

CAPTAIN NORMAN R. BERREE, UNITED STATES NAVY

Norman Rahn Berree was born in Fleetwood, Berks County, Pennsylvania on May 10, 1922, son of Norman G. and Gertrude M. (Rahn) Berree. He attended Upper Darby (Pennsylvania) High School, prior to enlisting in June 1942 in the U. S. Naval Reserve. He was appointed Aviation Cadet, USNR in September of that year and had flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, and was subsequently designated Naval Aviator. Commissioned Ensign, USNR in June 1943, he subsequently advanced in rank to that of Captain, to date from July 1, 1964, having transferred from the Naval Reserve to the Regular Navy on October 17, 1946.

After receiving his "Wings" in 1943, he had fighter operational training at the Naval Air Station, Miami, Florida until August of that year and the next month reported as Assistant Flight Officer of Fighting Squadron FIFTEEN, operating off the USS HORNET and USS ESSEX. While serving with that squadron, he was credited with destroying nine Japanese aircraft in the air and while participating in the Marianas "Turkey Shoot," shot down three Japanese aircraft during one flight. He was awarded the Air Medal with Gold Stars in lieu of eight additional awards and the Distinguished Flying Cross with Gold Stars in lieu of the Second, Third and Fourth Distinguished Flying Crosses. The citations follow in part:

Air Medal: "For meritorious achievement...during operations against enemy Japanese forces in the vicinity of the Marianas Islands, on June 23, 1944. Suddenly encountering four enemy fighters attempting to intercept the division of aircraft escorting our scout bombers, (he) pressed home vigorous attacks against the enemy, blasting one aircraft out of the sky and assisting his division in destroying two other planes..."

Distinguished Flying Cross: "For heroism and extraordinary achievement...during action against major units of the Japanese Fleet in the First Battle of the Philippine Sea, June 19, 1944. Pressing home vigorous counterattacks against numerous enemy air groups attacking our Fleet, (he) shot down two enemy fighters and one dive bomber of the total of sixty-seven aircraft destroyed by his squadron and, assisting in damaging many others, contributed materially to the defense of our forces in the area..."

Gold Star in lieu of a Second Air Medal: "For meritorious achievement...in action against enemy Japanese forces over Nansei Shoto, on October 10, 1944. An alert and aggressive airman assigned to a strike mission against enemy shipping and installations, (he) plunged through intense antiaircraft fire to execute a vigorous attack upon two enemy fighters, destroying the hostile planes and assisting his squadron in damaging other Japanese aircraft..."

Gold Star in lieu of the Second Distinguished Flying Cross: "For heroism and extraordinary achievement...in action against the enemy Japanese forces over Nansei Shoto, on October 10, 1944. An alert and aggressive airman assigned to a strike mission against enemy shipping and installations, (he) plunged through intense anti-aircraft fire to execute a vigorous attack upon two enemy fighters, destroying the hostile planes and assisting his squadron in damaging other Japanese aircraft..."

Gold Star in lieu of the Second Distinguished Flying Cross: "For heroism and extraordinary achievement...in action against the enemy Japanese in the vicinity of Ormoc Bay, Leyte, on November 11, 1944. Carrying out a strike mission against a hostile convoy in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire, (he) scored a direct bomb hit in a difficult masthead-level bombing attack on a large enemy cargo ship which later sank..."

The Gold Stars in lieu of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Air Medals and the Gold Stars in lieu of the Third and Fourth Distinguished Flying Crosses were awarded for completing forty-five missions against the enemy during the period May 19 to November 14, 1944. He is also entitled to the Presidential Unit Citations awarded the USS HORNET and USS ESSEX.

In January 1945 he joined Fighting Squadron ONE HUNDRED to serve as Assistant Flight Officer and later as Flight Officer. In that capacity he was engaged in instruction replacement pilots in combat flight. He remained there until October 1945 and the next month reported as Flight Test Project Officer in Flight Test at the Naval Air Facility, Naval Air Material Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. During the period September 1946 to June 1948 he had instruction at the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia. He next joined Air Development Squadron ONE as Project Supervisor and as such conducted operational fleet evaluation of new type aircraft and equipment.

He became Bureau of Aeronautics Resident Representative at Fort Worth, Texas, in July 1951 and in July 1953 was detached for instruction at the Postgraduate School, Annapolis, Maryland. From March 1954 until September 1955 he was Officer in Charge of the Mediterranean Detachment of Tactical Air Control Squadron TWENTY-THREE, after which he had duty until July 1957 as Executive Officer of Fighter Squadron FORTY-THREE. Following instruction at the Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia, he assumed command in August 1958 of Fighter Squadron THIRTEEN. Under his command that squadron, consisting of F4D all-weather fighter aircraft, was deployed to the Mediterranean on board the USS ESSEX.

In March 1960 he joined the Staff of the Commander Naval Air Force, Atlantic Fleet as Aviation Safety Officer. In May 1962, he reported as Operations Officer on board the USS ANTIETAM (CVS-36) and in January

1963 was transferred, in a similar capacity, to the USS LEXINGTON (CVS-36). In February 1964 he was assigned to the Aviation Plans Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., and in September 1967 joined the Staff of the Chief of Naval Air Training, headquartered at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida.

In addition to the Distinguished Flying Cross with three Gold Stars, the Air Medal with eight Gold Stars and the Presidential Unit Citation with two stars, Captain Berree has the American Defense Service Medal; the American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with four stars; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon. He also has the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation.