

## Robert Eugene Tucker



Captain Robert E. Tucker Jr., USN (Ret.), passed away peacefully on 16 December 2023 surrounded by his family. He was 86 years old. “Gene” was born in the Panama Canal Zone on 18 July 1937 to Colonel R.E. Tucker, USA, and Veronica (Waldron) and moved frequently during his childhood to many Army postings. After World War II, they were stationed in Berlin, where he had fond memories and liked to use the German words he had picked up. One of his favorite residences was Anna Maria, FL, where he lived with his young siblings. After retirement, he returned yearly to Anna Maria from his Washington, DC, home, along with family and friends to enjoy

watching sunsets and spending time together.

Gene was a proud graduate of the Naval Academy Class of 1960. He went on to flight training in Pensacola, FL, before becoming a test pilot at Pax River, MD. He served most of his career in the Virginia Beach area flying F-14s, then commanding fighter squadrons, ultimately serving as commanding officer of SYLVANIA (AFS-2) and CORAL SEA (CVE-57).

In Gene’s military career, he flew 6,186 hours while making 1,284 carrier arrested landings, (367 at night). During two Vietnam combat deployments, he shot down an enemy Mig and flew 275 combat missions. His combat awards include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal (5) and Navy Commendation Medal (4).

When he retired from the Navy, he flew with Presidential Airways and then went on to Lockheed Martin and Thales, where he spent four years working on the design of the HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH flight deck in Bristol, UK, where he enjoyed a good pub crawl.

Above all, Gene loved spending time with and entertaining his family and friends. He was the patriarch of his extended family and always made sure to take care of everyone and keep them laughing.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Dolly (Hauck) Tucker; children, Leslie Tucker, R.E. “Bob” Tucker III, Whitney Hauck Wood and Stephen Hauck; five grandchildren, R.E. “Tucker” Tucker IV, Ryan Tucker, Lieutenant Cooper Wood, USN, Emma Wood and Sarah Hauck; his former wife, Alice Tucker; sister, Anne Fister; and many nieces, nephews and cousins, all of whom he loved dearly.

*March-April 2024 Shipmate*