

General James Doolittle



Why is he famous?

Photo # NH 102457 LtCol. Doolittle wires Japanese medals to a bomb



- Medal of Honor winner
- Pioneering holder of air speed records
- Leader of the first aerial attack on the Japanese mainland
- Famed WW II air commander

Early life

- Born at Alameda, CA
- December 14, 1896
- Attended the University of California
- Enlisted in the Army Signal Corps
- Spent World War I as a flying instructor
- Earned his B.A. and eventually of Doctor of Science in Aeronautics

Photo # NH 97502 LtCol. Doolittle and crewmen in China after April 1942 raid on Japan



A Flying Genius

Photo # 80-G-41190 Doolittle raiders aboard USS Hornet. April 1942



- September, 1922 he crossed from FL to CA in 21 hours and 9 minutes; this earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross
- Flew the fastest seaplane at the time (1925) at a speed of 232 mph
- 1932 speed record for land planes - 252 mph

Bomber Extraordinaire

- Led the attack of 16 B-25 bombers on April 18, 1942 of Tokyo, Kobe, Osaka, and Nagoya; forced to bail out
- Received the Medal of Honor for heroism and risking his life in that raid



Recipient of the Medal of Honor



Later Life



- Retired from Active duty in Feb of 1959
- Eventually became a Four-Star General in the Reserves
- First President of the Air Force Association
- Chairman of the Board of Space Technology Laboratories