

MR. JAMES W. KINNEAR III



James W. Kinnear III was born in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1928 and attended St. Paul's School in New Hampshire before matriculating to the Naval Academy in 1946. The *Lucky Bag* wrote of "Jamie's" "cherubic countenance and idiotic sense of humor which... fell short of his accompanying provocative grin." He served in Brigade leadership positions and excelled academically, graduating with distinction in 1950.

Fifteen days after graduation Jim married Mary Tullis, whom he met on a blind date while at the Academy. The Korean War began five days later, so the honeymoon was short for Ensign Kinnear as he reported as Assistant Navigator aboard the USS BADOENG STRAIT soon after. He served three consecutive tours in Korean waters, resulting in seven engagement stars and a Navy Commendation medal for rushing to the aid of wayward parachutists during a refit in Japan.

Following his sea duty, Lieutenant Kinnear served as the personal aide to ComNine. His original focus on a naval career altered after his introduction to the president of Texaco. Impressed by the young officer, the executive offered him a job once his military service was done. In 1954, Kinnear took him up on the offer and joined Texaco's management training program where he pumped gas and washed cars at a Texaco station in Chicago before he ever got to make a management decision.

Mr. Kinnear held sales positions for Texaco in Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Hawaii, as well as positions in refining, marketing and transportation as he rose up the ranks, making vice president in 1966, the same year he retired from the Reserves as a Lieutenant Commander. He was elected to Texaco's Board of Directors in 1977, became executive vice president in 1978, and president of Texaco USA in 1982.

In 1987 as the new president and CEO of Texaco Inc., Mr. Kinnear became the first chief executive to hold a full-fledged press conference in Texaco's 85-year history. "I am absolutely determined to change the image of this company," he asserted. He didn't just change the image—he pulled them through bankruptcy and massive restructuring, putting a large focus on innovation and technology in the

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oilfields and laboratories. He attributed his leadership and problem-solving skills to his time at the Naval Academy.

Gulf War I crossed paths with Texaco when their oil field between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia was occupied by Iraqi forces who blew up around 1,000 wells. As one of the few Westerners on the Saudi Aramco Board of Directors, Mr. Kinnear was quick to take a leadership roll in reassuring Americans about their oil supply and negotiating the reconstruction of the fields, starting with hiring experts to extinguish the well-publicized fires blazing.

After his retirement in 1993, Mr. Kinnear became chairman of the board of the Metropolitan Opera, having received the National Medal of Art from President George H.W. Bush in 1992 for prior involvement with the Met. He has also been on the boards of the Public Policy Institute, St. Paul's School, Paine Webber, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Unilever, New York Botanical Gardens and Saudi Arabian Oil Company as the only non-Saudi where he worked to improve Middle Eastern relations.

He was one of the original members of the board of the Naval Academy Foundation (retiring in 2007) and is a life member of the Alumni Association and a member of the Robert Means Thompson Society. Jim and his wife Mary established and endowed the James and Mary Kinnear Chair in Physical Sciences, the Kinnear Fellows Program, and the \$1.4 million Director's Award. He has successfully raised funds for Naval Academy's Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies and supported his class's Naval Academy Museum endowment. They reside in Greenwich, CT.

"Leaders," Mr. Kinnear once wrote, "are driven by their dreams of success for the enterprise, rather than for themselves. They lead by words and example. They must be accountable. And above all they must have and must project a strong sense of ethics." As a father, author, patent holder, hunter, gentleman and leader, he is the personification of his own words, "earning the respect of everyone he meets" and "appreciating the importance of preserving America's soul as well as its strength," say his peers.