



MARITIME PATROL AND RECONNAISSANCE FORCE HALL OF HONOR

Commander Kenneth Walker

United States Navy

CDR Kenneth Walker enlisted in the Navy in 1966, quickly attaining the rank of First Class Aviation Acoustic Warfare Operator. The Cold War was heating up and the US Navy was shifting surface and carrier forces away from ASW as a primary mission. At the same time, the Soviet Navy was deploying new classes of nuclear attack, cruise missile and the first Yankee and Delta class ballistic missile submarines to locations off our shores. Pressure mounted on air ASW forces to hold Soviet submarines "at risk" when underway, which then AW1 Walker took as a personal challenge and spent his entire naval career in pursuit of. Possessing a vision, passion and unmatched intellect for passive ASW, then AW1 Walker displayed the boldness and perseverance that garnered him the oft used fleet nickname as the "Father of Beartrap", the gold standard program of acoustic measurements. Assigned to Patrol Wing 11 as an acoustic analyst, he integrated the tactical with the scientific into standardized training and readiness programs on numerous topics, most notably, Submarine Target Characteristics and Acoustic Propagation Loss Models on all variants of Soviet submarines. He built the initial training material for environmental effects on acoustic propagation, and much of his material was submitted to the CNO, who had them distributed to all surface, submarine and aviation ASW schools. For his work he was named the 1974 Shore Sailor of the Year and selected for Aviation Officer Candidate School.

Upon his commissioning and winging as a Naval Flight Officer, he returned to the VP community and served in VP-24, where he earned two Navy Commendation medals for his work as a Beartrap Tacco on missions against several new class Soviet submarines, while developing the first truly standardized tracking procedures for ASW aircrews. Following this tour he was once again assigned to Patrol Wing 11, this time to head up the newly established Special ASW Projects Office. Although a significant amount of his work was and remains classified, recognition of his unmatched efforts at improving all things related to ASW are reflected by the fact that he served in this position for 11 consecutive years and was selected for early promotion to Commander. His devotion was constantly noted by senior officers, as he passed up more career enhancing positions to continue to drive up the knowledge and capability of the US Navy ASW community. As the Cold War wound down in 1990, CDR Walker was recruited for the staff of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (DASN) for ASW. In this capacity, he constantly pushed the envelope in the field of ASW research and development efforts and authored several influential reports, such as the 1991 ASW Master Plan, that have brought to fruition many of the ASW system upgrades that air, surface and subsurface crews utilize today. Numerous flag officers have remarked that our ASW capacity was influenced more directly by CDR Walker than by any other individual and most associate to him the remark made by Soviet General Sergei F. Akhromeyev to Admiral Crowe at the end of the Cold War: "When I wanted to know where my submarines were, I looked to see where your P-3s were flying."