



MARITIME PATROL AND RECONNAISSANCE FORCE HALL OF HONOR

Rear Admiral Byron “Jake” Tobin

United States Navy

Rear Admiral Tobin was born in Newark, New Jersey in 1937 and after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania attended Aviation Officer Candidate School earning his commission and Naval Aviator wings in November 1962. His initial tour was with VP-45, where he first flew P-5M Marlin flying boats from Bermuda and participated in the transitioning of the squadron to P-3As, deploying to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba prosecuting Soviet submarines. He subsequently reported to VP-30 as an instructor pilot. After serving aboard the USS INTREPID (CV-11), where he participated in a North Atlantic deployment conducting anti-submarine patrols including areas north of the Arctic Circle, he was selected to attend the Naval War College. Following his department head tour in VP-5, he was selected for his first of 9 command tours in the Navy, reporting to VP-49 in 1977. He drove his crews to understand the “Art of ASW” and for their efforts his squadron was awarded the coveted Arnold J Isbell Trophy for ASW excellence.

He subsequently commanded the Naval Recruiting District Pittsburgh and returned to the community to command VP-30 in 1980. Following a tour on the CNO’s staff, he returned to Jacksonville to command Patrol Wing ELEVEN. This tour was marked by a significant increase in Soviet submarine patrols off the east coast of the United States, which required special attention be paid to protecting our submarine bases. Then CAPT Tobin worked tirelessly with the Commander of Submarine Squadron FOUR and developed what came to be called Task Force Sierra, which saw P-3Cs working highly successful combined ASW operations with US submarines. Over the next 3 years, the Soviets conducted several surge operations but Task Force Sierra operations resulted in the withdrawal of these submarines as the Soviets realized they were at extreme risk due to the successful prosecution by both P-3Cs and US submarines. Under CAPT Tobin’s leadership the P-3 community enjoyed its highest level of ASW readiness and some of the most successful operations of the Cold War.

After serving on the CNO’s Strategic Studies Group, RADM Tobin held his first flag command as the Commander of the newly established Mine Warfare Command, while also commanding Naval Base Charleston, SC. He returned to his beloved MPRA community in 1989, serving as Commander Patrol Wings, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. During this tour he surpassed 6,000 flight hours and directed the community’s support of the build-up for Operation Desert Storm. Continuing the Navy’s recognition of his leadership ability, RADM Tobin subsequently commanded Naval Base Norfolk, and finally, U. S. Naval Forces in Japan. Upon retiring from the Navy after 36 years, RADM Tobin and his wife, Sally, continued to serve together as they supported numerous charities in the Norfolk area and he was appointed President of the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation.