admiral Russell was employed by the Boeing Company as a part time consultant and his primary consultation was within the Aerospace Group in Seattle, Washington. He also consulted to the Boeing Company Commercial Airplane Division and VERTOL Division. He traveled throughout the United States on these consultation tours. He was also very active in the Seattle and Tacoma Councils of the Navy League. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Alaska Airlines, Incorporated and a member of the Board of Directors of Airtronics, Incorporated.

Since his retirement he served on the Puget Sound Oceanographic Study Committee and was selected as Chairman of the Zoning Commission of Tacoma's Industrial Airport. During the periods August to October 19, 1967 and August to October 1968 he was on active duty as Senior Member of the Aircraft Carrier Combat Operations Safety Review Panel, Navy Department, and the second period as Head of a Special Study Group in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, D. C.

Admiral Russell lost his first wife, Dorothy, to cancer in 1965. He later was married to the former Miss Geraldine Haus, of Seattle, Washington. Admiral Russell had two sons, Donald Johnson Russell and Kenneth McDonald Russell.

PROMOTIONS:

Appointed Midshipman, 20 June 1922
 Commissioned Ensign, USN, 3 June 1926
 Designated Naval Aviator #3495 in May 1929
 Lieutenant (junior grade), USN, 3 June 1929
 Lieutenant, USN, 12 June 1936
 Lieutenant Commander, USN, 26 June 1940
 Commander, USN, 17 September 1942
 Captain, USN, 27 April 1944
 Rear Admiral, USN, 1 July 1953
 Vice Admiral, USN, 1 July 1957
 Admiral, USN, 21 July 1958
 Transferred to the Retired List, 1 April 1965

MEDALS AND DECORATIONS:

Distinguished Service Medal
 Gold Star in lieu of the Second Distinguished Service Medal
 Legion of Merit with Combat "V"
 Gold Star in lieu of 2nd Legion of Merit with Combat "V"
 Gold Star in lieu of the Third Legion of Merit
 Distinguished Flying Cross
 Air Medal
 Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon (Patrol Squadron 42)
 American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp
 Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with four stars
 American Campaign Medal
 World War II Victory Medal

Chronological Transcript of Naval Service

7/26-7/28 USS *West Virginia*.
 8/28-5/29 NAS Pensacola, FL. (Flight training).
 7/29-11/31 USS *West Virginia* (Air Unit).
 12/31-6/32 Patrol Squadron ONE-B (Squadron Gunnery Officer).
 6/32-6/33 Postgraduate School, Annapolis MD. (Student, general line).
 6/33-6/34 Postgraduate School, Annapolis, MD. (Student, aeronautical engineering).
 6/34-6/35 California Institute of Technology, Pasadena (student, aeronautical engineering).
 6/35-6/36 Bombing Squadron FIVE-B (Squadron Eng. Officer).
 6/36-6/37 Fitting out duty in USS *Yorktown*.
 6/37-6/39 USS *Yorktown* (W&D, Air Dept.).
 6/39-6/41 Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Dept. (Carriers).
 7/41-10/42 Patrol Squadron 42 (Commanding Officer).
 11/42-12/42 Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept. (Air Bases).
 1/43-6/44 Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Dept. (Director, Military Requirements Division).
 8/44-4/45 Staff, Commander Carrier Division 2 (Chief of Staff).
 5/45-8/45 Staff, Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet

9/45-3/46 Air Technical Intelligence, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, Japan.
 Naval Analysis Division, U. S. Strategic Bombing Survey (Pacific) (Member).
 4/46-5/47 USS *Bairoko* (Commanding Officer).
 6/47-1/48 Atomic Energy Commission, Wash., D. C. (Head, Weapons Branch).
 2/48-6/48 Commander Task Group 7.1 (USS *Albemarle*).
 7/48-1/51 Atomic Energy Commission, Wash., D. C. (Deputy Director Military Application Division).
 2/51-2/52 USS *Coral Sea* (Commanding Officer).
 3/52-7/53 Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept. (Head, Military Requirements & New Developments Branch).
 7/53-4/54 Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept. (Director, Air Warfare Division).
 5/54-10/54 Commander Carrier Division 17.
 11/54-3/55 Commander Carrier Division 5.
 3/55-7/57 Chief, Bureau of Aeronautics Navy Dept.
 8/57-1/58 Deputy Commander in Chief, U. S Atlantic Fleet & Chief of Staff & Aide, Commander in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet.
 8/58- Vice Chief of Naval Operations Navy Department.
 1/62- Commander in Chief Allied Forces, Southern Europe.
 4/1/65 Retired from active duty.
 8/67-10/67 Active duty as Senior Member of the Aircraft Carrier Combat Operations Safety Review Panel, Navy Department.
 8/68-10/68 Active duty as Head of a Special Study Group Office of the Secretary of Defense, Washington, D.C.