



National Defense
Service Medal



Aviation Boatswain's Mate



USS Mindoro (CVE-120)

Lawrence Dale Sheaffer
Aviation Boatswain's Mate 3/C U.S. Navy
5 August 1952 – 17 November 1955

Lawrence "Dale" was born on 28 November 1934 in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, while his family was living in Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. He attended grades 1 & 2 at Tamaqua Area School, after which the family moved to Newton Falls, Ohio, in 1941, where Dale attended grades 3-5. They then returned to Pennsylvania to live in Allentown, where he attended Jefferson School (1945 to 1946), two years at Parkland High School, and two years at Tamaqua Area High School, graduating from the latter in 1952. During his junior and senior years of high school, Dale worked as a Carpenter Apprentice at Schilbe Lumber Company in Tamaqua. He enlisted in the Navy as an Airman Recruit on 5 August 1952 in Tamaqua, and underwent basic training at Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, Maryland. He was then ordered to Naval Air Technical Training Center in Norman, Oklahoma, from 24 November 1952 to 30 January 1953, and then to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for advanced training for the Aviation Boatswain's Mate (ABM) rating. He was at Philadelphia from 16 February 1953 to 10 June 1953, and was then ordered to sea duty aboard Escort Carrier *USS Mindoro (CVE-120)*, the "Mighty Minnie," at Norfolk, Virginia, Navy Yard. He boarded her just after she completed a six-month retrofit of her arresting gear. Dale served aboard *USS Mindoro* for two years as an ABM in Aircraft Catapult Operations. While Dale was aboard *USS Mindoro*, she conducted carrier type training and participated in fleet exercises. She operated along the eastern coast of the States, in the Caribbean Sea, in the Mediterranean as part of Task Group 81.2, and later in the North Atlantic where she acted as a helicopter assault carrier in arctic cold weather operations as part of Task Group 29.2 with a Marine Helicopter Air Wing and Marine Amphibious Group FOUR aboard with 500 ground Marines sleeping on cots on the hangar deck. Subsequently, after completing exercises off the Virginia Capes, *USS Mindoro* steamed to Boston on 17 January 1955 and was decommissioned there on 4 August 1955. Dale remained in Boston, living there with his first wife and first baby in Brookline until his release from active duty in Boston on 17 November 1955 as an Aviation Boatswain Mate 3/C. Dale married **Marie Ann Pucklavage** (22 June 1934 – September 1983) on 9 June 1953 at West Lawn, Pennsylvania. After his release from the Navy, Dale worked for Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania in Reading until his retirement in 1986. Dale and Marie had three children; **Zigmund Paul**, **Larry Dale**, and **Deborah Marie**. He married his second wife, **Jacqueline Anne Hillegass** (born 9 December 1934), in West Lawn, Pennsylvania, on 20 January 1995. In addition to Tamaqua, Allentown, and Newton Falls, Dale lived in Spring Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, and finally in Lower Macungie Township, Pennsylvania, to which he and Jacqueline moved and settled in 1995 after their marriage, and where Dale continued his hobbies of hunting and fishing for trout. Dale's parents were **Lawrence Leroy Sheaffer** (5 April 1907 – July 1968) and **Catherine Eugenia Forster** (20 March 1908 – 19 June 1995). Three of Dale's uncles served during World War II: **Carl Forster**, who was killed in action flying a B-24 in the 8th Air Force; **William Forster**, who flew a B-26 in the 9th Air Force; and **Chester Sheaffer**, who was an Army Medic.