

## Brigadier General Donald John Campbell



November 13, 1919 - May 12 2007 Don was a signature member of the “Greatest Generation.” He was a child of the Great Depression, the firstborn of a family native to Cincinnati, Ohio. He fell in love with his future wife of 65 years, Bettie, at a New Years Eve party at Western Hills High School of Cincinnati. They were married in California where Don graduated from Army Air Corp cadet flying training. He had entered training just days after Pearl Harbor and volunteered to serve overseas upon graduation. After three weeks of marriage, Don shipped out to join the war effort flying mostly P-39's and P-38's in the South Pacific. From 1942 to 1944 Don rose to be Squadron Commander of the Army Air Corp's 36th Squadron, 8th Group, 5th Air Force. He was based primarily in Milne Bay, New Guinea. After a short time back in the States, Don returned overseas to spend a year as a liaison officer flying P-51's with the Nationalist Chinese forces. His three years of combat included 274 fighter missions, during which he received the Distinguished Flying Cross, to which he later added two oak leaf clusters and the Air Medal with five oak leaf clusters.



P-38



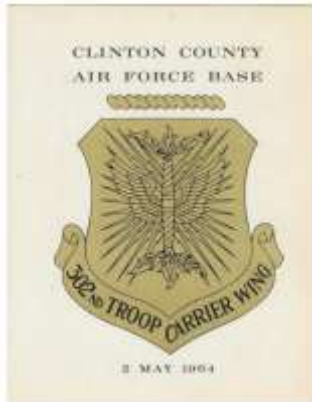
P-39



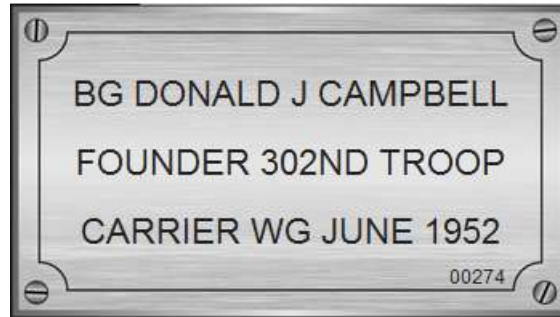
P-51



Distinguished  
Flying Cross



He was also awarded the Commendation Medal for meritorious achievement. After the war, Don commanded an “early version” of the Air Force's aerial demonstration team while serving as director of officer personnel for Air Material Command at Wright-Patterson AFB. He left active duty in 1946 and entered private business. During the Korean Conflict beginning in 1950, a majority of Air Force Reserve Units were call to active duty. New units had to be initiated in order to fill the huge void left by the Reserve call-ups. Through interplay with the Secretary of the Air Force and with a great deal of political intrigue, Don was able to receive military backing for the first Air Force Reserve Unit Training Assembly at Clinton County AFB Wilmington, Ohio in December of 1951. In 1952 Don assumed command of the 302nd Troop Carrier Wing Clinton County AFB. He attained the rank of Brigadier General in 1962. He commanded the wing until 1970 when he was assigned to the Pentagon as Deputy Commander of the Air Force Reserve. Don and Bettie retired in 1977. Brigadier General Donald John Campbell was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on July 22, 2007 with full Honors.



Don and Bettie Campbell were lifetime members of The 302 Buckeye Wing Association. They joined the association in 1986. Don and Bettie last attended the 2006 reunion.

At the 2012 reunion business meeting the members present approved this memorial plaque for the founder of the Buckeye Wing. The Wright-Patterson Air Force Base has this Plaque on display.

# Certificate of Recognition

This certificate confirms the purchase of a Legacy Data Plate for display at the National Museum of the United States Air Force to honor:

**BG DONALD J CAMPBELL**

**FOUNDED 302ND TROOP**

**CARRIER WG JUNE 1952**



  
Col. Larry "Scoop" Cooper, USAF (Ret.)  
Executive Director, Air Force Museum Foundation

Serial Number: 00274

Certificate of purchase of plaque 274 by the Buckeye Wing Association