

Half Staff – John B. Paradis III, 92, Williamsburg, VA

June 4, 2014



Long-term St. Mary's County MD resident John Baptiste Paradis III, 92, died on Wednesday, June 4 in Williamsburg, VA of a stroke. He was a resident of the Williamsburg Landing Retirement Community in Williamsburg, VA. He is survived by his second wife, Bea; brother, William; three sons (and their wives), John B. IV (Lani), Peter (Debra) and Richard; and a grandson, Carter Rene Paradis. His first wife, Helen died in 2008. Born in Rockport, MA on December 22, 1921, he was the eldest son of John and Leah Paradis. He graduated from Rockport High School and received his Bachelors Degree, cum laude, from Northeastern University, class of '43E. He completed graduate study in aeronautical engineering and engineering management. He joined the Navy in 1942, began active duty in July of 1944 as a pilot, and his flight training included carrier qualification, multiengine aircraft and seaplanes. He was assigned to Patuxent River Naval Air Test Center (NATC) with VP-24 in 1948, where he resigned from the Navy.

In 1949 Mr. Paradis accepted a civil service position as test engineer in the Flight Test Division, and was the only engineer there with carrier flight experience. He participated in the development of many of the procedures and techniques used in the test and evaluation of the ability of naval aircraft to operate from aircraft carriers and was the lead engineer for the NATC evaluation to qualify the steam catapult and MK7 arresting gear for shipboard use with all naval aircraft. In 1956 Mr. Paradis became Chief Engineer and Assistant Branch Head of the Patrol-Trainer Branch, Flight Test. He was responsible for the technical work of the branch and became the first engineer at Pax to fly supersonorically in the F9F-8T.

In 1959 he became the first Technical Director of NATC, a position he held until his retirement in 1980. His career activities and accomplishments as Technical Director include guiding NATC technical facilities planning and development to be an exemplary pace setter for all aircraft test and evaluation activities; participation in NATC reorganization, which resulted in the command winning the SEVNAV award for manpower management; participation in the NAVAIR-05 Field Activity Utilization Study, which resulted in AIR-06 being established to coordinate funding and overall operation of NAVAIR field activities; establishing the Technical Support and Central Computer Directorates; and helping establish the integrated laboratory concept.

Mr. Paradis was an executive board member of the Naval Aviation Executive Institute for training senior NAVAIR headquarters and field activity managers, and introduced numerous training, communication, management and acquisition programs that improved productivity and reduced staffing needs which saved millions of dollars. As an executive member of the National Range Commanders Council and a recognized aircraft T&E expert, he helped establish the national standards for test procedures for the quality of instrumentation systems and the quality procedures for evaluations of missiles, armament and aircraft.

During his career Mr. Paradis received the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award, the Navy

Meritorious Civilian Service Award and numerous outstanding performance ratings.

Mr. Paradis' Southern Maryland community involvement included extensive service and leadership with St. Mary's County Economic Development Committee, St. Mary's County Airport Committee, Long Range Planning Committee, County Board of Property Review, Lexington Park Rotary Club where he chaired the US National Oyster Shucking Championship for 25 years, Little Flower School PTA and Ryken High School PTA and Board of Directors, and Friends of Historic St. Mary's City. He was a founding member of both the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum and the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance.

He was an avid sailor and sailboat racer. He and his first wife, Helen cruised a wide area of the United States from the Bras d'Or Lakes in Nova Scotia to Glacier Bay in Alaska. Sailboat racing was his college sport and he participated in national championship races in three one-design sailboat classes. He was a member of the US Power Squadron, USPS National Sail Training Committee, Sandy Bay Yacht Club in Rockport, MA and the St. Mary's River Yacht Club.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Patuxent River Naval Air Museum at 22156 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

Friends are invited to join the family in a Life Celebration at Mary's Hope in St. Inigoes on Thursday, June 12 from 2:30 to 5:30 pm. Internment will be private at a later date.