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"O" "B" Gray, Captain USN

"O" "B" Gray was born in Muskogee, Oklahoma, on May 8, 1919, son of Ora Burton and Pearlie Violet (Branson) Gray. He attended the University of Oklahoma at Norman, from which he received the degree of Bachelor of Science. In December 1941 he enlisted in the U. S. Naval Reserve and after elimination flight training at the Naval Reserve Aviation Base, Dallas, Texas, was appointed Aviation Cadet in March 1942. He had flight training at the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas, and on October 1, 1942 was commissioned Ensign, USNR and designated Naval Aviator. He subsequently advanced in rank to that of Captain, to date from February 1, 1963, having transferred from the U. S. Naval Reserve to the U. S. Navy on May 6, 1945.

His first assignment after receiving his commission in 1942, was as Material Officer with Patrol Squadron TWO HUNDRED NINE and in May 1944 transferred to Patrol Bombing Squadron TWENTY-EIGHT to serve as Engineering Officer. While attached to that squadron, he completed twenty five missions during the period January 25 to June 18, 1945 and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with Gold Stars in lieu of the Second, Third and Fourth Air Medals. He is also entitled to the Ribbon for, and a facsimile of the Navy Unit Commendation awarded Patrol Bombing Squadron TWENTY-EIGHT for outstanding service in the South China-Formosa area during the period March 1 to April 23, 1945.

In September 1945 he reported as an Instructor at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, and from October 1946 until April 1948, was officer Personnel Officer on the Staff of the Chief of Naval Air Basic Training, Pensacola, Florida. Following an assignment, which extended to January 1950, as Executive Officer of Fleet Aircraft Service Squadron ONE HUNDRED FIVE, he served as Assistant Operations Officer at the Naval Air Station, Trinidad, British West Indies and from August 1950 had similar duty at the Naval Air Station, Seattle, Washington. He attended the Combat Information

School at the Naval Air Station, Glenview, Illinois, during the period August 1952 until January 1953 and the next month joined the USS *Timbalier* (AVP-54) to serve as Air, Deck Officer and Operations officer.

Assigned from October 1954 until March 1957 to the Heavy Attack Training Unit, he was Maintenance officer for four months and Director of Training for twelve months, after which he had duty in the Air Training Support Section, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. He remained there until January 1960, then attended the Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia. In August 1960 he joined Patrol Squadron FIFTY as Executive Officer and in March 1961 assumed command of that squadron. Detached from command in August 1962, he next reported as Executive Officer of the USS *Currituck* (AV-7).

During the period August 1963 to June 1964 he was a student at the National War College, Washington, D. C., after which he had duty in the Joint Staff Office, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C. In November 1966 he assumed command of the USS *Mountrail* (APA-213) and in November 1967 was ordered detached for instruction at George Washington University, Washington, D. C.

In addition to the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with three Gold Stars, and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon, Captain Gray has the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific campaign Metal; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia and Europe Clasps; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon.

He was married to the former Lillie Bernice Hill of Muskogee, and they had four children, Margaret Ann, Glen Burton, Gary John and Martha Ellen Gray.