



Noel Gayler, Admiral, USN (Ret.)
"Noel"

Date of Designation: NA # 6879(D)
Jet Pilot # 4

Dates of Active Duty: 1 July 1931 - 31 March 1987

Total Flight Hours: (I believe I have more total carrier fighter hours and carrier landings than anyone - prop, jet and rotary. Unfortunately, flight log is adrift and not currently available).

Combat Tours:

WW II: Central Pacific (VF)
Coral Sea battle.
Terminal strikes against Japan (Ops Officer, CTF).

Aviation Commands:

CO, VF-2
CO, VF-3
CO, VF-8
CO, VF-12
CO, VX-3
CO, USS *Greenwich Bay*
CO, USS *Ranger*
COMCARDIV 20

Combat Awards:

3 Navy Crosses
2 Distinguished Service Medals

Duty Assignment Chronology

1930-1931 Private, U. S. Army, assigned to Schofield Barracks, HI.
1931-1935 Midshipman, U. S Naval Academy.
1935-1940 Pacific fleet - battleships and destroyers.
1940-1987 - Navy flight training
- VF-3, USS *Saratoga* (WW II)



- VF-2, USS *Lexington*. Battle of Coral Sea.
 - Special Devices Center (Earliest mainframe)
 - Naval Air Test Center (Anacostia and Patuxent River, MD. Evaluated German ME-109 and FW-190, British Spitfire, Japanese Zero and many other U. S. and foreign fighters.
 - BuAer (Head, Fighter Design Branch)
 - Operations Officer for CTF VADM John S. McCain. Witnessed Japanese surrender on USS *Missouri* and visited Hiroshima six days or more after bomb drop.
 - Operations Officer, PACFLT.
 - Aide, SECNAV (Tom Gates).
 - CO, VX-3.
 - CO, USS *Greenwich Bay* (Bahrein).
 - COMCARDIV 20.
 - OPNAV Staff (OP-55).
 - Selected VADM. Assigned as Director, National Security Agency (NSA).
 - Deputy, Joint Strategic Targeting (JSTPS).
 - Commander-in-Chief, Pacific (CINCPAC).
- 3/31/87 Retired from active duty.
Post 1987 Board of Directors - various air lines/ Institute Defense Analysis/Committee, E.W. Accord/ Arms Control (especially nuclear)

Admiral Gayler spent a total of 46 years in the U. S. Navy and served during three wars. He has been a combat carrier pilot and a test pilot, evaluating contemporary American and foreign fighters, including British, German and Japanese. He flew the Japanese Zero fighter over the U. S. Capitol, with the original red "Meat Ball" painting in place, because of the urgent need to compare.

He has been a post-war airborne witness to the destruction of Hiroshima by a "small" atomic weapon, and an official observer of nuclear explosive testing at Eniwetok atoll.

- Continued -

He was present at the Japanese surrender on the deck of the Missouri, and immediately after interviewed Japanese military, including designated "Kamikaze" pilots, clearly glad that the war was over. Admiral Gayler has variously been Deputy Director of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS), responsible to the JCS for "strategic" nuclear targeting, Director of the National Security Agency, and Commander in Chief of the United States forces in the Pacific.

After retirement from the Navy and from Joint Command, Admiral Gayler has been active in international security affairs, focusing particularly on relations with the then-existing Soviet Union through the American Committee on East-West Accord, the Arms Control Association and like entities.

Gayler has been closely identified with technology as assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Research and Development and on a personal basis.

He may well have more acquaintances with nuclear effects than anyone without slant eyes, and accordingly is basically devoted to eliminating those weapons everywhere. Proud that he took that stance while still on active duty as CINCPAC - while enhancing our military capability. Can be done!

Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) As a test pilot, flew all USA and foreign single-seat fighter and attack aircraft, except Italian, for test and evaluation purposes -- e.g., all models of Spitfire, Fockawolf 190, Messerschmitt 109 and the Japanese "Zero".
- (2) As CO, VX-3, flew low level cross-country flight from launch east of Norfolk, Virginia to Denver, Colorado and return nonstop -- all below 200 feet to demonstrate feasibility of low level penetration and attack. Lots of astonished cattle!
- (3) As Navy representative at annual all-services demonstration for Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- (4) As Naval Attache London, evaluated British-developed angle-deck carrier and the mirror landing system. (Recommended plus for deck, negat for mirror).
- (5) As Commander, Carrier Division 20, flew single-seat day and night carrier landings on straight and angle deck CVs to demonstrate ease of change-over. (Both in my CarDiv).
- (6) Extraordinarily fortunate in my skippers: Jimmey Thach (CO, VF-3); Trap Trapnell (NATC); Tom Gates (SECNAV) and many others. Also, wonderful deputies - Pierre Charbonnet, Whitey Feightner (VX-3), Lewis Tordella, "Doctor T" (NSA) and many, many others!!!