



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL

TO

**Lieutenant Commander CARLTON W. SWICKLEY
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

For meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the night of September 1, 1964, while serving as pilot of a Coast Guard Helicopter engaged in fighting a fire aboard a cabin cruiser at Thunderbolt, Georgia. When informed of an explosion aboard the cruiser HAPPY BIRTHDAY, in the Wilmington River, Lieutenant Commander SWICKLEY, who was already airborne, immediately diverted to assist. Upon arrival, he commenced a search for survivors.

Observing that the current was rapidly setting the burning boat down on the Gulf Oil Company's fuel dock, he expertly maneuvered the helicopter to utilize the rotor downwash in an attempt to push the boat clear of the dock. However, with eight foot flames shooting continuously from the boat's gas tank, Lieutenant Commander SWICKLEY was forced to move away momentarily. He watched to see if the current would carry the boat clear of the dock area. When he saw the cruiser forced against a derrick barge, he maneuvered the helicopter over the pilings and succeeded in pushing the boat clear of the barge and fuel dock. Also, by expert use of the rotor downwash, he extinguished a fire which had spread to the barge and pilings.

Lieutenant Commander SWICKLEY displayed expert airmanship and skill throughout this perilous mission. His courage, sound judgement, and unwavering devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.



**CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE AIR MEDAL
(GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF A SECOND)**

TO

**Captain CARLTON W. SWICKLEY
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD**

Captain Carlton W. SWICKLEY is cited for meritorious achievement in aerial flight on the afternoon of 16 December 1976 while serving as pilot and aircraft commander of Coast Guard HH-52A 1420 engaged in the perilous rescue of sixteen crewmembers and passengers from a small commercial aircraft which had ditched two miles south of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Departing Coast Guard Air Station Port Angeles, Washington, Captain SWICKLEY encountered a dense fog bank covering the entire water area en-route to the ditch site, necessitating him to maintain visual contact with the water by flying at altitudes as low as 10 feet and at very low speeds. In spite of the intense concentration required by this exacting flying, he briefed his crew on the details of the expected rescue. Upon sighting the wreckage, Captain SWICKLEY immediately made a water landing and commenced the rescue operation. As the survivors were being retrieved from the frigid water, the wrecked aircraft capsized and a section of its wing struck the helicopter's rotating blades. Captain SWICKLEY's alertness and expertise in controlling the helicopter were instrumental in minimizing the damage. After all sixteen passengers were on board, the helicopter was then water taxied clear of the fog area and the survivors transferred to arriving surface craft for evacuation to safety. Captain SWICKLEY's initiative, perseverance and aeronautical skill contributed to the saving of sixteen lives. His courage, sound judgement, and unwavering devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Coast Guard.