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### **Marshall U. Beebe, Captain, USN**

(Naval Aviator Number 5534)

Marshall Ulrich Beebe was born in Anaheim, California, on August 6, 1913, son of Marshall E. and Anna M. (Ulrich) Beebe. He attended Occidental College, majoring in mathematics and physics, and graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1935. He played three years of varsity football and basketball, was a Class President and a member of Kappa Sigma Fraternity. His military career started with the California National Guard during his undergraduate years.

In 1936 he sought flight training in the Naval Aviation Cadet Program and participated in the Flight Training Program at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, in 1936 and 1937. He was designated Naval Aviator Number 5001 on December 26, 1937. Commissioned Ensign in the U. S. Naval Reserve on January 1, 1938, he applied for a commission in the U. S. Navy in 1940 and was commissioned Ensign, USN, in March 1941. By subsequent advancement he attained the rank of Captain, to date from July 1, 1956.

His first assignment was with Patrol Squadron One in Honolulu, Hawaii, and he remained on duty with that Squadron in the Pacific until July 1940, including a year in the Philippine Islands. Following a short tour as a flight instructor at the Naval Reserve Air Base, Long Beach, California, he reported to the Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., where he was assigned to the Engineering Division until March 1943. He was next ordered to Composite Squadron 64 as Prospective Commanding Officer, but before the commissioning of that squadron he was promoted to Lieutenant Commander and designated Commander Composite Squadron 39. He commanded that squadron, based on the USS *Liscome Bay*, in the Pacific, from August 1943 until that carrier was sunk during the Tarawa invasion by the Japanese later that year.

He then reported to Commander Fleet Air, West Coast, and in April 1944 was assigned duty as Commanding

Officer of Fighter Squadron 17, a squadron of F6F Hellcats of Air Group 17, based on the USS *Hornet*, in the Pacific. He remained in that command until June 1945, during which period he participated in the first Navy raids on Tokyo in February 1945 and was personally credited with 10 1/2 Japanese planes. He was awarded the Navy Cross for "extraordinary heroism as a Pilot and Flight Loader in Fighting Squadron 17 ...in the vicinity of Southern Kyushu, Japan, on March 18, 1945...where he shot down five planes of twenty-five destroyed by his flight of 16 aircraft... also accounted for two aircraft destroyed on the ground, probably destroyed another in the air and damaged two others..."

From June 1945 until June 1946 he again served in the Navy Department, this time in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, where he was assigned to Military Requirements, Armament Desk, and for a year thereafter he was a student at the General Line School, Newport, Rhode Island. In July 1947 he reported to the USS *Badoeng Strait*, in which he served as Air Officer until March 1948. He then became Aide and Flag Lieutenant on the Staff of Admiral Arthur W. Radford, USN, then Vice Chief of Naval Operations, and later Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet

In July 1950 he reported to Commander Air Force, Pacific as Prospective Commander of Carrier Air Group 5, and from December of that year until May 1952 commanded that Group, based on the USS *Essex*, operating in Korean waters. He was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," for "exceptionally meritorious conduct" in operations in Korea from August 1951 until January 1952. For further meritorious service in the Korean area, he was awarded Gold Stars in lieu of the fourth Distinguished Flying Cross and the tenth and eleventh Air Medals.

Detached in June 1952, he reported to the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, Maryland, for duty as Chief Project Officer, and later served as Assistant Director and as Director of the Flight Test Division.

From December 1954 until February 1956 he served in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air, as Advisor for Military Aircraft Matters. In April 1956 he was assigned duty as U. S. Naval Attache and Naval Attache for Air, Caracas, Venezuela, where he served for two years.

In June 1958 he reported to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, as Head of the Airborne Weapon Systems Branch, on the Staff of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air).

In September 1959 Captain Beebe was assigned duty as Commanding Officer of the USS *Pyro* (AE-24). As Commanding Officer, he put *Pyro* through shakedown in Guantanamo Bay, moved the ship from Service Force, Atlantic, to Service Force, Pacific, took her through Final Acceptance Trials in San Francisco and conducted a normal WestPac AE deployment. Detached in November 1960, he

assumed command of the USS *Bon Homme Richard* (CVA-31) on December 21, 1960. He was relieved on December 16, 1961, and on January 12, 1962 assumed the duties of Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander Carrier Division THREE. He served in that capacity until relieved of all active duty pending his transfer to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy on March 1, 1963.

In addition to the Navy Cross and the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," Captain Beebe has the Distinguished Flying Cross with three Gold Stars; the Air Medal with ten Gold Stars, Purple Heart Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon. His service medals include the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Korean Service Medal; and the United Nations Service Medal.

James Michener, author of the best-seller "Bridges at Toko-Ri," dedicated that book to Captain Beebe.