

Rear Admiral Sheldon Hoard Kinney, United States Navy, Retired

Naval Officer, Commandant of Midshipmen, College President and Maritime Educator

Rear Admiral (Ret.) Sheldon Hoard Kinney of Annapolis, Maryland, died December 11, 2004 at age 86, in his home following a brave fight with cancer. His 38-year naval career included distinguished combat service in three wars, and took him from Signalman to command of 125 ships and 65,000 officers and crew of the Cruiser-Destroyer Force of the Pacific Fleet. He served as the Navy's Chief of Education & Training, as Commandant of Midshipmen at the Naval Academy, as President of the New York State Maritime College at Ft. Schuyler, and as Rector (President) of the World Maritime University of the United Nations at Malmö, Sweden.

Admiral Kinney grew up with a love of sailing and of the deep ocean and crewed on a sailing schooner to Hawaii, so the Navy was the natural choice for a young man who wanted to see the world. His Navy career began with his enlistment in 1935 -- one year before he was to finish High School. Rear Admiral Kinney was the son of Harold S. Kinney of the Mt. Wilson Observatory and Gladys Hoard Kinney of Pasadena and Balboa Island, California.

Seaman Sheldon Kinney first served aboard the USS Omaha and then as a Signalman aboard the battleship USS New York representing the United States at the last gathering of the world's great Dreadnaughts for the Coronation Review at Spithead by King George VI of Great Britain.

Kinney was selected from the fleet to attend the U.S. Naval Academy in 1937. He lettered in Crew and found sailing still his first love. He was presented the Class of 1897 Sword now displayed with his medals at Bancroft Hall as a legacy for future Midshipmen. His class of 1941 graduated early in February 1941 for immediate sea duty with the clouds of War looming over two oceans.

Ensign Kinney reported aboard USS Sturtevant for convoy duties in the North Atlantic winter where her sister ship USS Reuben James was sunk. His ship survived being rammed at sea. On a subsequent operation Lieutenant Kinney received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for Heroism for diving from his ship to rescue two downed aviators. Later, the Sturtevant was sunk and he survived by floating on a bag of whole coffee beans.

Kinney took command of the USS Edsall in 1943, becoming the youngest Commanding Officer of a destroyer-type ship. He then commissioned and took command of the USS Bronstein. The Bronstein was credited with sinking three German U Boats in one night (U-603, U-709, U-801) and putting U-441 out of action. Lt. Kinney was awarded the Navy Cross for this extended action and the USS Bronstein received a Presidential Unit Citation. Admiral Robert Carney, Chief of Naval Operations (1953-55) described the USS Bronstein's fight that night as "the most concentrated and successful antisubmarine action by a U.S. Navy ship during World War II."

Admiral Kinney served as the Anti-Submarine Warfare officer on the staff of the Commander Destroyers Atlantic at the end of WWII. He went on to command the USS Ludlow and USS Taylor. The Taylor's actions in the Korean War included distinguished engagements at Wonsan Harbor for which the ship was commended. He commanded the USS Mitscher, the Navy's first guided missile Frigate, served in London on the staff of the Commander U.S. Naval Forces Europe, and then commanded USS Mississinewa, Amphibious Squadron 12, and then the naval gunfire support ships of Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla 11 in Operation Sea Dragon in Viet Nam. Admiral Kinney's final command was as Commander Cruiser Destroyer Forces Pacific, but his proudest moment was serving as Commandant of his beloved Naval Academy. Despite his skill and ferocity as a warrior his core sense of vocation was in training, encouraging and guiding new generations of seafarers and seakeepers.

Following his Navy retirement in 1972, Admiral Kinney served as President of the State University of New York (SUNY) Maritime College at Fort Schuyler for ten years. He was a founder and later Rector (President) of the World Maritime University of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) of the United Nations at Malmö, Sweden. He also served as Special Advisor to the Secretary General of the IMO in London, and later as a sparkplug for the Friends of the World Maritime University nonprofit foundation supporting WMU's mission of safer seas and cleaner oceans in developing maritime countries. A Doctoral Fellowship as well as a Memorial Prize Lecture with bronze medallion have been established at WMU in his honor.

Rear Admiral Kinney's decorations included the Navy Cross, Legion of Merit [Combat V] with 2 Gold Stars, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, Bronze Star [Combat V], Navy Commendation Medal, and numerous Unit, Campaign, Occupation, Service, United Nations and foreign government medals. Rear Admiral Kinney received the Order of the Patriotic War, First Class from the U.S.S.R. for perilous convoy protection runs to Murmansk and the northern

ports of Russia. He was awarded the Gold Cross of Merit from the Polish Government in Exile for spiring the treasury of the government in gold bullion across the submarine-infested Atlantic one league ahead of the Nazis from Dakar to New York City for safekeeping.

While he never finished High School, RADM Kinney held a B.S. in Marine Engineering from the Naval Academy, as well as two masters degrees and his Juris Doctor (Order of the Coif) from George Washington University. He served as Editor of the Naval Institute Proceedings, as Ordnance and Gunnery instructor and later Commandant of Midshipmen at the Naval Academy. He was a 1960 graduate of the National War College.

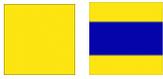
Admiral Kinney was an enthusiastic member of the Deer Isle (Maine) Yacht Club, the Cruising Club of America and the New York Yacht Club and helped organize two defenses of the Americas Cup. A sheltered mooring with the pennants of the three clubs will be established in Penobscot Bay to carry on his tradition of friendship and hospitality to his fellow sailors.

RADM Kinney is survived by his beloved wife of 64 years, Elizabeth (Lea) Douglas Kinney, of Annapolis, MD and by his sons Douglas Sheldon Kinney and wife Stephanie Smith Kinney of Washington, DC, and Capt. Bruce H. Kinney, USNR Ret., and his wife Dr. Jean Muench of Snellville, GA. He is also survived by his brother CDR Donald Kinney USN (Ret.) and his wife Jean of Orange Park, FL and brother in law Robert Douglas and his wife Karin of Stratford, CT. Admiral Kinney is also mourned by his grandson Kevin Kinney, his wife Beth and great-grandson Alexander of Duluth, MN; granddaughter Kimberly Kinney Hutcherson and her husband Michael of McKinney, Texas; and granddaughter Mercier Kinney of New York City. Admiral Kinney's other brother Gilbert had also joined the Navy in the 1930s and lies entombed to this day at his duty station aboard the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor.

A final honors ceremony and 13-gun salute will be conducted for Rear Admiral Sheldon Kinney at the U.S. Naval Academy Cemetery on Friday, January 21, at 11:00 a.m. (<http://home.comcast.net/~radmshk/index.html>). His family requests that in lieu of flowers contributions be sent to the "Rear Admiral Sheldon Kinney Memorial" to help establish a prize sword or similar award to be presented to a distinguished Naval Academy graduate entering the Navy or the Marine Corps who exemplifies Admiral Kinney's legacy of achievement, leadership, learning and constant concern for his shipmates, friends and the Nation. Contributions may be sent to: Rear Admiral Sheldon Kinney Memorial, U.S. Naval Academy Foundation, POB 64740, Baltimore, Maryland 21264-4740.

A "Logbook" is available for Sheldon Kinney's family, friends, shipmates and colleagues to share stories and photos at <http://www.legacy.com/Link.asp?Id=GB02954635X>. This long-term collection celebrating his life and friendships will be reprinted annually for the Naval Academy recipient of the Memorial Award to better understand Rear Admiral Kinney's legacy of service to our Nation, and will serve as a lasting and dynamic tribute from all who wish him Fair Winds and Following Seas.

Dad asked a lot of his God: Determination, vision, steady courage, the ability to summon valor, and compassion. All were granted. Following signals received, Dad:



QUEBEC-DELTA: "I am going ahead." In the Battle of the Atlantic, at Wonsan Harbor, off Viet Nam, through 38 years of seakeeping for the Republic and decades of preparing young sailors and officers for sea, in all you said and when you led by example, your ability to set and run a determined and often dangerous course inspires others to this day.



TANGO-YANKEE: "Thank you." From Bluejacket to leadership in several fields at home and abroad, your eagerness to give thanks for even the smallest things, and to acknowledge and share credit, was a becoming hallmark of a gentleman.



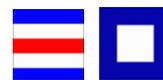
JULIET-LIMA: "You are running the risk of going aground." Your gift for mentoring, for counseling, for teaching and training enfolded the leadership art of giving someone broad guidance and letting them learn by navigating their way - and learning so much more thoroughly and deeply - up to the point where you had to take the helm and give direct guidance and experience.



BRAVO-ZULU: "Well done!" Your gift for enjoying, encouraging and recognizing achievement by others - your force multiplier - was deeply felt and intuitive. Your zeal to instill that in institutions helps ensure wider and more lasting achievements and victories than can one man.



ECHO-DELTA: We have understood your distress signals.



CHARLIE-PETER: "I am coming to help." Your unerring instinct to help those in distress of any kind made you who you were and made the world a better place, not only for the rescues, the saving smokescreens, the fearsome and persistent attacks on aggressors -- as well as the helping hands and the kind words for those down on one knee or in pain - but equally for the inspiration which that gallantry or those kindnesses provide others.

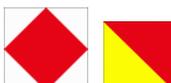


PETER-PETER: "Keep well clear of me." Assiduous skill and ferocity in prosecuting the attack, tempered with respect and compassion for the defeated enemy, are the marks of a great warrior.

Good crossing, Dad. Set your sails in the sure and certain knowledge that you are loved and that you made a difference and -- the rarest of God's gifts -- you continue to make a difference.



LIMA-ROMEO: "Crossing the Bar is not dangerous." You knew that. Carry on, as the Order of Service for Burial at Sea used to read, in your "sure and certain hope."



FOXTROT-OSCAR. We will find you and know you among the good and true.



BRAVO-ZULU. Your family, Navy and Nation are in your debt.
