

Hall of Honor Member since 1995



**Henry Williams "Hank" Hise, Brigadier General U.S.M.C.**

Died October 15, 2010

Henry Williams "Hank" Hise, Brigadier General U.S.M.C. (Retired), the last remaining member of the first marine squadron to land on Guadalcanal, passed away in Lubbock, TX from complications of a hip fracture on October 15, 2010. The son of Henry Luther and Stella Marie Hise, he was born July 7, 1920 in Shamrock, Texas. After attending North Texas Agricultural College (currently the [University of Texas](#) at Arlington) and U.T. Austin, he entered the Marine Corps and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in July 1941. His first combat tour was as a pilot in VMSB 232 flying against the Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands. He was wounded at Guadalcanal and evacuated to New Zealand. Of the original fifteen pilots in his dive bomber squadron deployed to Guadalcanal, only the commanding officer Major Richard Magnum was able to walk off the island under his own power. General Hise returned to the South Pacific in December 1943 as the squadron commander of VMTB 143. He was deployed to the Northern Solomon Islands where he led air strikes against the Japanese naval base at Rabaul Harbor. His final combat tour in WWII was as the commanding officer of Marine torpedo squadron VMTB 132 flying off of the USS Cape Gloucester in support of Marine operations around Okinawa. Flying F9F panther jets, Hank Hise returned to combat in Korea where he flew 66 bombing missions as a member of VMF 311. His final combat tour was as the Assistant Wing Commander, First Marine Air Wing, Vietnam. His combat awards included: The Distinguished Flying Cross 1942, Air Medal 1944 and 2 Legion of Merit, 1967 and 1969. After completing his tour of duty in Vietnam, General Hise returned to California to command the Marine Corps Air Bases on the West Coast. In November 1971, having completed a thirty-year career in the Marine Corps, Hank came home to Texas where he taught international relations and foreign policy at the University of Texas Permian Basin in Odessa. In 1977, he moved to Austin to become the Executive director of the community Mental Health Centers of Texas until his retirement in 1985. Hank Hise said on several occasions that his time on Guadalcanal removed any notions about the glamour of flying. A man of considerable insight, he had only two rules when faced with a combat mission: "Never fly a bad airplane and accept any risk necessary to accomplish the mission but not one iota more." Of the 26 second lieutenants who accompanied him to Hawaii in the spring of 1942, only 7 survived WWII. General Hise returned once more to Guadalcanal in 1995 accompanied by one of his sons and two grandsons. He remarked that if the ball had bounced a little differently, none of us would be standing here now. Raised in the dust bowl and having survived three wars and five combat tours, he had a great wit and numerous aphorisms. Perhaps his favorite saying was "luck counts." Hank never forgot his good fortune for having survived a thirty-year career as a Marine aviator. A competent and kind man, he enjoyed a long retirement. He was a talented sculptor, avid gardener, highly skilled woodworker and student of philosophy. From astronomy to zoology, his passion for learning was a life-long pursuit; Hank faithfully read Scientific American for more than fifty years. Hank and his wife of over 60 years, Mary Frances Halcum Hise, enjoyed traveling and visiting with their six children and eight grandchildren. In addition to his wife, he is survived by Lewis and Hazel Hise of Austin, Barbara and Ralph Desselles of Virginia, Nancy and Franklin Lilly of Austin, Martha and Jon Cieszinski of Lubbock, Joe and Beth Hise of Dallas, and Mary and Jack Brown of Chicago. Grandchildren are Josh Sheppard of Virginia, Matthew Phipps of Austin, Tim Hise of Dallas, Emily Hise of Austin, Luke Hise of Lubbock, Alan and Greg Hise of Dallas and Martha Elizabeth Penturf of Oklahoma City. Burial will be at the Arlington National Cemetery.

**Published in Austin American-Statesman on October 20, 2010**