



William I. Martin, Vice Admiral, USN

Vice Admiral William I. Martin a retired Naval pilot did early testing of all-weather and night flying techniques. Admiral Martin flew a record 440 night landings on carriers during service in the Pacific during World War II, when he also commanded bomber and fighter squadrons from the USS *Hornet* and USS *Enterprise*. After the war, he was a test pilot at the Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland and lectured and demonstrated flying techniques.

He commanded a flight training carrier and was Executive Assistant to Adm. Arleigh Burke, Chief of Naval Operations. During the latter assignment, while maintaining his night flying proficiency, he had to ditch his fighter plane in the Potomac River when it developed engine problems over Alexandria, Virginia.

Adm. Martin also served as Commander of the Atlantic Barrier Forces and of carrier divisions, as Deputy Chief of the Military Assistance and Advisory Group in Bonn, Germany, Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Air). He was Commander of the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean during the mid-1960s and retired as Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Atlantic Fleet and Chief of Staff of the Atlantic command

After he retired, he was a consultant with Grumman Aerospace Corporation.

Adm. Martin was a native of Ava, Missouri. He attended the University of Oklahoma and the University of Missouri, and he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1934.

His military honors included three Distinguished Service Medals, a Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, three Distinguished Flying Crosses and three Air Medals.

Adm. Martin was chairman of the Navy Advisory Council for the National Air and Space Museum and was technical adviser on the aviation film shown at the museum,

"To Fly". He was an honorary fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and was elected to the Hall of Fame in the Carrier Aviation National Memorial at the USS *Yorktown* in Charleston, S.C. He was also a member of the National Press Club, Naval Institute, Navy League, Test Pilot Association, Lions Club and the Masons.

In 1986, he was named by the Association of Naval Aviation as one of the top five individuals who has contributed the most to carrier aviation.

He died of cardiac arrest March 29 at his home in Alexandria. Services in the Naval Academy Chapel was followed by interment in the U.S. Naval Academy Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife, Friedel Opasinski Martin of Alexandria; two sons from his first marriage, Richard I. Martin of Aptos, Calif., and William David Martin of Monterey, Calif.; a daughter from his second marriage, Inge Martin-Nix of Fresno, Calif., and six grandchildren.