

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

REAR ADMIRAL DEAN L. AXENE, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

Dean Lane Axene was born in Kansas City, Missouri, on August 1, 1923, son of Oscar F. and Marlowe (Gross) Axene. He attended Upper Arlington High School, Columbus, Ohio, before entering the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from his native state in 1941. Graduated with the Class of 1945 on June 7, 1944 (accelerated course due to World War II), he was commissioned Ensign and subsequently advanced in rank to that of Rear Admiral, to date from July 1, 1970.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1944, he had instruction at the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Florida, for one month, then had a month's further instruction in the USS R-9 and USS R-18. He reported in September 1944 for submarine training at the Submarine School, New London, Connecticut, and in January 1945 joined a relief crew at Pearl Harbor, and had duty in connection with refitting submarines.

In March 1945 he was assigned as Gunnery Officer on board the USS PARCHE (SS-384) and was designated a Submariner in August of that year. While on board that submarine, he participated in two successful war patrols. "For meritorious service..." in that capacity, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" and cited in part as follows: "...By his keen understanding of fire-control equipment and by his proficiency in operating the torpedo data computer, (he) rendered valuable assistance to his commanding officer in successful torpedo attacks which resulted in the sinking and damaging of approximately 15,000 tons of hostile shipping and in evading strong enemy countermeasures..."

From October 1946 until June 1948, he had postgraduate instruction in Electronic Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, from which he received a Bachelor of Science degree. He served as Electronics Officer, Engineering Officer and Navigator on board the USS TIRU (SS-416) during the period July 1948 until June 1950, and the next month reported as Electronics Officer on the Staff of Commander Submarine Squadron ONE. He transferred, in a similar capacity, to the Staff of Commander Submarine Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet in July 1951 and in July 1952 was assigned as Executive Officer on board the USS SEA ROBIN (SS-409).

He had training at the Westinghouse Bettis Plant, Atomic Energy Commission, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, during September and October 1953, then continued training at the Naval Reactor Testing Station, Arco, Idaho, through December that year. In January 1954 he became the commissioning Executive Officer of the USS NAUTILUS (SSN-571) and assumed command of the USS CROAKER (SS-246) in September 1955. He served as Director of the Nuclear Department at the Submarine School, New London, from February 1957 until April 1959, and as such was in direct charge of all Nuclear instruction at the School.

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He had instruction at the Naval Reactors Branch, Atomic Energy Commission, Washington, D. C., from April 1959 until April the following year, when he returned to Bettis Plant for a month's additional training. He reported as Prospective Commanding Officer of the USS THRESHER, building at the Portsmouth (New Hampshire) Naval Shipyard, in June 1960 and assumed command of that vessel upon her commissioning, August 3, 1961.

During February and March 1963 he attended the Polaris Command Course at the Naval Guided Missiles School, Dam Neck, Virginia, after which he had duty as Prospective Commanding Officer of the USS JOHN C. CALHOUN (SSBN-630), building at the Newport News (Virginia) Shipbuilding and Drydock Company. He assumed command of that vessel and the Blue Crew upon her commissioning, September 15, 1964.

He was a member of the State Department's Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy from July 1966 until June 1967, after which he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., where he served as Head of the Policy Coordination, Diplomatic Clearance and International Aviation Branch, Politico-Military Policy Division until June 1969, then as Director of the Pan-American Affairs, Naval Missions and Advisory Group Division. "For exceptionally meritorious service in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations...from June 1967...to March 1970..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

He reported in April 1970 as Deputy Chief of Staff and Assistant Chief of Staff for Policy, Plans and Operations to the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, with headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Legion of Merit for "...his contributions to the many important activities of the Allied Command Atlantic..." In March 1972 he reported as Deputy Chief of Naval Training and Chief of Staff to the Chief of Naval Training (Changed to Naval Education and Training in August 1973), with headquarters at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, with additional duty from January to September 1973 as Deputy Director of Naval Education and Training in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. "For exceptionally meritorious conduct...from March 1972 to June 1974..." he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Third Legion of Merit.

On July 1, 1974 he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with two Gold Stars, the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", Rear Admiral Axene has the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; and the National Defense Service Medal with bronze star. He also has the Great Star of Military Merit awarded by the Chilean Government.

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