

**HOUSE RESOLUTION - HONORING  
CAPTAIN LEWIS LOCKHART FOR HIS HEROISM DURING WWII**

*Introduced By: Representatives Martin, Gallison, Abney, Newberry, and Fox*

*Date Introduced: May 15, 2013*

*Referred To: House read and passed*

WHEREAS, While in New Guinea during World War II, **Captain Lewis Lockhart** joined the **39th Fighter Squadron**, a group that was formed in WWI by flyers such as Jimmy Doolittle and Eddie Rickenbacker; and

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** endangered his life daily by flying through the 13,000 foot peaks of the Owen Stanley Mountains in **New Guinea** to bomb and strafe the Japanese 9<sup>th</sup> Fleet headquarters on **Kairiru Island**; and,

WHEREAS, the **39th Fighter Squadron** cut off transport ships from mainland Japan and totally destroyed Japanese planes and ships at **Wewak, New Guinea**; and

WHEREAS, conditions became so bad for Japanese soldiers and sailors stationed on Kairiru Island that they fantasized about food and painted chickens green to camouflage them from the repeated air attacks by the 39<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron; and

WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart flew combat cover missions to **Hollandia** and Rabaul; and,

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** had to make an emergency landing in his P-38 after one of his engines was destroyed in a combat mission over **Rabaul**; and

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** flew as flight leader when the 39<sup>th</sup> covered a major parachute drop in the **Markham Valley, New Guinea**; and

WHEREAS, Captain Lockhart led the bombing and strafing mission on **May 27, 1944**, when 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Robert E. Thorpe was reported missing; and

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** and **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Fred Tobi** went looking for **Lt. Thorpe** in hazardous flying conditions when the entire squadron was grounded; and

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** flew as wingman when his squadron leader had to bail out and escape from hostile natives in New Guinea, a story that was captured in a documentary “*Injury Slight,*”; and

WHEREAS, **Captain Lockhart** flew a total of **171 combat missions** in the P-38 and the P-47; and

WHEREAS, As a testimony to Captain Lockhart’s heroic service to our nation during World War II, he received the **Air Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters**; and

WHEREAS, the 39<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, together with other units of the **5<sup>th</sup> Air Force**, is credited with preventing **New Guinea**, and probably **Australia**, from falling into Japanese hands during the early years of the war in the Pacific; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations hereby **expresses our gratitude to Captain Lewis Lockhart** for his service to our nation during the darkest days of World War II; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this House **respectfully requests the Governor to honor Captain Lewis Lockhart for his extraordinary heroism** in the service of our nation, in particular **for his efforts to save 2nd Lt. Robert E. Thorpe**, a Rhode Island hero who lost his life after flying a combat mission for the 39th Fighter Squadron; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to **Governor Lincoln Chafee** and **Captain Lewis Lockhart**.

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText13/HouseText13/H6118.pdf>