

Floyd Kenneth Callesen

Born: July 28, 1920
Hometown: Elma, WA
Class: 1942
Service: USNR
Position / Rank: Chief Engineer / Lt. (j.g.)
Date / Place of death: June 12, 1944 / Pacific, Mios Woendi Lagoon
Date / Place of burial: June 12, 1944 / Lost At Sea Mios Woendi Lagoon; Memorial Tablets at Manila National Cemetery
Age: 23



Ensign Floyd K. Callesen, USNR reported aboard the USS Kalk (DD 611), a USS Benson (DD 421) Class Destroyer, upon its commissioning on October 17, 1942. Over the next two years Floyd Callesen and the Kalk served in Alaskan and North Atlantic waters escorting convoys. In early 1944 the Kalk was transferred to the Pacific fleet. By June 1944, Floyd Callesen had been promoted to Lieutenant (j.g.) and assigned to duty as the Kalk's Engineering Officer.



USS Kalk (DD 611)

On June 12, 1944 the Kalk was patrolling the Mios Woendi lagoon, providing support for several beached LST's. At 1032, Japanese aircraft were reported in the area, and at 1036 an enemy plane was sighted diving into the ship from the starboard quarter. The Kalk began firing on the plane, but a bomb hit on the Kalk's starboard side between the stacks before the Kalk's gunners could shoot it down. The Midships Repair Party, headed by Lieutenant Callesen, was stationed exactly where the bomb hit. Almost every member of the Midships Repair Party, including Lieutenant (j.g.) Callesen, was



Memorial Aboard USS Kalk to those Killed or Missing in Action June 12, 1944

declared "Missing in Action".

The Kalk was able to proceed on its port engine to Hollandia, New Guinea for emergency repairs. The ship returned to San Francisco where it was repaired and returned to action by the end of November. A memorial plaque to the ship's dead and missing was placed on the Kalk during its repairs by Bethlehem Steel Shipyard, San Francisco, the shipyard that built the ship. The USS Kalk was decommissioned after World War II, never served again and was sunk as a target in 1969.

U.S. Navy and Merchant Marine Cadet Corps records indicate that Floyd K. Callesen began his "Sea Year" on May 1, 1941 serving as Engine Cadet aboard the USAT St. Mihiel and SS President Coolidge. He was appointed a Midshipman, USNR on June 13, 1941. On November 3, 1941 he

was placed on Active Duty in the U.S. Navy and assigned to the Transport USS Henderson (AP 1). U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps records show that Cadet-Midshipman Callesen was considered to be eligible to sit for his Third Assistant Engineers License on or before November 30, 1942, after accumulating 505 days of sea time. However, since he reported aboard the USS Kalk as an Ensign, USNR six weeks earlier, one must conclude that he never took his Third Assistant Engineer's License. The actual date of his graduation from Kings Point cannot be determined.

Lieutenant (junior grade) Floyd K. Callesen, USNR was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal. Based on his merchant marine service he also earned the Merchant Marine Defense Bar. Floyd K. Callesen belongs to a very small group of about fifty Kings Point Cadet-Midshipmen that served on Active Duty in the Navy as Midshipmen during World War II. It is believed that these men were the only U.S. Navy Midshipmen to serve aboard combatant ships in combat since the days of fighting sail.



**Floyd (center) with
his
Mother and Sister
Helen**

According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Floyd Callesen was one of four children of James Peter Callesen and Margaret Thomsen Callesen. Floyd had an older sister, Helen, and two brothers, Walter and Irving. The Callesen's were Danish immigrants who had worked their way across the west from Minnesota, through Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota and finally settling in Elma, Washington. James Callesen was the town barber. At the time of his death Floyd Callesen was married to Charlotte Elaine Hughes Callesen. Their daughter, Judith Elaine Callesen, was born May 11, 1943. According to the family genealogist, Sue Ellen Stetler, Judith has four sons (Kenneth, Stewart, Timothy and Donald).



**Floyd's Father
James P.
Callesen**