

JOHN BENNETT “BEN” NEWELL
Richmond, Virginia



Inducted in 2004, John Bennett “Ben” Newell began his aviation career in February 1943 when he was called by the U.S. Army Air Corps to begin his aviation cadet training. He graduated and received his silver pilot wings in class 44-E in May 1944. After gunnery school, Ben was sent to the Pacific Theater with the original 1st Fighter Squadron of the 413th Fighter Group at Ie Shima Island. He flew 16 combat missions against the Japanese and was awarded the Air Medal with clusters before the war ended in August 1945. After the war, he became a flight instructor with Hawthorne School of Aeronautics Contract School, at Spence Field, Moultrie, Ga., teaching military cadets and student officers. In July 1961 Ben applied and was selected for a job with the FAA as a General Aviation Inspector at the Washington Flight Standards District Office and was promoted to Principal Operations Inspector in July 1962. From March 1967 to April 1969, Ben became the General Aviation Section Chief at FAA headquarters. In 1969 he transferred to Richmond and became the Chief of the General Aviation District Office. Ben was recognized by Gov. John Dalton for his on-going aviation safety efforts. Ben’s flying career spanned from the open-cockpit Stearmans up to the modern day business jets such as the Jet-star, Lear-jet and the Falcon 50 aircraft. Ben retired in 1990 after 21 years in the Richmond office of the FAA.