

## CAPT GEORGE C. DUNCAN, USN



George Chamberlain Duncan was born on 11 February 1917 in Tacoma, Washington, and graduated from the United States Naval Academy, in Annapolis, Maryland, in June of 1939. After two years on the battleship USS *West Virginia* (BB-48), he was accepted for flight training at Pensacola, and earned his wings in mid-1943. However, he did not join Naval Fighter Squadron 15 (VF-15) on the aircraft carrier USS *Essex* (CV-9) until September of 1943. Flying F6F *Hellcats*, he ultimately flew 54 missions, but did not score his first victory until June 15, 1944, when he shot down a Japanese *Zero* over the island of Iwo Jima. A few days later, on June 19, during the famous "Marianas Turkey Shoot," which was part of the Battle of the Philippine Sea, Duncan claimed three more *Zeros*. He earned his "Ace" status on September 12, when he destroyed two more *Zeros* over the Philippines. The next day, again over the Philippines, he claimed one *Oscar*, one *Nate*, one *Betty* bomber, and shared credit for another, running his total to 9.5 aerial victories, and by early November of 1944, he had shot down four more Jap fighters, making his war total 13 and a half "kills," and having earned the Navy Cross, Silver Star, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Since WW II, he has served on the Staff of ComNavAirPac; commanding officer of VF-51 and VF-101; Commander, CVG-5; Head, Fighter Aircraft Design Branch, BuAir; Assistant Director, Aircraft Division of BuWeps; and Executive Officer of USS *Forrestal* (CVA-59). CAPT George Chamberlain Duncan eventually commanded the aircraft carrier USS *Ranger* (CVA-61), 7 May 1962–20 May 1963. Captain Duncan passed away on 15 December 1995 in Arlington, VA, at the age of 78.

### NAVY CROSS - CITATION

"The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Lieutenant Commander George Chamberlain Duncan (NSN: 0-82484), United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in operations against the enemy while serving as Pilot of a carrier-based Navy Fighter Plane in Fighting Squadron FIFTEEN (VF-15), attached to the U.S.S. ESSEX (CV-9), in action against enemy Japanese surface forces over the Sibuyan Sea during the Battle for Leyte Gulf in the Philippine Islands on 25 October 1944. Undaunted by hostile anti-aircraft fire, Lieutenant Commander Duncan carried out an attack against major units of the Japanese Fleet, scoring a direct bomb hit to assist in sinking an enemy carrier, and contributing to the success of the mission. By his skill as an airman and devotion to duty throughout, Lieutenant Commander Duncan upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Submitted by Bill Gonyo