

Obituary – Jack Herbert McDonald, CAPT USN RET

Jack Herbert McDonald
1924- 2011



Jack Herbert McDonald, a resident of Altamonte Springs since 1978, left May 3rd to rejoin after four years of separation his beloved wife, Edwina Rachel, where she lies at Arlington National Cemetery. Not a day went by since February 2007 that he did not mourn her sudden departure. He leaves behind seven children, Susan, Marjorie, Jeffery, Robert, Jack, Jeanne, and Gigi, and their spouses, 20 grandchildren, and 9 great grandchildren. Every one of them is stricken by his passing, but relieved that his sorrow and pain are over.

Jack McDonald was raised in Keystone, in South Dakota's Black Hills. After the death of his mother he moved to California, joined the navy near the end of World War II, was demobilized at war's end, and returned to California, where he received an engineering degree from the University of California at Berkeley. Degree in hand, he returned to the navy, where he was to spend a total of thirty-seven years of commissioned service on active duty as a naval aviator. He retired in the grade of captain.



The highlights of Captain McDonald's navy career included service during the Korean War, for a time as the youngest maritime patrol aircraft commander in the Pacific Fleet; flying to fix the position of typhoons decades before the advent of weather satellites; service ashore in post-war Japan; a master's degree in meteorology from the Naval Postgraduate School; command of Patrol Squadron Forty-four; and for nearly four years in the early 1970s command of Naval Station Keflavik, on the island of Iceland. At the time, the height of the Cold War, Keflavik was the fulcrum of NATO's defense of the North Atlantic against the Soviet Union, home to an air force fighter squadron, a navy patrol squadron, and several important intelligence collection activities.



After retirement from active duty Jack McDonald taught mathematics in local schools for more than ten years, patiently explaining the mysteries of mathematics to many hundreds of Seminole County's children.

He and the love of his life, Edwina, when not divided by navy deployment, were an inseparable couple. Today is their anniversary. Their homes in five states and three countries were havens for their children and welcoming harbors for their friends.

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Jack leaves a legacy of commitment to family and service to his country and community that will continue to be honored by his children, grandchildren and great-grand-children.

Edwina and Jack were for many years members of Christ Episcopal Church. Family and friends will say goodbye to Jack at Baldwin-Fairchild Altamonte West from 9:30-10:30 on Saturday, May 7th. A service of thanksgiving for his life will be held in Christ Church, 151 West Church Ave, Longwood, at noon. Interment will be at the national cemetery in Arlington, Virginia.

The family thanks the entire staff at Florida Hospital Altamonte, especially the oncology unit, for their compassionate care.

In lieu of flowers, friends are asked to consider a contribution in Jack's name to "Hives For Lives" www.hivesforlives.com a kid run charitable organization founded by his great-granddaughters to support primary cancer research at major oncology research centers throughout the United States.



*Captain McDonald at the Commissioning of his Grandson
as a U.S. Navy Ensign*