
Obituaries

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Highly decorated retired Adm. John J. Hyland dies

By Harold Morse
Star-Bulletin



Retired Adm. John J. Hyland, 1967-70 Pacific Fleet commander, Honolulu resident and much-decorated scion of an old Navy family, died Sunday in St. Francis Hospice after a brief illness. He was 86.

A naval aviator, he championed the aircraft carrier. "The aircraft carrier is one way to provide first-class tactical air power in a selected area," he once said.

Born in Philadelphia, he graduated from the Naval Academy in 1934, 34 years after the academy graduation of his father, a Navy captain. He became a Navy flier in 1937.

In the Philippines at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack, he took part in the defense of the Philippines, various engagements in the Dutch East Indies and the 1942 Allied pullback to Australia. Later that year, he became Fleet Adm. Ernest J. King's personal pilot, returning to the Pacific in 1943.

He commanded an air group flying off the carrier *Intrepid* and took part in various combat actions in the last years of World War II.

His postwar career included a number of command positions, both sea and air. He also was a Navy test pilot and served in various high-ranking staff positions. He took over the Pacific Fleet with promotion to full admiral after his 1965-67 command of the 7th Fleet in Southeast Asian waters. His arrival then marked his third Pearl Harbor tour. In 1940, he was stationed here, and his family lived six months on Ford Island. In 1954, he returned to Hawaii to become Pacific Fleet air operations officer.

After retiring Jan. 1, 1971, Hyland held business directorships and continued an active interest in naval aviation. He was elected to the Naval Aviation Hall of Honor in Pensacola, Fla., and the Naval Aviation Test Pilots Hall of Honor in Charleston, S.C.

His awards and decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal with gold star for second award for exceptional meritorious service; Distinguished Flying Cross with gold stars for two additional awards for heroism or extraordinary achievement in flight; Silver Star for gallantry in action in leading a low-level air attack against an enemy air base at Kure, Japan, on March 19, 1945; and Air Medal with gold stars for four additional awards for meritorious service in war or peace. Decorations from governments of the Netherlands, Philippines, Japan, South Korea, Republic of China and South Vietnam also came to Hyland. He received the John Paul Jones Award for inspirational leadership from the Navy League in 1966.

His wife, the former Florence Day Whiting, died in 1991. An art admirer, she was a volunteer with the Honolulu Academy of Arts. The admiral is survived by sons John J. Hyland III and Whiting Walker Hyland; daughters Nancy Arnold and Pamela Hyland; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

A Mass will be said at 11 a.m. tomorrow at the Naval Station Chapel, Pearl Harbor, with visitation from 10:45 a.m. Inurnment will follow in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Punchbowl, at 1 p.m. tomorrow. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Honolulu Academy of Arts, 800 S. Beretania St., Honolulu 96813; or St. Francis Hospice, 24 Puiwa Road, Honolulu 96817.