

# NORTH DAKOTA AVIATION HALL OF FAME

## Alexander Macdonald

## Inducted: 2010



Alexander P. Macdonald, a native of Davenport, ND, and long-time resident of Fargo, ND, has provided a positive influence on many in the state with his civilian and military efforts.

General Macdonald achieved as much as one could imagine as a member of the North Dakota military. He enlisted at age 19, became a mechanic, a pilot, flew 36 combat missions in Korea, worked his way up to the commander of the guard unit, and ultimately the head of the state's National Guard. He earned the highest rating as an air defense pilot (Master of Air Defense) and eventually retired after completing 45 years of military service.

During 13 years as commander of the Fargo-based Happy Hooligans, his command gained national prominence by winning the National Flight Safety Record Award, twice winning the all-Air Force William Tell air-to-air competition and the Daedalion Maintenance Award, prompting many to start their careers

with the NDANG. As commander, he sent the first woman pilot to Air Force training and on to a successful career as a pilot, both in the military and in the airlines. He served as the Chief of Staff for Air, Headquarters, ND Air National Guard, Air National Guard Assistant to the Commander-in-Chief, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and the State Adjutant General of North Dakota.

Perhaps his most newsworthy achievement, while pilot-in-command of a C-54 transport aircraft carrying Governor Guy, the aircraft experienced an in-flight engine fire that couldn't be extinguished and the engine burned off of the airplane. The problem then developed into hydraulic failure, an electrical fire, unsafe landing gear, and finally a dead-stick landing. All evacuated safely after his successful landing. For this he was awarded the North Dakota Distinguished Service Medal.

In his civilian job, Alex was Chief Executive Officer of Dakota First Capital Corporation, a Fargo small business investment corporation. He used that experience to help found the Fargo Air Museum, and became an important team member in keeping the museum solvent. He has also served for 21 years on the Fargo Airport Authority, helping that airport to grow to become the state's largest and one of the most successful airports, and guide it into the busiest time in its history.

Alex has been President of the state Elks Association, Commander of the American Legion Post, Chair of the North Dakota State Games, and Chairman of the North Dakota Veterans Cemetery Foundation. Alexander Macdonald has left an impressive resume of his

lifetime of accomplishments. His accomplishments while on military duty are themselves worthy of praise, he continued to contribute his time and talents as a civilian to the betterment of others. For all of this, the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame thanks Alexander Macdonald.

