

Public Information Division
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
Washington, D. C., 20590

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM L. MORRISON,
U. S. COAST GUARD

Rear Admiral William L. Morrison, Chief Counsel for the U. S. Coast Guard, was born on November 21, 1914, at North Smithfield, Rhode Island, and was graduated from Central High School, Washington, D. C., in 1932.

He was graduated from the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., with a B.S. Degree and with a commission of Ensign on May 29, 1939.

During his four years as a cadet, he was Class President during his second class year (1938), was Battalion Adjutant during his first class year, and was captain of the boxing team the latter part of four years as a team member.

During his earlier assignments, he served as watch officer and navigator on board the Coast Guard Cutters PONTCHARTRAIN and COMANCHE, both based at New York.

From August 1942 to February 1943, during World War II, he served on board the Cutter STORES in the North Atlantic. For the remainder of the war, after first serving six months as the ship's Executive Officer, he commanded the destroyer escort USS SELLSTROM (DE-255) on convoy operations in the Atlantic. He received a Navy Commendation Ribbon for outstanding service during that command for the the rescue of 18 survivors following the collision between the steam tankers NASBULK and SAINT MICHEL on April 9, 1945. He received a Bronze Star in lieu of a Second Commendation Ribbon for skillfully operating the destroyer on convoy operations under hazardous conditions.

Reporting at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C., in September of 1945, he served as Assistant Chief, Reports and Records Section, Administrative Management Division, until September 1947. Assigned for two years as a student, he was graduated from George Washington University Law School with an LL.B. Degree in September 1949 (later converted to Juris Doctor Degree with honor).

Ordered to sea duty in December 1949, he served first as Executive Officer and then as Commanding Officer of the 311-ft. ocean station patrol vessel USCGC MACKINAC, based at New York. That was followed by command of the Port Security Unit on Ellis Island, N. Y., from September 1951 to September 1952, and then two years of duty as Legal Officer of the Third Coast Guard District, N. Y. Stationed a second time in Washington from August 1954 to June 1959, he served as Special Assistant to the Chief Counsel in the Legal Division at Headquarters.

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After first commanding the Cutter YOCONA out of Astoria, Ore., for one year, he then commanded the Cutter DEXTER out of Alameda, Cal., from September 1960 to June 1961. During his next tour of duty, he served as Captain-of-the-Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and as Acting Chief of Operations of the 11th Coast Guard District, Long Beach.

Reporting at Headquarters again in July 1963, the then Captain Morrison first served as Congressional Liaison Officer until spring of 1966, when he became Deputy Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard. In April 1967, he was designated Assistant to the General Counsel in the Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

In March 1968, following his appointment as flag officer to rank as permanent Rear Admiral from January 1, 1968, he assumed the new post of Assistant Chief of Staff for Boating Safety. A subsequent reorganization named him Chief of the newly created Office of Boating Safety effective October 1, 1968.

On January 1, 1969, Rear Admiral Morrison was designated Chief Counsel for the U. S. Coast Guard. ~~his present duty.~~ In February 1972, he was awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious performance of his duties in that post.

In June 1973, he became Commander, 11th Coast Guard District, Honolulu, which covers Coast Guard activities in the far Pacific and the far East.

Following is a resume of his appointments in rank: Ensign, May 29, 1939; Lieutenant (jg), May 29, 1942; Lieutenant, June 15, 1942; Lt. Commander, June 3, 1943; Commander, January 26, 1951; Captain, July 1, 1960; by nomination of the President on November 30, 1967 and approval of the Senate he was appointed to rank as Rear Admiral from January 1, 1968.

In addition to the recent Legion of Merit Award and two earlier Navy Commendations, Rear Admiral Morrison has the following World War II campaign service medals and ribbons: American Area, American Defense Service, European-African-Middle Eastern Area; World War II Victory.

Rear Admiral Morrison holds memberships in the Phi Delta Phi International Legal Fraternity, Federal Bar Association, American Bar Association, Judge Advocates Association, and the Coast Guard Academy Alumni Association.

Rear Admiral Morrison's wife is the former Mary Louise Grennan of Staten Island, N. Y. They have two daughters, Mary Louise (July 6, 1943); and Linda (May 24, 1947). ~~The Morrison's present home is at 500 McCauley St., Washington Grove, Md.~~

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