

LIEUTENANT (junior grade) GEORGE MARVIN CAMPBELL, U.S. NAVY (DECEASED)

Lieutenant Campbell, born in Madras, Jefferson County, Oregon, January 7, 1907, attended Oregon State College, Corvallis, Oregon, and enlisted in the U. S. Navy on June 27, 1928. During his enlisted service in July - August 1934 he participated in the first flight of Patrol Squadrons to the Aleutian Islands from San Diego, California, with Patrol Squadron 7.

On June 9, 1938 Lieutenant Campbell was discharged from the U. S. Navy and on April 2, 1942 he was appointed Lieutenant (junior grade) in the U.S. Navy. He was designated Naval Aviator (heavier-than-air) and on April 7, 1942 he reported for duty with Torpedo Squadron EIGHT, based on the aircraft carrier HORNET. He was pilot of one of the planes which took off from that vessel on the morning of June 4, 1942, to search out the Japanese task force planning to attack and invade Midway Island. Every plane of Torpedo Squadron EIGHT was shot down during the battle and Lieutenant Campbell was reported missing in action on June 4, 1942 and was presumed dead on June 5, 1943.

For his heroism in the Battle of Midway, Lieutenant Campbell was awarded the Navy Cross posthumously, and the ribbon for, and a facsimile of the Presidential Unit Citation awarded Torpedo Squadron EIGHT. The citations follow:

NAVY CROSS:

"For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service beyond the call of duty as a pilot of Torpedo Squadron EIGHT in the 'Air Battle of Midway', against enemy Japanese forces of 4 June 1942. Grimly aware of the hazardous consequences of flying without fighter protection, and with insufficient fuel to return to his carrier, Lieutenant (junior grade) Campbell, resolutely, and with no thought of his own life, delivered an effective torpedo attack against violent assaults of enemy Japanese aircraft and against an almost solid barrage of antiaircraft fire. His courageous action, carried out with a gallant spirit of self-sacrifice and a conscientious devotion to the fulfillment of his mission, was a determining factor in the defeat of the enemy forces and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

PUC - TORPEDO SQUADRON EIGHT:

"For extremely heroic and courageous performance in combat during the 'Air Battle of Midway,' June 4, 1942. Flying low without fighter support, TORPEDO SQUADRON EIGHT began the perilous mission, 'Intercept and attack!' First to sight the enemy, the SQUADRON attacked with full striking power against crushing enemy opposition, scoring torpedo hits on Japanese forces. Realizing to a man that insufficient fuel would prevent a return to the carrier, the pilots held doggedly to the target, dropping torpedoes at pointblank range in the face of blasting antiaircraft fire that sent the planes, one by one, hurtling aflame into the sea. The loss of twenty-nine lives, typifying valor, loyalty and determination, was the price paid for TORPEDO SQUADRON EIGHT's vital contribution to the eventual success of our forces in this epic battle of the air."

Lieutenant Campbell was also entitled to the Purple Heart Medal. In addition to the Navy Cross, the Purple Heart Medal, and the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon, Lieutenant (junior grade) Campbell was entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

A destroyer escort vessel, the USS GEORGE M. CAMPBELL (DE 773) was named in honor of the late Lieutenant (jg) George M. Campbell, USN. Mrs. George M. Campbell was designated sponsor of the vessel named for her husband. The construction of this vessel was later suspended.

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22 September 1949