



VICE ADM. R.N. SMOOT, USN (RET.)
MAY 1976

Admiral Roland Smoot's distinguished career in the United States Navy dates from his graduation from the Naval Academy in 1926 to his retirement in 1962.

Early assignments were on destroyers, submarines and battleships with duties divided between engineering and gunnery. After World War II started in Europe in 1939, he operated for a time out of Iceland as commander of destroyer groups escorting convoys across the North Atlantic. Following Pearl Harbor, he was commander of a new destroyer assigned to escort our remaining old Atlantic battleships through the Panama Canal to the Pacific.

At various times he commanded destroyer squadrons, a destroyer flotilla, a heavy cruiser, a division of cruisers and the Mine Force of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. He saw action in the early amphibious landings at Guadalcanal, and the many air-sea battles and night time forays up the "slot" in the long campaign in the South Pacific.

Under his command, destroyer groups participated in the recapture of the Philippines, were in support of the landings at Iwo Jima, Okinawa and finally in the surrender in Japan. Admiral Smoot witnessed the historical signing of the instrument of capitulation by Japan on the USS Missouri.

During a battle in the Saragas Strait, Admiral Smoot directed a victorious torpedo attack against the Japanese despite the loss of six of his nine destroyers during a devastating kamikaze reprisal which saw his own ship sunk and his aid killed as he stood on the bridge beside him.

In his final four years of active duty, Admiral Smoot was assigned as Senior Naval Officer in the Far East with the title of Taiwan Defense Commander, with the collateral assignment of Senior U.S. Military Advisor to President Chiang Kai-shek.

Admiral Smoot and his wife Sally became residents of Leisure World in 1966. He was active in behalf of community welfare and served as president of the Golden Rain Foundation, the directorate of Leisure World.