



Thomas F. Connolly Vice Admiral, USN

Vice Admiral Connolly became the seventeenth Naval Officer to serve as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) when he relieved Vice Admiral Paul H. Ramsey on November 1, 1966. He served as such until relieved of active duty pending his retirement, effective September 1, 1971.

He was born October 24, 1909, in St. Paul, Minnesota. While attending the University of California at Los Angeles, he was appointed to the Naval Academy in 1929 from the Eleventh Congressional District of California. As a Midshipman he was a member of the U. S. Olympic Team of 1932, athletic editor of the *Lucky Bag*, and awarded the Society of Cincinnati Sword for excellence in modern languages.

Graduation in 1933 was followed by sea duty and then flight training at Pensacola where he was designated a Naval Aviator in 1936. His early aviation career was marked by tours in several flight squadrons culminating in his war-time command of Patrol Squadron THIRTEEN, for which service he was awarded the DFC and Air Medal, each with two Gold Stars. During this early period he received a Master of Science Degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Post war assignments engaged him in test pilot activities at Patuxent River, Maryland; as Executive Officer of the carrier *Rendova* and as Experimental Officer, Naval Ordnance Test Station, China Lake, California, prior to a Washington tour in the Navy's Strategic Plans Division.

Command of two aircraft carriers; *Corregidor* and *Hornet* followed and in 1958 he returned to Washington to become Assistant Chief for Pacific Missile Range and Astronautics in the Bureau of Aeronautics. He held this post until April 1961, when he became Commander Carrier Division SEVEN.

In May 1962, he again returned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, first as Director of Strike Warfare Division, then as Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Operations and Readiness; and finally as Special Assistant to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Operations and Readiness. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious service as Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Operations and Readiness from May 1964 to August 1965. Admiral Connolly was known for his opposition to F-111B. His testimony to Congress was that it was too heavy to land on carriers. He was backed in this opinion by RADM G. E. Miller and Mr. George Spangenberg, the top Navy civilian engineer.

October 31, 1965, Admiral Connolly assumed the post of Commander Naval Air Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet, serving until November 1, 1966. As a result of his meritorious service in that capacity, he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Legion of Merit.

In 1969 Admiral Connolly was the recipient of two distinguished awards; the National Aviation Club Award for Achievement, and the coveted Kitty Hawk Memorial Award (Military).

Admiral Connolly was married to the former Margaret Irene Hagy of Beverly Hills, California. They had a son, Thomas F. Jr. born March 8, 1944 and a daughter, Susten Loraine, born January 4, 1947. Admiral Connolly died on 31 May 1996.

Duty Assignment Chronology

6/29-6/33	U. S. Naval Academy. Midshipman.
6/33-6/35	USS <i>Cincinnati</i> (CL-6).
6/35-8/36	NAS, Pensacola, FL. Instruction.
8/36-6/38	USS <i>Nevada</i> (BB-36).
6/38-6/39	Patrol Squadron TWELVE.
6/39-9/44	U. S. Naval Academy, Postgraduate School (Student).
6/42-9/44	CO, Patrol Squadron THIRTEEN.
9/44-10/44	Staff, Commander Fleet Air, West Coast.
10/44-2/47	NAS, Patuxent River, MD. Assistant Director, Flight Test.
2/47-7/48	XO, USS <i>Rendova</i> (CVE-114).
7/48-4/51	Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, MD. Director, Test Pilot Training Division.
4/51-6/51	Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, Sandia Base, Albuquerque, N. M. (Instruction).
6/51-8/51	Heavy Attack Wing ONE (Instruction).
8/51-7/52	CO, Composite Squadron SIX.
7/52-6/54	Naval Ordnance Test Station, Inyokern, Calif. Experimental Officer/Acting Exec Officer.
6/54-6/56	Office of CNO, Head, Special Weapons Plans Branch, Strategic Plans Division.
6/56-6/57	CO, USS <i>Corregidor</i> (T-CVU-58).
6/57-8/57	Fleet Airborne Electronics Training Unit, Pacific (Instruction).

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Duty Assignment Chronology continued

8/57-8/58 CO, USS *Hornet* (CVA-12).
8/58-12/59 Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, D. C.,
Assistant Chief for Pacific Missile Range.
12/59-4/61 Bureau of Naval Weapons, Washington, D. C.,
Assistant Chief for Pacific Missile Range and
Astronautics.
4/61-5/62 Commander, Carrier Division SEVEN.
5/62-5/64 Office of CNO, Director, Strike Warfare
Division.
5/64-10/65 Office of CNO, Assistant CNO for Fleet
Operations and Readiness.
10/65-11/66 Commander, Naval Air Force, Pacific Fleet
11/66-11/69 Office of CNO (Deputy CNO (Air)).
9/1/71 Retired from Naval service

MEDALS AND AWARDS

Legion of Merit with one gold star in lieu of second award
Distinguished Flying Cross with two gold stars in lieu of
subsequent awards
Air Medal with two gold stars in lieu of subsequent awards
American Defense Service Medal
American Campaign Medal
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal
China Service Medal
World War II Victory Medal
National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star in lieu
of second award

TRANSCRIPT OF NAVAL SERVICE

24 OCT 1909 Born in St. Paul, Minnesota
1 JUL 1929 Midshipman, U. S. Naval Academy
1 JUN 1933 Ensign
1 JUN 1936 Lieutenant (junior grade)
1 JUL 1940 Lieutenant
1 OCT 1942 Lieutenant Commander
1 JAN 1944 Commander
1 JUL 1951 Captain
1 APR 1960 Rear Admiral
1 NOV 1965 Designated Vice Admiral while serving in
billets commensurate with that grade
Service continuous to date
9/1/71 Retired from active duty.