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Biography. Capt. Charles H. Bassett USN (Ret)

I was born in the hills of West Virginia, in Weirton , November 20th 1932 . I spent all of my school years except for the first three in Parkersburg, WV. High school was time of good memories I played in the marching band and on most weekends in my senior year I played bass fiddle in a five piece dance band. I was lucky enough to have a 1927 Nash to get around in.

I started my college career at the University of Kentucky where I played in the marching band and orchestra and Bass fiddle on the weekends in a swing dance band. I studied engineering and after two years the university said that on a music scholarship I should be a music major. I finished college at West Virginia University and took a degree in Accounting. I met my wife to be, Gloria, at the University and we were married in 1956. We adopted two boys in the early 60's. The oldest, Chip, is now a retired Marine GySgt. And the younger, Jeff, is in the construction business in Long Beach, Ms.

After college I was employed by the U.S.Steel Corp. as a works auditor . After a year with the company I decided it was time to move ahead of the draft and enlisted for Officer Candidate School and was commissioned in the summer of 1957.

The Navy offered me the opportunity to go to Postgraduate School and learn meteorology. I never have figured out the criteria for selection. After a year at PG school I was assigned for two years as a forecaster to COMBARFORPAC spending about half of my time at the Fleet Weather Central Pearl Harbor, my weather mentor was Dom Zizzi , and the other half on Midway Island where the early warning aircraft were based. Off watch I learned to sail. I liked the Navy and applied for augmentation to regular navy and was selected. I was off to sea, to the USS Epperson DD 719.

In Epperson, coming aboard as a JG, I had to work hard to catch up, I earned my surface warfare badge and qualified as Officer of the Deck underway and completed my tour as Gun Boss. An exciting event just after the Gulf of Tonkin incident was steaming at GQ for 24 hours around Hinan Island to see if we could draw fire, we didn't. Then it was back to PG school

in Monterey for two years and a degree in Oceanography. My next assignment was unique at the time. I was the first Officer in the Atlantic Fleet assigned to a flag staff of an ASW task group as the oceanographer. And my admiral, Eddie Outlaw worked his group according to the oceanographic situation. Following that sea duty I was assigned to FWC Norfolk as the Oceanographer working with Jim King, Dick Ward, Ace Trask, and Jim Koehr. Following that Norfolk tour I went back to PG School as an assistant curricular officer and associate professor of meteorology working for Jim Dedijian teaching lieutenant aviators basic meteorology. While there in Monterey I was able to get my private pilots license.

Next it was back to Norfolk as the XO with Frank Schatzle, Chuck Fifield and Ted Lemond and then off to Naval War College for a year. My next assignment was as the financial manager for the Oceanographer of the Navy, Adm. Ed Snyder, most of that three year tour was heading a group to do the planning, budgeting and position papers for the move and consolidation of the Navy oceanography program at the Stennis Center in Bay St. Louis, MS. I then had a tour as Operations Officer at CNMOC at Stennis followed by command of the Naval Oceanographic Office.

After my tour at NAOCEANO I retired with 27 years service and went to work for Hancock Bank in Gulfport. There twenty years ago I met my present wife, Dale a Mississippi lady. I worked as the Hancock Bank Property manager for twelve years and retired again. We lost our house and everything in it in Hurricane Katrina so I have nothing to refer to refresh my memory of names and faces. Except for that, life after retirement has been Trap shooting, making wood scale models and golf, but lately no golf because my neck is out of wack however, I did treated myself to a guided quail hunt for my 80th birthday last winter.