



## MARITIME PATROL AND RECONNAISSANCE FORCE HALL OF HONOR

### Captain F.P. Anderson United States Navy (Ret.)

A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, *Capt. Anderson* served as a gunnery officer aboard the USS Aaron Ward, USS Arkansas, and USS Northampton prior to reporting to flight school in October 1941/ Designated a Naval Aviator on May 8, 1942, Capt. Anderson was assigned to VP-33 as it was forming in NAS Norfolk, Virginia. In August 1942, VP-33 was ordered to the Panama Canal Zone and participated in anti-submarine operations protection the Panama Canal. For his conduct during this deployment, Capt. Anderson was awarded the 4 Cross of Boyaca by the Government of Columbia.

Re-designated VPB-33, the squadron deployed to the Southwest Pacific via Hawaii and Australia in August 1943. The squadron participated in every campaign in this combat theater of operations until February 1945 following the liberation of the Philippines. In addition to the combat sorties deep in enemy territory, these operations included regular daytime patrols and rescue missions. As reported in the 1992 book, *Black Cats with Wings of Gold* by A.J. Mueller, Capt. Anderson held several leadership positions in VPB-33, a squadron that fly the PBY-5 Catalina seaplanes referred to as the "Black Cats" for their black non-reflective paint and the ability to attack Japanese strongholds and ships at night deep behind enemy lines. During September 1944 while Capt. Anderson was the Commanding Officer, VPB-33 sank or destroyed 103,500 tons of valuable enemy shipping and damaged an additional 53,000 ton. This was the highest one-month total achieved by any WWII flying unit. For this feat, the squadron received the Presidential Unit Citation and Capt. Anderson was awarded the Legion of Merit with a Combat "V". It was also during this period that Captain Anderson earned personally the Distinguished Flying Cross for attacking and sinking a Japanese tanker and its escort despite intense anti-aircraft fire damaging his aircraft. The exploits of VPB-33 were the subject of the 1981 Richard Knotts' Naval Aviation classic, *Black Cat Raiders of WWII*.

Following his return to the United States in March 1945, Capt. Anderson served in several aviation training assignments, most notably as Executive Officer, NAS Brunswick, Maine. In March 1948, he reported for duty with VX-4 and participated in hurricane tracking. Eventually, he reported to Air Borne Warning Squadron One (VPW-1), re-designated VP-51. VPW-1 was the Navy's first dedicated land-based airborne early warning (AEW) squadron flying the Navy's variant of the Army Air Force's radar-equipped EB-17G or PB-1W.

Capt. Anderson returned to flying in June 1952 when he became the first Commanding officer of the new AEW Squadron One (VW-1). During Capt. Anderson's tour, VW-1 participated in combat operations in Korea and transitioned from the PB-1W to the Lockheed Constellation (WV-2) in December 1952.

Capt. Anderson retired from active duty in 1965 and became a defense consultant in Washington D.C. He was recalled to active duty in a retired status in 1970 and served as the Director, Navy Council of Personnel Boards until 1976, for which he received his second Legion of Merit.

Capt. Anderson died in Arlington, VA, on January 2, 2005 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.