

# NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN K. BELING, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

John Kingsman Belling was born in New York, New York, on October 29, 1919, son of Aelian Arnold and Mable Ashe (Jackson) Belling. He graduated from Stevens Institute of Technology, in Hoboken, New Jersey, with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in June 1941. Commissioned Ensign, USNR, on June 6, 1941, he reported for instruction at the Naval Training School (Aircraft Engines) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in Cambridge. After three months' instruction, he remained there as an Instructor in Aircraft Engines. In December 1941 he was assigned duty in the Power Plant Design Section, Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. On April 22, 1942, he resigned his commission to enter flight training. Enlisting in the U. S. Naval Reserve, he continued on active duty, and was appointed Aviation Cadet, USNR, on July 23, 1942. Designated Naval Aviator and again commissioned Ensign, USNR on January 8, 1943, he subsequently advanced in rank, to that of Rear Admiral, to date from August 1, 1963, having transferred from the Reserve to Regular Navy on August 27, 1946.

After receiving his "Wings" in 1943, he had further training at the Naval Air Station, Miami and Daytona Beach, Florida, and during May and June 1943 was assigned to Bombing Squadron EIGHT. In July 1943 he joined Bombing Squadron ONE, and was awarded the Air Medal with two Gold Stars, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. The Air Medals were awarded for completing fifteen missions against enemy Japanese forces, during the period June 12, to July 20, 1944. The citation for the Distinguished Flying Cross follows:

"For heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight as Pilot of a carrier-based Dive Bombing Plane, during operations against enemy Japanese forces in the vicinity of the Bonin Islands, July 4, 1944. Assigned to the dangerous mission of attacking enemy shipping, (he) deliberately dove to a minimum altitude through an intense screen of antiaircraft fire and scored a direct hit, causing an explosion which demolished the enemy ship..."

He is also entitled to the Ribbon for and a facsimile of the Presidential Unit Citation awarded the USS YORKTOWN, on which Bombing Squadron ONE was based.

Detached from that squadron in July 1944, and after a period of hospitalization, he reported in January 1945 for instruction at the Naval Air Station, Melbourne, Florida. During the period May 1945 to June 1946, he served with Bomber Fighter Squadron FIVE, and until January 1947 attended the Postgraduate School, Annapolis, Maryland. He had two months' instruction in the Office of Naval Research, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., then continued training at the Naval Training Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Physics in May 1951.



In addition to the Legion of Merit with Gold Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with two Gold Stars and the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon, Rear Admiral Beling has the Purple Heart Medal (for wounds received in action); American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Vietnam Service Medal with one star.

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