

Ronald William Hinkel



CDR "Ron" Hinkel, USN (Ret.), a retired naval pilot, husband, father, grandfather, uncle and dear friend passed away peacefully on August 27, 2026, while at home in McCormick, South Carolina, surrounded by his family. He enjoyed 88 years of life committed to the values of duty, honor, courage and family.

Born in Reading, Pennsylvania, he was the son of William Raymond and Emma Marie Elizabeth Goodman Hinkel. In high school, he was a strong student and athlete with a plan to serve his country and advance his opportunities. In July 1956, Ron was selected as a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy and proudly graduated with the USNA Class of 1960 with a degree in Naval Science (General Engineering). During his time in Annapolis,

Ron was especially active in Varsity Football (Lineman) and Wrestling. As a teammate for the 150lb "Sprint" Football League, he thrived under the leadership of College Football Hall of Fame Coach Jack "Flying" Cloud.

Upon graduation, Ron received his commission in the United States Navy on June 8, 1960, and embarked on a career of service as a Naval Aviator. Following his naval flight training in Pensacola, Ron was stationed in Kingsville and Cecil Field where he flew F-8 Crusaders. CDR Hinkel served proudly aboard the Kitty Hawk (CVA-63) with the VF-114 Fighter Squadron (Aardvarks) flying the F-4 Phantoms and is a Viet Nam Veteran, serving two combat tours in 1968 and 1969. Affectionately referred to as "the life of the party", Ron would eagerly search for fun wherever he could throughout his adventures.

After 20 years of active service as a Navy pilot and instructor, and having earned a Master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering at Cranfield, CDR Hinkel retired and enjoyed a rich life beyond his military career. Ron was the proud husband of Barbara Rowe-Roberts, celebrating more than 50 years of marriage together. He enjoyed sharing a joyful life together with his family, exploring the world. In recent decades he happily called McCormick home.

Ron is survived by his beloved wife, Barbara; their children, Heather Louise and Phillip "Phil" David; two cherished granddaughters, Riley and Sydney; nephew and niece, Scott and Shelley. Ron leaves a loving group of extended family, classmates and friends.

He was predeceased by his parents William and Emma, his son, John, his sisters, Virginia, Fern and nephew Kerry.

The Hinkel Family