

CAPTAIN WILLIAM H. ALEXANDER, UNITED STATES NAVY

William Henry Alexander was born in San Diego, California, on June 24, 1921, son of Ralph C. and Elizabeth (Griffiss) Alexander. He attended St. Albans School, Washington, D. C., and Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, prior to entering the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from the State of New York in 1940. Graduated with the Class of 1944 on June 9, 1943 (accelerated course due to World War II), he was commissioned Ensign on that date and subsequently advanced in rank to that of Captain, to date from January 1, 1964.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1943, he joined the USS ABBOT (DD-629) and served in that destroyer throughout the remaining period of World War II and until November 1945. While on board the ABBOT, he participated in the Gilbert Islands, Hollandia, Marianas, Leyte operations; THIRD Fleet raids against Japan; consolidation of the Philippines and the Corregidor-Mariveles operation. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal and cited as follows:

"For distinguishing himself by excellent service as Gunnery Officer of a United States ship during the bombardment of an enemy stronghold in the Southwest Pacific Area. By cool and capable direction of his gun battery he repeatedly delivered accurate and devastating gunfire against enemy shore batteries, thereby effectively protecting vital minesweeping operations. His skill and leadership was largely responsible for the success of his ship's mission..."

In April 1946 he reported on board the USS RICHARD E KRAUS (DD-849) and in November 1947 was detached for flight training at the Naval Air Training Command, Pensacola, Florida. Designated Naval Aviator in June 1949, he served as Team Pilot with Composite Squadron THIRTY-THREE, which deployed to the Mediterranean. He returned to the Naval Academy in August 1951, for duty in the Executive Department and from September 1953 to May 1956 served as Operations and Executive Officer of Fighter Squadron FIFTY-FOUR, which had two Western Pacific deployments. In June 1956 he joined the Staff of Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet as Composite Squadron All Weather Training Officer and in August 1957 reported for instruction at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island.

During the period September 1958 to August 1959 he commanded Attack Squadron ONE HUNDRED FORTY FIVE, which, under his command, deployed to the Western Pacific, after which he was assigned to the Officer Promotion Division, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. In May 1962 he joined the USS INDEPENDENCE (CVA-62) to serve as Navigator and Executive Officer and while on board that attack aircraft carrier participated in two Mediterranean deployments and the Cuban crisis in October 1962.

Detached from the INDEPENDENCE in December 1963, he next served in the Europe/Middle East Division, Operations Directorate (J-3), Joint Staff, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C. He assumed command of the USS MISSISSINEWA (AO-144) in December 1965 and in February 1967 became Commanding Officer of the USS OKINAWA (LPH-3). In May 1968 he reported as Chief of Staff for Plans and Policy to the Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

In addition to the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V", Captain Alexander has the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one silver star and one bronze star; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal; China Service Medal; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Navy Expeditionary Medal.