



Lieutenant William F. O'Neil
United States Navy – Retired

LT William (Bill) Francis O'Neil is thought to be the oldest living shipmate in the Navy Weather Service Community. He was born in Harvard, Illinois on October 23, 1913. Bill graduated from High School, but did not enter the Navy until after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. On December 08, 1941 he joined the Navy and went to boot camp at the Great Lakes Training Center. During his career, the United States was involved in World War II, Berlin Crisis, Korean Conflict, Vietnam, and the Cold War era. His awards included both the Navy and the Joint Services Commendation Medals.

Following boot camp, Bill was assigned to a newly formed school for Navy Aerographers at Pensacola, Florida in January 1942. His next assignment was to the Navy Hurricane - Weather Central, Miami, Florida. In those days, personnel were sent on temporary duty to various sites to provide weather observations and his first assigned duty was to a one person weather office at Grand Cayman, Island. Returning to the Hurricane Center and after completing his tour of duty, Bill was transferred to Fleet Weather Central, Norfolk, Virginia. By this time he had advanced to Aerographers Mate First Class.

From Norfolk, Bill left the Navy Weather Service when he was transferred to Naval Security Group (NSG) in Washington, D. C. This group later merged with other Services Security Groups to become the Armed Forces Security Group (AFSA) and later renamed National Security Group (NSA). Bill continued to serve in NSA in D. C. area and at various overseas billets ending with his assignment as an NSA Liaison Officer in the Pacific Theater. He was then transferred from NSA to the newly formed Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) in Arlington, Virginia. He ended his Naval Career there in August 1966. Bill continued in a civilian capacity with DIA until August 1975 having a combined total of almost 30 years in Intelligence – Security assignments.

In 1958, the Armed Forces added two new pay grades (E-8 and E-9) to the existing rank structure for enlisted personnel. These grades converted to Senior and Master Chief in the Navy. Bill was in the second group of Chiefs' selected for promotion to Senior and Master Chief Aerographers Mate and was the second Aerographers Mate to be advanced to Master Chief on May 16, 1959. Bill did not attend AG "B" School prior to being advanced to chief, because of his NSA assignment. In 1961, he was promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG), by-passing Ensign, and retired as a Lieutenant from the Navy.

Bill's wife of 59 years, Dorothy, died in 2001. He has two daughters, one son and many, many grand and great grand children. Bill is now living in a retirement home at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.