

## Thomas Arthur Head



Captain Thomas Arthur Head, USN (Ret.), died on 15 May 2021 at his home in Flat Rock, NC. He was 82 years old.

A Navy junior born in Pensacola, FL, "Tom" was the son of Virginia Crocker Head and Captain Nelson Mead Head '31. He was a member of the 14th Company at the Naval Academy.

Tom enjoyed 26 memorable years as a surface warfare officer. He served aboard MYLES C. FOX (DDR-829), BARNEY (DDG-6), SAMPSON (DDG-10) and had command of TATTNALL (DDG-19).

After FOX, he was assigned to ComCruDesFlot Six's staff homeported in Charleston, SC, where he met his future wife, Legaré Benton. That tour included three months each as liaison officer on the French DDG, DUPETIT THOUARS and Italian DDG, IMPAVIDO.

As BARNEY's weapons officer, he went to Vietnam for the first time in 1967, where they saw action in Operations Sea Dragon and North Star (participating in 14 rescues in as many days). He spent the entire year of 1971 in Vietnam as ops at NSF DaNang for six months and then OIC NavSupActDet Qui Nhon for six months.

As XO of SAMPSON, he was part of the great Greece homeporting experiment in 1972/1973, known as Operation Pegasus.

He took TATTNALL to Northern European waters in 1978 for six months duty with the NATO Standing Naval Force. In 1982 and 1983, he was commander of Destroyer Squadron Nine based in Long Beach, CA. This included HMAS SYDNEY, built for the Australian Navy by Todd Shipyard, Seattle.

Shore duties included the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA; Strategic Systems US/UK Polaris projects officer, ICAF; and NavSea-06, BuPers. He earned a master's degree from The George Washington University.

He received the Legion of Merit, plus a number of other awards/medals during his career. Tom retired from the Navy in 1986 and was selected for the Alternative Science Teach Program, a joint DOD/DOE program. He taught physics at Lake Braddock Secondary School in Burke, VA, for 11 years.

He was active in his church at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Arlington, VA, and St. John in the Wilderness in Flat Rock, NC.

He is survived by his wife of over 56 years, Legaré; daughter, Caroline T. Knox; and three grandchildren, Eleanor, Turner and Henry Knox. He was predeceased by his brother, Nelson M. Head Jr.

*September 2021 Shipmate*