

CAPTAIN CHARLES W. FIELDER
UNITED STATES NAVY

Charles William Fielder was born on January 15, 1910, in Bottineau, North Dakota, son of Charles W. and Marian Jean (Ellis) Fielder. He attended Salina (Kansas) High School and Kansas Wesleyan University, also at Salina, and for a year, from June 1, 1928 had enlisted service in the U. S. Navy. Honorably discharged on June 27, 1929, he accepted an appointment by the Secretary of the Navy to the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland. As a Midshipman he participated in plebe tennis and basketball. He was graduated on June 1, 1933, but was not commissioned in the U. S. Navy due to legislative action of the previous year.

Commissioned Ensign in the U. S. Naval Reserve on June 1, 1933, he resigned his commission on October 2 of that year, and from that date until July 5, 1934, had flight training at Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas, as an Aviation Cadet in the U. S. Army Air Corps. Commissioned Ensign in the U. S. Navy on July 12, 1934, he subsequently attained the rank of Captain, to date from September 1, 1952.

Upon receiving his commission in the U. S. Navy in July 1934, he reported for flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida. Designated Naval Aviator on January 28, 1935, he was ordered to Scouting Squadron TEN-S, aviation unit of the USS CHESTER. Detached from that squadron in May 1937, he joined Bombing Squadron THREE-B, based on the USS LEXINGTON, and in July of the same year transferred to Bombing Squadron FOUR based on the USS RANGER. Between January 1938 and October 1940 he served with Patrol Squadron SIX (redesignated in July 1939 Patrol Squadron TWENTY THREE), at Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii.

Returning to the United States, he had duty with Utility Squadron FOUR, attached to the Naval Air Station, Squantum, Massachusetts. He was ordered in June 1943 to command Utility Squadron FIFTEEN, being fitted out there. He commanded that squadron from its commissioning until February 1944, while on duty in the Atlantic (New England-Newfoundland-Bermuda Area). He then became Commander Utility Wing Service Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, and for "meritorious service...(in that capacity)" received a Letter of Commendation with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon, from the Commander in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. The citation further states:

"(He) has provided outstanding service to the Atlantic Fleet in an extended training area and at an important time. Complete and highly realistic antiaircraft towing service was furnished to surface units, and the initiation of small drone services and the development of a large drone service were vigorously prosecuted during this period, resulting in a material increase in the gunnery efficiency and combat readiness of a large number of ships..."

In May 1945 he joined the USS RANDOLPH and served as her Navigator in both the Atlantic and Pacific. When detached from that aircraft carrier in January 1947, he became a Navy member of the Joint Strategic Plans and Operations Group, General Headquarters,

Far East Command, at Tokyo, Japan. He remained there until July 1949, and in August reported as Executive Officer of the Naval Air Station, Key West, Florida. In July 1951 he was ordered to the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, where he completed the course in Strategy and Logistics in June 1952.

He next served as Operations Officer on the staff of Commander Fleet Air Wings, Atlantic, July 1952-July 1954, after which became Commanding Officer of the Naval School, All Weather Flight, Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas. When the school was decommissioned in September 1954, he was ordered to Monterey, California, to be Commanding Officer of the Naval Auxiliary Air Station, his current assignment.

In addition to the Commendation Ribbon, Commander Fielder has the American Defense Service Medal with star; the American Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two engagement stars; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; National Defense Service Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon.