



### **Richard Halsey Best, Commander, USN (Ret.)**

Date of Designation: 15 November 1935      NA # 4159

Dates of Active Duty: 14 June 1928 - 1 March 1944.

Total Flight Hours: 2,744

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 330

Approximate Flight Hours:

Prop: 2,744    VF: 400    VB: 1,036    VS: 274

#### Combat Tours:

WW II: 2 missions outside Pearl Harbor on 7 Dec. 1941; 2 missions against Kwajalein and Maloelap on 1 Feb. 1942; 1 against Wake Island on 26 Feb. 1942; 1 against Marcus Island on 2 Mar. 1942; 1 against Japanese patrol boats on 15 Apr. 1942, the Doolittle Raid; 2 during battle of Midway against the carrier Akagi in the morning and the Hiryu in the P.M. on 4 June 1942.

#### Aviation Commands:

CO, Bombing Six in Enterprise, 14 Mar. 1942 - 5 Jun. 1942.

#### Combat Awards:

Navy Cross

Distinguished Flying Cross



### **Duty Assignment Chronology**

6/28-6/32      U. S. Naval Academy - Midshipman.  
6/32-5/33      Light cruiser USS *Richmond*, Scouting Fleet.  
5/33-11/34      SPECSERVSQDN.  
11/34-1/36      Flight Training, USNAS Pensacola, FL.  
1/36-6/38      VN5D8, USNAS Pensacola, FL.  
6/38-6/40      VB-6, USS *Enterprise*.  
6/42-3/44      US Naval Hospital Mare Island and Pearl Harbor and USA General Hospital, Denver  
3/1/44          Retired 100% Physically disabled.

### **Summary of Significant Career Events**

- (1) Flew morning and afternoon attacks at Midway against the Japanese strike force. Hit on the *Akagi* and the *Hiryu*. VB-6 only squadron to have a part in the sinking of three enemy carriers, *Akagi*, *Kaga* and *Hiryu*. VB-3, VS-6 and VB-6 between them sank all four enemy carriers of the Kido Butai.
- (2) Served a full carrier tour in Fighting Two, the only squadron in the Navy in which enlisted pilots flew all the wing positions. In 1937, we came aboard *Lexington* with an average interval of 13 1/4 seconds.
- (3) Made one bow landing on *Lexington* in 1937, and one on *Enterprise* in 1941. Early carriers had eight wires and two sets of barriers astern and three wires and one set of barriers on the bow. In winds of 30 knots or more the carrier steamed down wind and planes approached from the starboard bow,