



Robert G. Owens, Jr., MGEN, USMC (Ret.)
"Bob"

Date of Designation: 10 May 1940 NA # 6397

Dates of Active Duty: 1939 - 1972

Total Flight Hours: 4,000+

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 300+ Rotary: 200

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 2,000 Prop: 2,000 Helo: 600 VF/VA: 3,500

Combat Tours:

WW II: Pearl Harbor, MCAS Ewa, Oahu, 1941

WW II: XO/CO, VMF-215, Solomon Islands

Vietnam: AWC, First Marine Air Wing
Chief of Staff, III MAF

Aviation Commands:

He commanded five tactical fighter squadrons, two Marine Air Groups and two of the three Marine Air Wings.

Combat Awards:

Navy Cross

5 Legions of Merit

5 Distinguished Flying Crosses

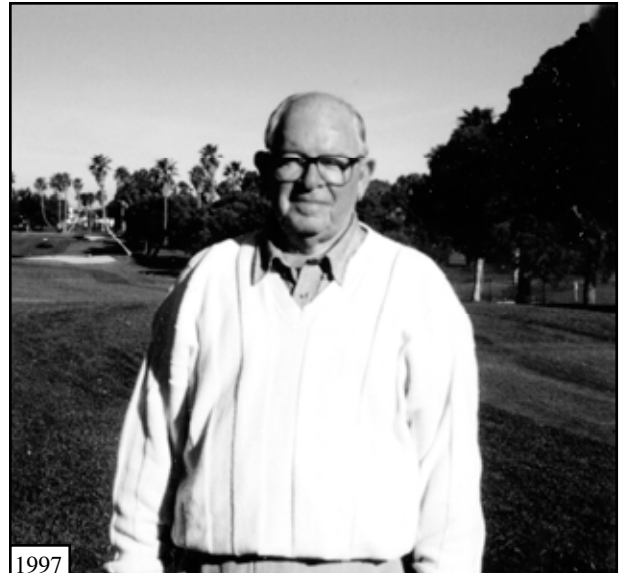
12 Air Medals

Purple Heart

Duty Assignment Chronology

Bob Owens was born in Greenville South Carolina on 13 February 1917 and graduated from Furman University in 1938.

He enlisted in the Marine Corps in August 1939 as a USMC Aviation Cadet. Completing flight training in May 1940 at Pensacola, he was designated a Naval Aviator and commissioned a Second Lieutenant in June, 1940.



His first duty station was NAS North Island flying BG-1's. Later we took delivery of some of the first SBD's, carrier qualified and moved to Ewa, Hawaii in early 1941. Since none of the aircraft were flyable after Pearl Harbor, it was off to Santa Barbara, CA., to form VMF-215 with F4U-1's.

As Executive Officer and later Commanding Officer of "The Fighting Corsairs" he entered combat in the summer of 1943. With never more than 16 Corsairs and fewer than 40 pilots, VMF-215 was credited with 137 1/2 enemy aircraft shot down and produced ten Aces including "Big O" with 7 confirmed and 4 probable. On one occasion he was shot down over Rabaul but was able to land his burning F4U in the open sea and was picked up by a PBY in less than 30 minutes.

During his 33 years, he flew from numerous carriers from his first qualifying in SBD's aboard USS *Lexington* (CV-2) to his last carquals in F8U's aboard USS *Ranger* in the early '60's as a Colonel. He was one of the few Leathernecks to command a Naval Carrier Air Group as CO, MCVEG-6 aboard USS *Puget Sound* (CVE-113). This unit made 602 accident free landings in one day which may still be a record. Later in his career, as CO, VMF-115 (F9F's) an all-jet air group was formed aboard the USS *FDR* to participate in the CV versus B-36 demonstrations. As one of the senior squadron commanders he served as CAG on some exercises.

In the Vietnam war, General Owens was Chief of Staff, III Marine Amphibious Forces, which directed all military operations in the five provinces south of the DMZ. Here he flew his final combat missions as a helo pilot.

He is a graduate of the Air War College, the National War College and also received a Master's degree in 'International Affairs' from George Washington University. Among his honors is the fact he was an honorary pallbearer for President Eisenhower at his funeral in Abilene, Kansas. General Owens retired in August 1972 and resides with his wife, Fran, in Newport Beach, California.