



Leland Drynan White

AUG 14, 1919 - JUL 4, 2017



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Leland Drynan White

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Leland Drynan White was born on August 14, 1919 in Palo Alto, California , the home of Stanford University. He was named Leland after the founder of the university. His middle name, Drynan was his mothers maiden name. Lee's mother died when he was only nine years old. Fortunately for Lee and his four siblings, two older and two younger, they had a wonderful father. Albert White had emigrated from New Zealand when he was 39, and now raised his five children by himself while working full time to successfully keep the family together and off the welfare rolls during the Great Depression.

Lee grew up in Oakdale, a farming community on the Stanislaus River where he spent many happy hours swimming, rafting and fishing. But in 1933 his father contacted tuberculosis and died a year later. Lee dropped out of high school after only two years and worked at agricultural jobs until he turned 17. Then, after being on a waiting list for eight months he finally got his childhood wish and enlisted in the United States Navy.

Following completion of recruit training (boot camp) at Naval Training Center San Diego, Lee was assigned to the light cruiser USS Richmond (Cl-9). But when war broke out in 1941 he immediately volunteered for submarine duty. He was accepted and sent to the Submarine School at New London, Connecticut for basic submarine training. Upon graduation he was assigned to the newly commissioned submarine USS Muskellunge (SS-262). Lee served aboard Muskellunge throughout the war, making all seven of her war patrols in the Pacific.

After the war Lee re-enlisted and subsequently served aboard two other submarines, USS Chopper (SS-342) and USS. Gudgen (SS-567), as well as several shore based assignments. Lee retired from the navy as a Chief Engineman, ENC(SS) on August 3, 1960 after 24 years of service to his country. He was awarded and authorized to wear the following medals and commendations:



Obituary

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Combat Action Ribbon

Navy Good Conduct Medal with three stars

Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two stars

World War Two Victory Medal

Philippine Liberation Medal with one star

Submarine Combat Pin with two stars

Only a week after retiring from the Navy Lee began his second career in civilian life, joining Philco on August 8, 1960. Philco was later purchased by Ford and renamed Ford Aerospace. Lee enjoyed a 22 year career with the two companies, finally retiring for good in 1984.

Lee's wife of 57 years, Helen died on February 16, 2008. He was also predeceased by his only son Leland Gary.

United States Submarine Veterans membership number 5791 is hereby retired.

Sailor, rest your oar.



Tribute Wall

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TW

Tony Welch posted:

For an insight into Chief Petty Officer Leland White's combat days aboard the USS Muskallunge, google up "Muskallunge – Kilroy Was Here." It was my privilege to do an oral history/first-person account on Lee's WW2 adventures. As a machinist mate, Lee kept the submarine's diesel engines running and in good repair — and did the same with himself post-war — living just short of 98 years. Long enough, thank heavens, for me to make his acquaintance and treasure his friendship. Tony Welch Oregon City, Oregon

August 14 at 5:27 PM

KA

Katherine posted:

Dedicated, true, a proud Member of United States Defense Forces contributor to the 52 Boats Memorial in San Diego. Loved always, White family

July 26 at 10:41 AM

KA

Katherine posted:

Sent a gift in memory of Leland Drynan White

July 26 at 10:37 AM

AA

Ariki Katherine La'a Kea posted:

Matua Keke Lee, Ariki of our family, beautiful soul lifted with Angels, and a new journey with many adventures in other realms, joined with his wife Helen and his brothers and sister and parents before him. Lee is the longest living of our family I know of and was a gracious and proud server of our country, loyal Navy officer and mate always. Lee, loved life, family, friends, his 'boats', his cars and the license plates, the Naval memorial he helped to build. Lee, sharp and witty always and a good friend. I am saddened to feel this loss, but he is with me always and I know he is in a good place I know I will see him again when I get there. Ka kite ano my Matua Keke, aroha nui, we shall meet again Ariki Kat xx

July 25 at 12:19 PM

SL

Susan White-Lowe posted:

Rest in peace Uncle Lee Susan White-Lowe daughter of Harvey White – Lee's brother.

July 25 at 11:11 AM



Tribute Wall

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JR

John Rezek posted:

Rest In Peace Uncle (once removed) Leland, job well done; BZ. And thank-you for protecting my country, my friends, my family & myself. You are an American Patriot, a Warrior, and a Protector of Freedom!

July 25 at 10:03 AM

HE

Helena posted:

In September, 2009 I booked a week long trip to a family history research center in Utah for my mother (Ruth). It was there, with the help of a genealogy expert that she finally discovered what happened to Albert White (Leland's father) in the early 1900's when he left New Zealand and never came back. Albert was about 13 months older than his sister Edith (my great grandma) and the two of them were close. Mum said Grandma Edith had often wondered what happened to her brother. Turns out Albert met a lovely American lady named Ms. Drynan. Married her and had several children, including Leland. In 2009, Leland (Lee) was the only surviving child of Albert's. My mother was thrilled that Lee wanted to meet as soon as possible. Within a couple of weeks, the two connected twice. Once in Chula Vista where Lee resided and once again when Lee drove his old Lincoln out to Phoenix (the area that I resided) to see my mother again. Lee was so happy to finally discover his fathers roots and meet so many of his relatives on his fathers side. Eventually, Lee visited Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii to meet many relatives. In New Zealand, he was delighted to visit the same places that many of his ancestors once lived including his Maori roots in Whakatane (Ngati Awa iwi). Lee was a real joy getting to know. He led such a fascinating life filled with adventure and service to his country. Lee was intelligent, kind, generous, and one of America's finest patriots. He will be missed but never forgotten. Until we meet again, ka kite ano. Arohanui, Helena

July 18 at 6:57 AM

LV

Libby Vick posted:

We were lucky enough to get to know Lee in his later years after the excellent genealogy research on the part of our cousin, Ruth Howard. We were thrilled to get to know our cousin Lee, and I know he was also thrilled to discover that he had a big family with cousins around the globe. Lee was smart, thoughtful, and charming. He added so much to our lives, and we will miss him greatly. The Vick family – Libby, Steve, Lauren & Courtney

July 13 at 6:54 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Leland by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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