

Robert Jackson Brenton

Captain Robert J. Brenton, USN (Ret.), died of natural causes at his home in Virginia Beach, VA, on 23 May 2024. He was 86 years old.

A native of Western Colorado, “Bob” received his appointment to the Naval Academy from his congressman, Wayne Aspinall. He graduated with his class in June 1960, a member of the 12th Company.

Upon graduation, he began his seagoing career homeported in San Diego, CA, on a series of destroyers serving in the Pacific. He served on PERKINS (DD-877), HALSEY POWELL (DD-686), Destroyer Division 172 staff and SUTHERLAND (DD-743) as executive officer. These last two destroyer assignments were in support of the Vietnam War, where assignments included shore bombardment, Operation Market Time and off-shore interdiction.

After earning his Master of Science in Electronics Engineering at the Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey, CA, and attending the Naval War College in Newport, RI, he served as commanding officer of CALCATERRA (DE-390) in Key West, FL. His next assignment took him to Wilhelmshaven, Germany, as an exchange officer with the Federal German Navy. This was a wonderful assignment for the whole family. He returned from Germany for his last seagoing assignment as commanding officer of AINSWORTH (FF-1090) in Norfolk, VA. His final shore assignments were at Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, VA. He served as commanding officer of the Naval Amphibious School and retired in 1985 as Commander, Surface Warfare Development Group.

Bob retired in Virginia Beach and began a small business investing in and renovating residential properties. This segued into a second career as a licensed contractor in residential remodeling. During his retirement years, Bob was active in his church, Bayside Presbyterian. He coordinated and participated in multiple foreign mission trips, which took him to Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. Using his residential construction experience, Bob participated in Habitat for Humanity, and his favorite charity, Faith Works Coalition, doing home repairs for low-income families.

Bob is survived by his wonderful wife of 63 years, Bobbie Y. Wade. They were married in Bobbie’s home church in Hagerstown, MD, on 3 December 1960. He is also survived by their beloved children, Rebecca Rawls, Elizabeth Taft and Brian Brenton; eight grandchildren; and ten great-grandchildren.

July-August 2024 Shipmate