



Harry Marvin Havins

Born at home in Gordon, Texas on May 8, 1918; died February 21, 2003 in Tucson, Arizona. Preceded in death by parents Andrew M. Havins and Pauline B. Havins; twin brother Herbert W. Havins; older brother Bruce T. Havins; and sister Lois H. Helms. Survived by his first wife, Ruth H. Havins; daughters Linda R. Doering (James); Cynthia J. Havins; and two sons Herbert B. Havins (Janice); and James P. Havins (Rebecca). Also survived by many loving grand children; great grand children; nephews and cousins.

After formal education in Thurber and Weatherford, Texas, Harry enlisted in the U.S. Navy at Los Angeles in October, 1940. At Radio and Signal School, he was assigned by the Naval Air Corps to a training and patrol squadron aboard a PBY-5 Catalina at the San Diego Naval Air Station. With the outbreak of WWII, his squadron transferred to Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Island chain after the Japanese bombing of this American port. In the ensuing invasion of the island chain by the Japanese, VP-43 engaged and fought enemy planes and ships gallantly; during the initial enemy encounter from June 10 to June 20, 1942, they lost over fifty percent of the squadron .

Harry distinguished himself in severe combat conditions, serving as radar operator, navigator, fifty caliber gunner, radioman and surveillance cameraman for his aircraft. He received the Air Medal for valor; was recommended for a second Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross; was awarded the Combat Air Crew Insignia with three stars; American Area Campaign Medal; and the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal. He is being considered for posthumous award of the Distinguished Flying Cross as well as the Purple Heart. The accomplishments of his flight wing during that period have been memorialized in the poem *The Epic Of VP Forty Three*, published by C.H. Amme, and in the book *The Thousand Mile War*.

After the war, Harry was selected for a joint Army, Navy and Weather Bureau task force for the Thunderstorm Project, an intensive scientific study for determining the safety of aircraft flight through thunderstorms. During the period of 1947-48 he worked for the U.S. Weather Bureau in the first installation of weather radar systems. It was during this assignment that he met, courted and married Ruth Doyle House, a former Navy Wave also working for the Weather Bureau.

From 1949-1952 he was Project Design Engineer of the first Amphibious Doppler Radar System for the Navy Bureau of Ships. From 1952-1970 he worked as a senior design engineer and design group engineer with General Dynamics of Ft. Worth, Texas in the development of airborne radar systems for military aircraft, including the B-58 and F-111b fighter planes.

In 1969, Harry began a new career in the real estate industry in Los Angeles, California culminating in the co-ownership and management of a highly successful commercial brokerage in Ft. Worth, Texas from 1975-1980. He re-married in 1979 and semi-retired in 1980, spending time with Margie until her death in 1989. From then until just before his passing from the effects of Pulmonary Fibrosis, he spent time with his sons and daughters; fished almost every type of water from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean; was given the Texas Big Fish Award for 1991; and played golf every chance he could.

His life was a complex blend of service to his country and to the welfare of mankind; he was a natural leader with an easy going manner, a good father and husband , and a loyal friend to the many who knew the pleasure of his company. His life was a tribute to honesty, integrity and patriotism and he will not be forgotten by the loved ones he left behind. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to a favorite cause. Long Live The State of Texas!

Memorial Service at 2:00 P.M., Sunday, March 2, 2003 at Adair Dodge Chapel, 1050 N. Dodge Boulevard.