

RADM Richard H. O'Kane

Commanding Officer, USS Tang

Citation:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of this life above and beyond the call of duty as Commanding Officer of the USS TANG operating against two enemy Japanese convoys on October 23 and 24, 1944, during her Fifth and last War Patrol. Boldly maneuvering on the surface into the midst of a heavily escorted convoy, Commander O'Kane stood in a fusillade of bullets and shells from all directions to launch smashing hits on three tankers, coolly swung his ship to fire at a freighter and, in a split decision, shot out of the path of an onrushing transport, missing it by inches. Boxed in by blazing tankers, freighter, transport and several destroyers, he blasted two of the targets with his remaining torpedoes and, with pyrotechnics bursting on all sides, cleared the torpedoes and, with a heavily escorted convoy steaming to support the Leyte campaign with reinforcements and supplies and with crated planes piled high on each unit. In defiance of the enemy's relentless fire, he closed the concentration of ships and in quick succession sent two torpedoes each into the first and second transports and an adjacent tanker, finding his mark with each torpedo in a series of violent explosions at less than a thousand-yard range. With ships bearing down from all sides, he charged the enemy at high speed, exploding the tanker in a burst of flame, smashing the transport dead in the water and blasting the destroyer with a mighty roar which rocked the TANG from stem to stern. Expending his last two torpedoes into the remnants of a once powerful convoy before his own ship went down, Commander O'Kane aided by his gallant command, achieved an illustrious record of heroism in combat, enhancing the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

<http://www.usснаutilus.org/medalofhonor/okane.shtml>