

CWO4 Peter Brunk, USCG Retired



CWO4 Peter A. Brunk retired in 1980 with 26 years of Coast Guard service. He served as skipper of the *Nantucket lightship LV-112 (WLV-534)* from March 1970 to July 1971, CO of the *USCGC Sledge* and as operations officer for the Atlantic Strike Team from 1975 to 1978. He was skipper of the *Sledge* for the second time when he retired.

On November 10, 1975 the *SS Edmund Fitzgerald*, a massive American Great Lakes freighter, sank in a violent storm on Lake Superior, claiming the lives of all 29 crew members. On assignment, as the Atlantic Strike Team executive officer, during a search for the missing ship, Peter Brunk was instrumental in helping locate the underwater wreckage.

In December 1976, the *Argo Merchant*, a Liberian oil tanker laden with 7.6 million gallons of No. 6 fuel oil, heading to Massachusetts Bay and searching for the guidance of Nantucket Lightship, missed the navigational aid and became lost at sea. The marine environment paid a heavy price. The oil tanker grounded out on an area of the shallow Nantucket Shoals, 26 miles from Nantucket Island, broke up and caused the third worst coastal oil spill in U.S. history to date. The book "Hard Aground" is a suspenseful action-packed story that reveals the facts behind this horrific environmental disaster, which could have been avoided. At the time, Peter A. Brunk (USCG CWO4 Ret.), a former Commanding Officer of *Nantucket LV-112* (1970-71), was on the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Strike Team (specifically trained to fight oil spills) as Chief Warrant Officer, assigned to this incident. Previously, a commercial fisherman, he enlisted in the USCG in 1954 and retired from active duty in 1980. Subsequently, Peter had been piloting tugboats and other commercial vessels and remains working in the maritime industry. Since 1992, Peter had been employed by one of the top environmental and emergency response companies in America, IMS Environmental Services (now HEPACO), as Senior Training Supervisor, Oil Spill Response and Training.

Peter Brunk's USCG service included active duty assignments as Commanding Officer on several Coast Guard vessels and other high-profile positions. As a result of his exceptional service, the U.S. Coast Guard has established the annual PETER A. BRUNK Award in recognition of his outstanding leadership and devotion to duty during his career. This award is a lasting tribute to his continuous efforts to improve the USCG service and to inspire the quality leadership he practiced throughout his career. Peter currently lives in Portsmouth, VA, and serves on the U.S. Lightship Museum's Board of Directors and as an active volunteer. At age 90, Peter's lifelong passion and love for the sea motivates him to fill his spare time as a crab fisherman. Thank you, Peter, for your volunteer efforts and service to our nation

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

PETER A. BRUNK

High School - Glen Burnie, MD – 1954

Commercial Fishing until 1954

1954-1955 - USCG Reserves, Baltimore, MD

1955-1957 - USCGC MADRONA - Seagoing Buoy Tender

12/57 - 03/58 - Commercial Fishing - Oyster Boat

03/58 -10/58 - USCG - Port Security Unit, Baltimore, MD

10/58 -12/59 - USCGC MADRONA - Buoy Deck Supervisor

12/59 - 02/61 - CG-52308-D and OinC* CG 67008-D - Buoy Boats

02/61 - 04/62 - CG 56021 Cable Boat OinC - Morehead City, NC

04/62 - 06/64 - USCGC MADRONA - Buoy Deck Supervisor

06/64 - 02/67 - USCG Light Attendant Station OinC, Crisfield, MD

02/67 - 06/68 - USCG Training Center, Cape May, NJ

04/68 - 06/69 - USCG Light Attendant Station, OinC, Crisfield, MD

06/69 - 03/70 - USCGC SLEDGE XPO - Portsmouth, VA - Inland Construction Tender

03/70 - 07/71 - Nantucket Lightship WLV-534 (LV-112) – CO*

07/71 - 08/75 - USCGC SLEDGE - CO

08/75 - 07/78 - USCG Atlantic Strike Team, Elizabeth City, NC - OPS Officer,
Oil Spill Response

07/78 - 03/80 - USCGC SLEDGE, CO - Retired 26 years

03/80 - 11/80 - Tug Boats and Oil Barges - Interstate Oil Transport, Philadelphia, PA

11/80 - 03/86 - Industrial Marine Service - Oil Spill Response

03/80 - 03/92 - Tug Boats, Union Camp Pulpwood barges and
Corps of Engineer Snag boat

03/92 - 2019 - Industrial Marine Service, Senior Training Supervisor –
Oil Spill Response and Training

*OinC – Officer in Charge

*CO – Commanding Officer