



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kathleen A. Marchione

## Stephen Dennis

KATHLEEN A. MARCHIONE May 19, 2015



Stephen Dennis

**Award:** Honoring Our Veterans

**Year:** 2015

Navy

Stephen Dennis enlisted in the Navy at the age of 19, four days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He arrived in the Hawaiian Islands just four months later. Assigned to the USS Atlanta, he soon saw action at Coral Sea. On June 4, 1942, the Atlanta was in the decisive Battle of Midway Island. On November 13, the Atlanta was the lead American ship at Iron Bottom Sound on Guadalcanal, taking a direct hit from a torpedo and being hammered by 49 shells. Eight hours later, having lost one hundred seventy-two men with 79 more wounded, the Atlanta went down. Steve and the rest of the surviving sailors were evacuated from the stricken vessel.

Steve was subsequently assigned to serve as a PT boat radioman off the Island of Tulagi. After two years he was assigned to the USS Ancon as a radio operator, and served in the amphibious invasion of Okinawa. On September 2, 1945, he witnessed the formal surrender ceremony, which took place aboard the battleship USS Missouri. He had the momentous task of radioing the news of the surrender back to the United States.

He was honorably discharged in November 1945 and returned to Mechanicville. He married his wife, Mary, on May 5, 1946, raised three children, and has five granddaughters, one grandson and is a great-grandfather. He worked 31 years at the Westvaco Pulp and Paper plant in Mechanicville. Stephen Dennis is an active member of the American Legion Post #91.

In August 2014, he celebrated his 92nd birthday and just two days prior, he was presented with the Medals he earned for his service to our nation in World War II. These included the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with Two Bronze Stars, the Navy Occupation Service Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon and the Combat Action Ribbon and 5 Battle Stars. In 2014, Steve was also

awarded his High School diploma which he missed out on when he left school three months prior to graduation. He now has the distinction of being a member of the Class of 2014!