

Edwin Fendig Jr.

December 15th, 2015



Edwin R. Fendig Jr. was born in Brunswick, Ga., on June 3, 1927. His parents were Edwin R. and Emwynn Neal Fendig. His family moved to St. Simons Island from Brunswick in 1929.

He attended schools in Brunswick, Ga., graduating from Glynn Academy in 1945. While in high school, he played on the football team under Coach C.M. Page. He achieved All Conference S.G.F.A. status as a running back and passing back – a position now known as quarterback. He was also a “triple threat” on the field. He was offered college scholarships from Clemson University, Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia. He also served as an officer in the class of 1945.

He was very active in the Boy Scouts of America attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. He was also a Sea Scout under Skipper Nelson Niall and assisted on civilian patrols of local waters during World War II. He became very skilled at Morse code and semaphore signaling.

Twenty-four hours after graduating from Glynn Academy he enlisted in the Navy where he later served in the Philippines on the island of Samar in the South Pacific Theater during World War II. The war ended in the Pacific just about the time he arrived. In 1946 he was sent back to the States and mustered out.

That fall he began college at the University of Georgia on a full football scholarship. Competition was fierce with many returning war veterans and sensational players like Charlie Trippi! He was also a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity in Athens, Ga. He graduated from the University of Georgia with a degree in business administration during June of 1950.

After graduation, he returned to St. Simons Island to work in the family sign business, Fendig Outdoor Advertising. In December of 1950, he married Betty Bruce, daughter of Ed and Beth Bruce of Brunswick, Ga.

In 1951, the 224th Radio Relay Squadron of the Georgia Air National Guard, a unit that he had joined earlier, was called up to active duty to prepare for the Korean Conflict. The unit was sent to Sewart Air Force Base in Tennessee. Serving as the unit's personnel officer, he was selected to go to Nouasseur Air Force Base near Casablanca in North Africa. While living in Casablanca, he would go down to the port and watch the tugs dock and undock merchant ships and fell in love with that type of work.

Upon returning to Brunswick and the Golden Isles, he went back into the family sign business. Soon after his return, he saw Captain Alfred Brockinton, a veteran Brunswick Pilot; he encouraged Captain Brockinton to call if he ever needed an Apprentice Pilot.

About that same time, voters in the City of Brunswick and Glynn County overwhelmingly approved a municipal bond issue to reconstruct the ailing Brunswick Port Authority. Soon after passage of the city/county municipal bond issue, the Georgia Ports Authority made plans of its own to construct and operate a terminal in the Port of Brunswick. Captain Brockinton later endorsed Edwin Fendig Jr.'s application as an Apprentice Pilot.

He served a long apprenticeship under the tutelage of Captain Brockinton for nearly five years and was licensed as a Short Branch Pilot for the Port of Brunswick in 1962.

He served actively as a State Licensed Pilot in the Port of Brunswick for 37 years. Although retired from active piloting he continued to serve as President of the Brunswick Bar Pilots' Association.

All who knew Edwin will attest to his having been most instrumental as an advocate and lobbyist for the Port of Brunswick, especially its depth to 36' and the replacement of the Sidney Lanier Bridge. He also prided himself in having been appointed an Admiral in the Georgia Navy by former Governor Sonny Perdue.

In addition to his full-time duties as a Bar Pilot, Edwin also ran two long-time family businesses, Fendig Sign Co. and Fendig Tire Co. Edwin served in the Georgia Air National Guard as the Commanding Officer of the 224th Squadron from 1958-60. After becoming licensed as a pilot he had to resign his Commission as Commanding Officer of the 224th Squadron due to increasing port traffic and was honorably discharged from the Guard at the rank of Major.

In his younger years, Edwin was active as a golfer playing to a low handicap, and he coached little league baseball teams for several years. He was co-organizer of the St.

Simons Snipe Fleet, a local sailing club that raced the popular one-design class “Snipe.” He was also an avid and competitive tennis player.

Civically, Edwin was active as a young man in the Jaycees, and he served as **president of the St. Simons Rotary Club in 1958**. He was honored by being chosen as “Outstanding Young Man of the Year” in Glynn County in 1958. Edwin was also the recipient of the Alfred W. Jones Award.

Edwin was active in the St. Simons Presbyterian Church as deacon, elder and trustee.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by a brother, H. Neal Fendig.

He is survived by his wife, Betty Bruce Fendig; three children, Lucy Wynn Fendig, Edwin R. Fendig III (Deborah) and Bruce B. Fendig (Teri); and two grandchildren, Claire and Jack Fendig.

A visitation will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 16, at Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home.

The funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 17 at St. Simons Presbyterian Church.

Interment at Christ Church, Frederica, will be private.

Mr. Fendig’s family requests that memorial contributions be made to Hospice of the Golden Isles, 1692 Glynco Parkway, Brunswick, GA 31525, International Seafarers Center, 307 Newcastle St., Brunswick, GA 31520 or Boy Scouts of America, Okefenokee Council, 302 Screven St., Waycross, GA 31501.

Arrangements for Edwin Fendig have been placed into the care of Edo Miller and Sons Funeral Home.

Please visit his online memorial at www.edomillerandsons.com.