

Untitled

LCDR James S. Russell was stationed to Naval Air Station Sand Point in early 1941 as a PBY squadron commander. From there his squadron moved north to Naval Air Station Kodiak after the attack on Pearl Harbor flying patrol over the Aleutians Islands. Yes, he was in on fighting the Japanese around Kiska and Attu. After his time in Alaska he moved to staff I believe under Bull Halsey in the Pacific. Bull Halsey had a stand up desk as well as his love of swimming every day. Admiral Jim also had a stand up desk in the Navy and swam every day after retirement from his dock on American Lake, rain, snow or shine into his 90s!

Following the war, he was the plank owner Commanding Officer of USS Coral Sea (CV 43) in 1949. He served as Vice Chief of Naval Operations under ADM Arleigh Burke. By the way, Secretary of Defense MacNamara didn't like him and would not approve his elevation to CNO following Burke's tenure and therefore he went to Europe as Commander Naval Forces Europe. He retired in 1967 from the Navy after having flown every aircraft in the Navy inventory up to through the F-8 Crusader.

He graduated from Stadium High School at the age of 15 and went into the Merchant Marine as the Navy wouldn't take him. He applied and was accepted into Naval Academy when he was 18. By the way, Stadium High School has two 4 star Admirals as alums: Jim Russell and Eric Olson.

I am proud to say ADM Jim was a friend and source of wonder among my fellow workers at SeaLand as he would call me up when I was at work in my yard tractor during Desert Shield. They would ask if he was calling me up for active duty while I was a drilling Naval Reservist.

Respectfully,

Roger Olsen