

VICE ADMIRAL RALPH WALDO CHRISTIE,  
UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

Vice Admiral Christie was born in Somerville, Massachusetts, on August 30, 1893. He attended grammar school in Somerville and high school in Wakefield, Massachusetts, before his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, from the Seventh District of his native state in 1911. Graduated and commissioned Ensign in June 1915, he progressed in grade to the rank of Rear Admiral, effective November 9, 1942. On August 1, 1949, he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy, and advanced to the grade of Vice Admiral.

Upon graduation in 1915, Vice Admiral Christie joined the USS NEW JERSEY and after serving in her for a year was transferred to the USS MONTANA for torpedo instruction. In January 1917 he was under submarine instruction in the USS FULTON, and upon completion of this course joined the submarine C-1 the following July, assuming command of her in January 1918. Detached from the C-1 in February 1919, he was ordered to duty in connection with fitting out the USS CALDEN, serving in this submarine tender until August 1920, when he assumed command of the submarine R-6.

Vice Admiral Christie was under instruction in ordnance engineering at the Postgraduate School at Annapolis from December 1920 until September 1921. This was followed by a special course of instruction in mechanical engineering (torpedoes) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he received the degree of Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering in June 1923.

After a short tour of duty as Commanding Officer of the submarine S-1, Vice Admiral Christie joined the USS ARGONNE in October 1923 for passage to the Asiatic Station where in December of that year he was assigned to the submarine tender RAINBOW. In April 1924 he assumed command of the USS S-17, and the following September was transferred to duty in the destroyer JOHN D. FORD. He was Officer in Charge of the Submarine Base, Cavite, Philippine Islands, from July 1925 until April 1926, and was Commander of that base for a short period.

After his return to the United States in the summer of 1926, Vice Admiral Christie was on duty at the Naval Torpedo Station, Newport, Rhode Island, for two years. In September 1928 he joined the USS ARGONNE, tender and flagship of Submarine Division TWENTY, Battle Fleet, serving as her Torpedo Repair Officer until November 1930 when he was transferred to the USS HOLLAND, flagship of Submarine Divisions, Battle Fleet. In February 1931 he returned to the Naval Torpedo Station at Newport where he was on duty until he assumed command of the submarine NARWHAL in the spring of 1933.

In May 1934, Vice Admiral Christie reported to the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Newport News, Virginia, for duty in connection with fitting out the USS RANGER, serving as Navigator of that aircraft carrier from her commissioning June 4, 1934, until June 1936, when he became Head of the Torpedo Section, Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. In January 1939 he assumed duty as Commander, Submarine Division FIFTEEN, and from December 1940 until November 1942, was Commander, Submarine Squadron TWENTY, redesignated Submarine Squadron FIVE during his command. In November 1942 he was given additional duty as Commander Task Force FORTY TWO. For meritorious service in this assignment

he was awarded the Legion of Merit and cited as follows:

LEGION OF MERIT:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service as Commander, Submarine Squadron FIVE from April 15, 1942 and as Commander Task Force FORTY-TWO from April 21 to December 23, 1942. His outstanding administrative ability and thorough knowledge of submarine warfare contributed materially to the efficient operations of the forces under his command. These submarines under his command sank thirty enemy ships totaling 181,800 tons, five of which were enemy combatant units, and damaged twenty enemy ships totaling 105,800 tons. Under his direction and supervision a base and submarine repair units were established at Brisbane, Australia to adequately repair and supply submarines and rehabilitate their crews. He coordinated the various allied naval vessels and shore establishments comprising Task Force FORTY-TWO in an outstanding manner and his conduct was at all times in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Vice Admiral Christie was Inspector of Ordnance in Charge, Naval Torpedo Station, Newport, Rhode Island, from January to March 1943, when he reported as Commander, Submarines, Southwest Pacific, with additional duty as Commander of Task Force FIFTY-ONE. For his services in this command, Vice Admiral Christie was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and the Army Silver Star Medal with the following citations:

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL:

"For exceptionally meritorious service to the Government of the United States in a duty of great responsibility as Commander Naval Forces, Western Australia; Commander Submarines, Seventh Fleet; and Commander of a Task Force from March 1, 1943, to November 23, 1944. A courageous and forceful leader, insistent on rigorous indoctrination and training, Rear Admiral Christie has consistently imbued in the officers and men under his command a high degree of initiative and self-reliance as evidenced by their outstanding success in executing numerous reconnaissance, evacuation, shore bombardment and air-sea rescue missions in addition to their notable record in the primary duty of sinking vital Japanese shipping. By his remarkable professional skill, expert seamanship and tireless devotion to duty during these hazardous engagements, Rear Admiral Christie has been directly instrumental in furthering the progress of the war in the Southwest Pacific Area. His distinguished and valuable service throughout this period reflects the highest credit upon Rear Admiral Christie, his command and the United States Naval Service."

ARMY SILVER STAR MEDAL:

"For gallantry in action in the Southwest Pacific Area in June 1944."

In February 1945, Vice Admiral Christie assumed duty as Commandant, Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, Washington. After the reorganization of Naval Shore Establishments late in 1945, Vice Admiral Christie's title was changed to Commandant, U. S. Naval Base, Bremerton, Washington. He served in that assignment

until January 28, 1948 when he was ordered to duty as Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, Philippines. On March 10, 1949, he was ordered relieved to return to the United States for further assignment, and in April reported as General Inspector for Commander, Western Sea Frontier. On August 1, 1949, he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Silver Star Medal and the Legion of Merit, Vice Admiral Christie has the World War I Victory Medal, Submarine Clasp (USS C-1); the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the American Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon. He was also made an Officer of the Order of the Orange-Nassau by the Netherlands Government.