

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

CAPTAIN JOHN JAY FLACHSENHAR, U. S. NAVY

John Jay Flachsenhar was born in Mankato, Minnesota, on May 16, 1914, son of J. J. Flachsenhar and Mrs. (Allie A. Scherer) Flachsenhar. He was graduated from Mankato High School and entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from his native state on June 29, 1931. He was graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 3, 1935, and through subsequent advancement attained the rank of Captain, to date from July 1, 1954.

After graduation from the Naval Academy, he was assigned to the USS CONCORD (CL-10), and served as Watch and Division Officer in that cruiser until June 1937, when he reported to the Submarine School, New London, Connecticut, for submarine instruction. He completed the course in December 1937, and in January 1938 joined the USS POLLACK, a submarine of the Pacific Fleet, and served as Torpedo Officer, Gunnery Officer, and First Lieutenant until October 1939. He was then transferred to the USS PERMIT, in which he served as Gunnery Officer, First Lieutenant, Torpedo Officer, and finally Executive Officer prior to and following the outbreak of World War II, during eight War Patrols in the Asiatic-Pacific Area.

Detached from the PERMIT in May 1943, he assisted in fitting out the USS ROCK, and at her commissioning in October of that year assumed command. Under his command the ROCK soon proceeded to the Pacific where she engaged in five War Patrols during the period ending in February 1945. For his war service Captain Flachsenhar was awarded the Silver Star Medal, a Gold Star in lieu of the second SSM, and a Letter of Commendation, with Ribbon and Combat "V."

Silver Star Medal: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Engineer and Repair Officer, Diving Officer and Assistant Approach Officer of a United States submarine during War Patrols in enemy Japanese-controlled waters during World War II. Performing his duties with courage and efficiency Lieutenant Commander Flachsenhar contributed materially to the sinking or damaging of more than 40,000 tons of enemy shipping. During an attack on a heavily escorted convoy, he was responsible in large measure for the correct firing data which enabled his ship to sink two Japanese vessels and to damage a third..."

Gold Star in lieu of the Second Silver Star Medal: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Commanding Officer of the USS ROCK, during the Third War Patrol of that vessel in enemy Japanese controlled waters from June 22 to August 12, 1944. Braving adverse weather conditions, (he) penetrated heavy enemy escort screens to deliver two bold torpedo attacks and inflict severe damage on five hostile ships, totalling 39,000 tons. Escaping subsequent enemy countermeasures, he succeeded in returning to port without damage to his ship..."

In April 1945 he reported to the Naval Shipyard, Hunter's Point, San Francisco, California, where he remained on duty for a year. From June 1946 until October 1947 he was Commanding Officer of the USS CARP, another submarine operating in the Pacific Area, and when detached he began a tour of duty at San Diego, California, as Director of Welfare on the Staff of the Commandant, Eleventh Naval District. Detached from that assignment in May 1950, he served from July of that year until August 1953 as Operations Officer, Military Sea Transportation Service, Western Pacific Area, at Tokyo, Japan.

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He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and cited for "meritorious achievement in the Western Pacific - Far Eastern Area from 7 July 1950 to 8 August 1953..."

In September 1953 he assumed command of the USS WARRICK (AKA-89), and remained in command of that cargo attack vessel until November 1954. The WARRICK was awarded the "E" for the period July 1, 1954 to July 1, 1955. In December 1954 he reported as Commanding Officer of the U. S. Naval Schools Command, at Treasure Island, San Francisco, California. On November 22, 1957 he was detached for duty as Chief of the Naval Section, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Viet Nam, Saigon. On his return to the United States in 1960, he became Administrative Officer of the Boston Naval Shipyard. On March 12, 1962, he was assigned duty as Assistant Chief of Staff, J-4 Division, to Commander U. S. Forces, Japan.

In addition to the Silver Star Medal with Gold Star, the Bronze Star Medal, and the Commendation Ribbon with Combat "V," Captain Flachsenhar has the Army Distinguished Unit Emblem; the American Defense Service Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; China Service Medal (extended); Navy Occupation Service Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Korean Service Medal; United Nations Service Medal; and the Submarine Combat Pin with four stars. He also has the Philippine Defense Ribbon; Philippine Liberation Ribbon; Philippine Independence Ribbon; and Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge.

Captain Flachsenhar is a Life Member of the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States.

Navy Office of Information
Biographies Branch
22 June 1962