



**Ben
Payne**
Navy

Ben Payne

Sep 13, 1917 -

BIRTHPLACE: Idalia, Colorado

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Navy

THEATER OF OPERATION: Pacific

SERVED: Dec 8, 1941 - Nov 1, 1945

HONORED BY: Wife, Betty Payne

BIOGRAPHY

Ben H. Payne enlisted in the Navy on Dec. 8, 1941 --- the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Following his enlistment in Salina, KS, he was sent to San Diego for boot training and assignment to the Destroyer Base. On Feb. 23, 1942, he was sent to the 12th Naval District Base at Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA, where he served as 'Jack of Dust' (storekeeper in the federal Building Galley). He also served as Armed Guard at Treasure Island. He helped commission a new ship, the USS Chandeleur (AV-10) and went to sea with her on Nov. 22, 1942. Crew members on Commissioning Day were called 'Plank Owners' and Ben proudly has that title. The ship was a sea-plane tender or 'Sailing Airbase for Flying Boats.' Ben stayed on the ship throughout the Pacific Campaign. He saw action in many areas including Espiritu Santo, Guadalcanal, Tulagi, and Bougainville. He has an identification card which reads that he is a member of the 'Ancient Order of the Deep' which has written on it 'Having crossed the Equator on a United States Man of War during World War II.' Ben was awarded the 'American Campaign Medal,' the 'Navy Good Conduct Medal' and the 'Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with four Battle Stars.' After discharge from military service in 1945, he worked for Duckwall-ALCO at many locations in several states in the Midwest. He retired as a Vice President of that Company in 1983. On Oct. 9, 1956, Ben married Betty Winterscheidt in Horton, KS. The couple has one son and two daughters as well as several grandchildren. The Paynes now reside in Abilene, KS.