



## Capt. Howard Elliott Odell

April 20, 1920 - July 19, 1950

Capt. Howard Elliott Odell

Captain Howard Elliott Odell was a veteran World War II fighter pilot who was shot down in July of 1950 during the early days of the Korean War. Listed as Missing in Action for 75 years, his remains have recently been identified by the Air Force Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency using DNA and forensic testing. Interment will take place on October 15, 2025, at Arlington National Cemetery.

Called "Elliott" by family and friends, he was born in 1920, in Poughkeepsie, New York, the son of Raymond and Marcella Odell. He was raised in nearby Red Oaks Mill, where the family lived alongside Wappinger Creek, about 4 miles from the banks of the Hudson River.

One of four brothers, he was raised in a rural setting and developed a love for the outdoors, especially boating and fishing in the Adirondack Mountains where his family spent summers camping. The Odell brothers were known for their ingenuity, and they built many wooden boats from Chris-Craft kits and loved motorboating.

Elliott had his mother's Irish blue eyes, and his father's aptitude for all things mechanical.

As a child, Elliott's first school was a one-room schoolhouse, which he attended through the eighth grade. He went on to attend Arlington High School, where he played football and ran track. Upon graduation in 1938, he became an apprentice at a machine shop in Poughkeepsie, and in a few short years he became foreman.

In the spring of 1942, a few months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Elliott was accepted into the Army Air Corp cadet program. Upon completing advanced pilot training, he was chosen as Honor Cadet by his commanding officer. His mother was flown to Dothan, Alabama to be in attendance when Elliott received his wings and commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant.

Odell was stationed in China during World War II, where he flew with the Air Corp's 23rd Fighter Group, the Flying Tigers, against Japanese forces. He later became an instructor pilot, and after the war joined the Air Force Reserves.

In 1948, Elliott married Margie Senkier. After he signed on for another round of active duty with the Air Force, she visited him overseas when he was stationed in Japan.

On 19-Jul-1950, the 25th day of the Korean War, Capt. Odell was flight leader of four F-80 fighter jets conducting a tactical reconnaissance mission over enemy territory. They intercepted and destroyed four YAK-9s, which were attacking the airstrip at Taejon. Odell's plane was hit by enemy fire during the exchange; he attempted to land at the airstrip, which was still in friendly hands, but his plane slid into a dyke on the bank of a river and exploded one mile from the strip.

Taejon fell into enemy hands the following day, 20-Jul-1950, and his remains could not be recovered at that time; months later his remains were found, but not identified, and sent to the United Nations military cemetery at Taejon. In 1952, his remains were labeled Unknown X-100 and declared unidentifiable. In 1954, they were transported and interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu. In 2019, his remains were sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis, and in April of 2025 his identity was confirmed.

Howard Elliott Odell is recipient of the Air Medal and the Purple Heart.

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

OCT **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Arlington National Cemetery  
1 Memorial Drive  
Arlington, VA 22211

# Tribute Wall

SB

“ *Don't know him personally but had the opportunity to meet his family and would like to express my sincere condolences and appreciation for his ultimate sacrifice to our nation. ~ Sean B*



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**Sean Brown** - October 14, 2025 at 06:45 PM