

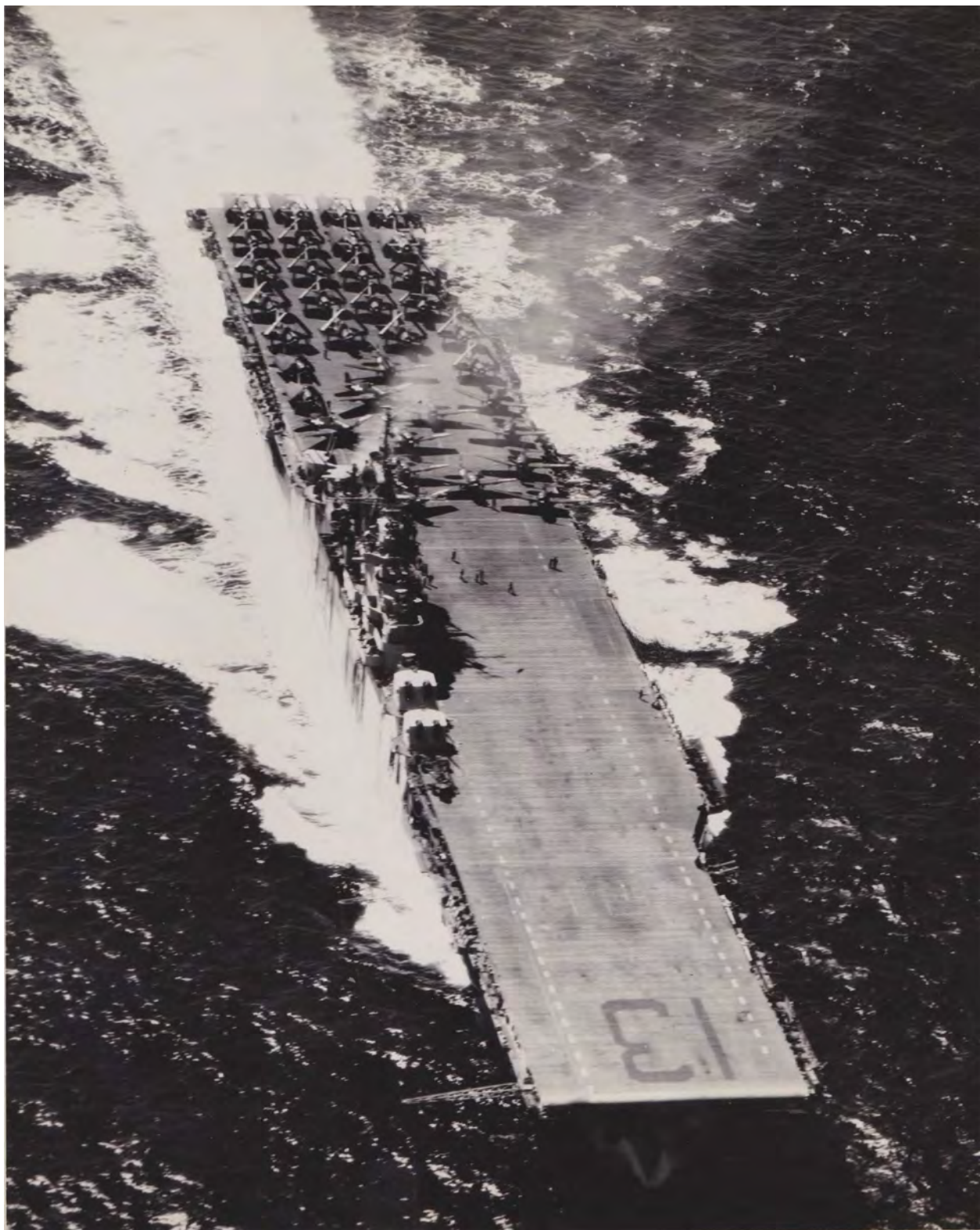
Some Memories of Service in the Navy

William “Bill” McGuire

July 22, 2008

With additional photos from Bill’s collection added as part of this pictorial preface





USS Franklin (CV 13) [Official Photograph U. S. Navy]



Bill McGuire (top row, left) with fellow officers



Bill McGuire (center) with Curtiss Helldiver SB2C dive-bomber maintenance team

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Bill McGuire

Introduction and Acknowledgment.

The following has been written more than sixty years after my release from active duty in the Navy. It reflects my memory of the events of the times. It may not be accurate in all detail. But it is true in essence. In addition to drawing on my personal file and mementos I have made extensive use of the following sources.

1. For a comprehensive history of the naval war in the Pacific: Morison, S. E., *History of United States Naval Operations in World War Two, Volumes 4, 8, 12,13,14*, Little, Brown , Boston, 1960
2. For an overall view of life on the *Franklin*: Bowman, M. K., Editor, *Big Ben the Flat Top, the Story of the U.S.S. Franklin*, Albert Love Enterprises, Atlanta, 1946
3. For a graphic account of the most difficult times on the ship: Springer, J. A., *Inferno, the Epic Life and Death Struggle of the USS Franklin in World War II*, Zenith Press, MBI Publishing, St. Paul, 2007

I am grateful to Joseph Springer on several counts: First, for the masterful way in which he has combined and ordered personal interviews, maps, charts, and photos. An oral history can tell a story in ways beyond the reach of a conventional, completely dispassionate one. Also, it stimulated me to prepare this summary, to get in touch with two of the interviewees, Bob Frank and Byron Robison, shipmates and close wartime friends I had lost contact with, and to renew acquaintance with others by enrolling in the USS Franklin Museum Association.

Nevertheless, as a result of their subjectivity and reliance on the long time memory of the participants, discrepancies are inevitable in oral histories. In the present case, on page 199 the attribution of the description of conditions on the flight deck during launching on the morning of March 19, 1945 is incorrect. I was the one who was standing directly behind the flight deck officer. The episode is important to the narrative and, since it does affect me, I've called it to the author's attention and have received a gracious and satisfactory reply. A copy of his explanatory note is attached to my description of the event below, and one of our complete correspondence is appended.

1, Summary of Navy Record

1942:

In April, while a senior at Bucknell, I applied for and received a commission as Ensign, USNR. Received my Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in June.

Called to active duty in the Navy in September for a 16 week course in Aeronautical Engineering at MIT

1943:

Completed the MIT course in January and ordered to the Bureau of Aeronautics in Washington. Tasked with preparing responses to requests for facilities from Pensacola and Corpus Christi. Washington interesting but not a desirable career or useful wartime service. Started requesting sea duty in April (letter attached)

Request granted in August with provisional orders for: 1) a tour of the Norfolk Assembly and Repair shop, 2) P & W Engine Training School, Hartford, 3) maintenance officer for a carrier squadron in training, and 4) board ship with squadron and transfer to ship's company. Completed the first two by mid November and then ordered to Bombing Squadron 13 in NAS Wildwood. Promoted to Lieutenant (jg) in October.

1944:

Squadron transferred to NAS Oceana in January to join Air Group 13. Boarded Franklin (CV13) in March as dive bomber maintenance officer. Shakedown in Trinidad. A week's training at Wright Paterson Aircraft in April. Ship left Norfolk on May 5th.

Transited Panama Canal, stopped at Pearl Harbor (June 6) and joined the Third Fleet at Eniwetok on June 29. Marianas Operation in July and August, Western Caroline Operation in September, Leyte Operation in October. Kamikazi attack off Leyte on October 30 damaged flight deck and after elevator. Returned to Puget Sound Navy Yard for repairs. Two day instruction in fire fighters school on Bainbridge Island while there. Promoted to Lieutenant on 1/1/45..

1945:

Repairs completed in January. Left Bremerton for Alameda and a replacement air group (AG5). Left San Francisco February 7, arrived Pearl Harbor March 3rd and Ulithi March 13th. Joined the Fifth Fleet and struck Japan on March 18th and 19th. Low level bomber attack on 19th caused serious damage and casualties. Returned to Ulithi, Pearl Harbor, the Panama Canal, and the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Arrived New York April 28.

Detached from ship on May 9 with one month leave. On June 16 reported to the advanced dive bomber training station, NAAS Cecil Field, Jacksonville as an aircraft maintenance officer. Received Letter of Commendation for March 19 distinguished service on Franklin. Released from active duty on December 6. Visited graduate schools (Lehigh, Cornell, MIT) on terminal leave. (Separation Notice and 3/19 Citation attached)

1946-1949:

Graduate school at Cornell, structural engineer in Boston, return to Cornell as Assistant Professor. No Naval Reserve activity.

1950-1958:

Cornell faculty member. Monthly meetings of an Ithaca Naval Reserve Officers unit. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander, November 1951. Stopped participating in unit in '54. Honorable Discharge from the Reserve, October 1958.

2. Aircraft Maintenance on the Franklin

Organization and Responsibilities

Not counting those who came on with Air Group 5, there were seven officers involved in supervising maintenance: C. Turek (V2 division officer), Phil Geier and

Byron Robinson (F6F fighters), Bob Frank (TBF torpedo bombers), myself (SB2C dive bombers), Lindsey Morgan and L. McAllister (hanger deck crews), (Roster attached).

Geier's, Robinson's, and Frank's experiences were similar to mine: limited but sufficient to become thoroughly familiar with the characteristics and the problems of the structure and power plant of the aircraft we were responsible for, and an understanding of the resources (men and materials) we had to draw on. We were in the hanger deck division where most of the maintenance was done, but our general quarters stations were on the flight deck and we were there for take-offs and landings to diagnose problems that arose in planes preparing for take-off or reported by incoming pilots, and to take appropriate action.

Lindsey Morgan and L. McAllister were mustangs, regular Navy men who had become warrant officers. Red Morgan (Lieut. jg from 1/1/45) had extensive sea duty, including a tour on the Enterprise. He was exceptional in every respect – in his mechanic's knowledge, in how to fix things, and in getting it done.

Working on either the flight or hanger deck, Phil, Byron, Bob, and I normally handled quick-fix problems (e.g., replacing a leaking hydraulic fitting) or those typical of our plane (the SB2C tail hook) by calling the knowledgeable Machinist Mates. Routine maintenance (e.g., periodic checks) and more difficult or extensive problems (e.g., determining source of engine malfunction) were supervised by Red Morgan or, for reparable structural damage, by McAllister.

After shakedown and our initial training exercises we had a good team: top notch, hard working mechanics, the experience and knowledge of Morgan and McAllister, and, I like to think, the useful specialized expertise of Geier, Robinson, Frank, and myself. It was an organization of mutual respect and cooperation – never a rank conscious one.

The Dive Bomber

From early 1944 on, the Curtiss Helldiver was the carrier dive bomber, The first version, the SB2C-1 was under powered and soon replaced by the SB2C-3 which had a nine cylinder Wright engine and an electrically controlled propeller. It proved to be an effective fighting machine. But it had an extraordinarily large number of functional and mechanical problems that made it a maintenance headache and helped earn the pilots' label, "the Beast". Among the problems:

1. Failure of the hydraulic control of the dive flaps on one wing, letting them close in a dive.
2. Failure of the wheel up-lock on one side when pulling out of a dive, permitting the wheel to slam down and destroy the down-lock and the hydraulic system on that side in the process. On land I saw an experienced pilot make a landing balancing on one good wheel and a dangling one. At sea, the dangling wheel made a bail-out essential.
3. Failure of the tail hook hold-down dash-pot on first impact permitting the hook to bounce over cables and causing a barrier crash.
4. Fatigue failure of one of the steel studs that connected the vertical fin to the fuselage. (Discovered in mid '45 at Cecil Field in examining wreckage after a fin pulled off in

flight and the pilot had bailed out. An older plane – no idea if the same problem had caused any losses at sea)

5. Fairly frequent complaints of faulty propeller pitch control.

6. Diagonal buckling of the undersurface of a wing between a wheel and the fuselage. Possibly caused in pullout from a dive or, more probably, an exceptionally hard wheel's first landing. Non-catastrophic but requiring plane to be restricted to level flight until replacement available.

7. Loosening, fracture and ejection of an exhaust valve seat in a cylinder, causing loss of compression. Detectable by listening for an irregularity in the sound of the exhaust - either with the engine running or in pulling the propeller through manually with it stopped. Repair was to replace the defective cylinder, which could be identified in the pull-through process. Loss of compression in one cylinder not necessarily catastrophic and not necessarily evident from cockpit manifold pressure and rpm readings, but concern was for sudden failure and loss of power in flight.

3. Attacks on the Ship

October 1944

I was at my battle station on the flight deck during attacks off Formosa on October 13th and the Philippines on the 15th but a non-participating spectator in both. The same is true for a kamikaze attack on the 30th during the mopping up operation after Leyte Gulf. As I recall it, although the damage to the ship and some planes on the after end of the hanger deck was extensive, none of the dive bombers were damaged in a way that I might be useful in the repair work, so I stayed out of the way.

March 1945

March 19th was the second day of striking Japan. It started early. By 7:08 there were 15 planes in the air and 53 still on the flight and hanger decks, positioned as shown in Figure 1 (Springer pg 279). All on the flight deck and some on the hanger deck were fueled and armed. The ship was on alert but not at general quarters (had a full day of operations on the 18th plus a night of rearming and refueling – a number of crew were relieved and in mess lines on the hanger deck). I was stationed behind Red Harris, the flight deck officer. I had learned to sense the valve problem from the sound of the exhaust. It could occur even though the pilot had full rpm and manifold pressure and be ready to give thumbs up for take off. It was infrequent. But if it did occur, it was my job to slap him on the back and have him abort the launch. (Correction to item on Springer pg 199 referring to Bob Frank as officer behind the FDO at this time attached)

Harris was in the launching spot waiting for the next plane and I was behind him. I remember looking forward (probably to follow the one taking off) and seeing a plane coming in low and straight over the deck from fore to aft. It went by so fast that I couldn't identify it. I assumed it was one of our own and my reaction was: what's that crazy ----- trying to do! All hell broke out almost immediately- the general alarm Klaxon sounding simultaneously with the first explosions. The first bomb hit forward of where we were and detonated on the hanger deck nearer to our position. The second one hit farther aft (Figures 2 & 3, Springer pgs 280, 281). The blast from the first one impacted

the ready rooms and quarters in the gallery deck under the flight deck. Both triggered fuel fires and explosions of our own bombs. Within minutes they were widespread throughout the hanger deck and after half of the flight deck. The speed with which the conflagration spread is documented by many accounts in Springer (Chapter 7).

I don't know where Harris went, but as an immediate reaction to the blasts and fire - and with my recent fire fighting instruction in mind - I went back to the island, got our flight deck chief, Mike Gibbons, and some of his crew, and uncoiled one of the hoses stored there. We got it in position to fight fires that were starting on the deck, but when I turned on the nozzle I had no success in getting anything - either water or fog spray. We continued to try, but I soon decided that the risers had probably been knocked out. The fires and explosions were increasing in intensity and we were engulfed in smoke (Figure 4). We abandoned the hose and went to the starboard side to get air. Little there so we went to the catwalk and from there down a ladder on the side to the hanger deck. By then it too was an inferno of explosions and fire. The external 40 millimeter gun mounts were nearby but not reachable from where we were. We went over the side.

After swimming for a few minutes, I found one of the netted rafts that had been thrown over the side and already had perhaps a dozen others on it. We were shortly picked up and taken aboard by the destroyer Hunt. It was probably less than an hour from the time of the attack to winding up on the Hunt. Bob Frank and Byron Robinson had been driven off other parts of the flight deck and left the ship from other locations at about the same time (Springer, pgs 226 & 230). They and 480 others (Springer, pg. 277) were also picked up by the Hunt. We stayed on the Hunt while it accompanied the ship back to Ulithi and re-boarded it there.

4. Aftermath of the March 19 attack

Almost 800 men died and nearly 500 more were wounded on the 19th. The experiences of a number of the survivors are recounted in *Inferno*, Springer's oral history of the ship. It has some fine accounts of the day's action, also bitter memories of some the Captain's orders.

When we returned to the ship in Ulithi we were ordered to report what we had done. I thought it was fair enough. I had no qualms about telling my story. I was also told that when the Santa Fe had come alongside to take off wounded at about 10:30 (after the fires were burned out or under control) some unauthorized officers had gone over and that they - and not we - were subject to discipline (see Springer, pg 297) My statement was the same as in the above account. The letter of commendation I received was based on it, perhaps exaggerated slightly in that the citation didn't mention that we weren't successful. But we had tried valiantly, so I believe it was fair. (Parenthetically: Among the hoses lying on the flight deck and used after water was restored may have been the one we abandoned, or an extension of it - see pictures from the Santa Fe in Bowman & in Springer.)

Between Ulithi and Pearl Harbor, Bob Frank and I spent time swabbing parts of the hanger deck and pumping out flooded pockets. Figure 5 is of an occasion when some

other officers came by. In the top one (5a) Bob is on the front row right and I am next to him. In Fig 5b (from Bowman), he is third from the left in the back row and I'm on its right end. Joe Taylor (short sleeves) is in the center of the front row and Harry Hale, Dr. Fuelling (I believe) and Red Morgan (holding the pump) are at the right. Among the others are Air Division officers Hizer and Stone.

The pace slowed down when we reached Pearl Harbor. Figure 6 has pictures taken then in Phil and Robbie's room. Bob and I are on top and Byron, myself and Phil in the lower one. It was known that we were returning to Brooklyn, that the ship would be laid up indefinitely, and that we would be transferred off. We had been asked for our preferences for next assignment. I believe all of us asked for air stations in either Texas or Florida.

I received orders when we arrived in New York in April and I reported to Cecil Field in June. When I got there they had about 100 (I believe) SB2C's, all of them planes returned from carriers. Many needed repairs or replacement of worn parts. A few were unsalvageable. The availability was low and the flight training program was being affected. But by then the maintenance crew was a team of experienced veterans. I joined when a rebuilding program was getting underway. It took several months (often functioning as an assembly and repair shop – with an improvised engine change line for example) but by early fall the record was excellent. My last six months on active duty were busy, productive ones.

I had no complaints about the post March 19 treatment I received from the Navy. I believe it was fair. Others were not treated well. Some sailors of the V2 Division who were still alive and aboard had gone over to the Santa Fe when it came alongside at about 10:30. As recounted in Springer (pg 260) apparently they did so under orders from Red Morgan who reasoned that, since the planes were gone, they were nonessential. Captain Gehres rejected this and denied them permission to re board at any time and ordered disciplinary action (Springer Chapter 9)

5.The Navy in Wartime

Family Life

Barbara and I were engaged in November, 1943 and married in Hartford on February 5, 1944 when I had a brief leave from Oceana. For the remainder of the war our life was a typical navy one in which we were together for short periods in a number of places.

It started in Virginia Beach where we shared an apartment with other newly weds, Rupert and Gerry Weber, in Bullock's Cottage – a rooming/apartment house near the boardwalk (Figure 7). Rupe was the squadron engineering officer and my closest friend among the pilots. Barbara returned to West Hartford when the ship left on shakedown. She rejoined me at the Chamberlain in Old Point Comfort when we returned and went with me to Paterson, while I was there at the Wright Engine School for a week while the ship was in dry dock. She again went home when the ship left port.

When the ship returned to Puget Sound in November, I went to Hartford and we returned to Bremerton by train. There we stayed briefly at a house in Old Port Orchard and then at the Enetai Inn. When repairs were completed in January, she followed us to San Francisco, staying with the Livingstons, cousins of mine. On February 7th (two days after our first anniversary) she saw us leave through the Golden Gate and went home again.

In April she received word that we were on our way to Brooklyn and went to my parents' apartment on Staten Island to see us come up the Narrows on April 28th. From the day after we entered the Navy Yard until I was detached, the Navy put us up in a room at the Waldorf. We left on May 9th and had a month's leave, most of which we spent on Chebeague Island, Maine.

Our last wartime housing was in "Splinterville" a prefabricated village between Jacksonville and Cecil Field. While there we bought our first car, a 1939 Chevrolet, which we used to tour Florida and drive home in December.

Carrier Life

Life on an aircraft carrier can be dull. In port or on long voyages from port to port there may be little for most crew members to do. But it is an exciting place, even on routine operating days. And in combat it is the center of the action.

Ideally, the operations of launching and recovering planes on a carrier are precision drills in which they are sent off and received without interruption and in the shortest possible time. But things go wrong. Figure 8 is of an SB2C in which the landing hook has skipped over the wires and it has crashed into a barrier, sideswiping the superstructure on the way. It would have been sent to the hanger deck, cannibalized for spare parts and the carcass thrown over the side. Springer has examples of other types of flight deck accidents: men walking into propellers, shot while de-arming a plane, hit by errant planes, etc.

Also clear from examples in Springer and the Bowman book is the central role of the carrier pilots. Aside from having sometimes untrustworthy planes, special skills were needed for either a catapult or deck launch, particularly with a fully fueled and armed aircraft. Landing required following the directions of a flag wielding landing signal officer and, at the last instant, setting the plane down at low speed and in a tail down attitude on a small spot of the constantly moving deck. These were in addition to flying over large stretches of water, dueling, shooting or bombing in combat, and then returning to a different location. Carrier pilots and their crews were, daily, the heroes of the naval war in the Pacific.

Among the pilots I knew, some had exceptional careers. Joe Taylor (see Figure 5), initially Franklin's Air Officer and then its Executive Officer, had been skipper of the torpedo bomber squadron on the Yorktown in the Coral Sea in 1942. He led one of the first attacks on Japanese ships in the War on May 8th and was a member of the crew when

it was sunk a month later (Morison, Vol. 4). A 1927 Annapolis graduate, he was a strong, fair, leader in the best traditions of the Academy – always responsible and never pompous. He was probably the firmest leader in the aftermath of the March 19th attack. He retired as a rear admiral in 1950 as one of its most decorated officers, with three Navy Crosses.

As mentioned above, my closest friend among the pilots was Rupe Weber. We met in Wildwood in late November, 1943 when I arrived as the fledgling maintenance officer. Rupe was a Chicago native with a 1940 B.S.C.E degree from the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) so we also had pre navy interests in common. He was an expert pilot – one of the leaders in the squadron. He was shot down over Formosa on October 12 (Springer, pg 110).

One of the other pilots, Milt Bonar, and his wife also had rooms at Bullock's. Milt, a veteran of earlier service off Guadalcanal, was the first dive bomber pilot lost – over Iwo Jima on July 4 (Springer, pg 74)

Others among the finest of the squadron were also lost: Holmstrom, Barnett, Brooks, etc. I've often wondered what they might have done – Weber as an engineer for example. A few years ago I got a copy of his transcript from a friend of mine on the IIT faculty. He was an indifferent student – on probation once – like some of my own best students. But he flourished in his senior year with A's in aerodynamics and airplane design. He would have been good.

Like the eight hundred other Franklin men we lost, Rupe never had the chance. And as Don Conrad, one of the ship's crew, said to Springer: "We *all* looked at death differently then. It was part of life and it was accepted, People were more stoic then, and I believe that helped me out on the ship because the *Franklin* was no place for such sentimentality."

In reply address not the signer of
this letter but Bureau of Aeronautics,
Navy Department, Washington, D.C.

Refer to No. Aer-MA-3112-EW
145113

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF AERONAUTICS
WASHINGTON

5 April 1943

From: Ensign William McGuire, A-V(S), USNR,
Shore Establishments Branch, Maintenance Division,
Bureau of Aeronautics.
To : The Chief of Naval Personnel.
Via : The Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics.
Subject: Request for Transfer of Duty.
Reference: (a) BuPers ltr. P16-3(c), Pers-319-MJU, to All
Shore Stations, dated 3 March 1943 re: Assign-
ment of Line Officers Under 30 years of Age to
Sea Duty.
Enclosure: (A) List of Personal Data.


1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a),
it is respectfully requested that, upon completion of any necessary
training, I be assigned to sea duty as soon as is practicable.

2. Enclosure (A) is forwarded in accordance with para-
graph 4 of reference (a).

William McGuire

NOTICE OF SEPARATION FROM THE U. S. NAVAL SERVICE

NAVPERS-553 (Rev. 9-1-51)

1. SERIAL OR FILE NO. 145113		2. NAME (LAST) (FIRST) (MIDDLE) McGUIRE, William (n) Lieut. (A)		3. RATE AND CLASS (OR RANK AND CLASSIFICATION) 100 Stuyvesant Place, St. George Staten Island, New York, N. Y.		5. PLACE OF SEPARATION PERSONNEL SEPARATION CENTER, NAS, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.	
6. RACE W		9. SEX M		10. MARITAL STATUS Married		11. U. S. CITIZEN (YES OR NO) Yes	
12. DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH 12-17-20, Staten Island, N. Y.		13. REGISTERED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		14. SELECTIVE SERVICE BOARD OF REGISTRATION Richmond County, N. Y.		15. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE Same as 4	
16. MEANS OF ENTRY (INDICATE BY CHECK IN APPROPRIATE BOX) <input type="checkbox"/> ENLISTED <input type="checkbox"/> INDUCTED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMISSIONED		17. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE 30 September 1942		18. NET SERVICE (FOR PAY PURPOSES) (YRS. MOS. DAYS) 3-6-23		19. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE Same as 4	
20. QUALIFICATIONS, CERTIFICATES HELD, ETC. Aviation Maintenance Officer		21. RATINGS HELD None		22. FOREIGN AND/OR SEA SERVICE WORLD WAR II <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		23. SERVICE SCHOOLS COMPLETED Aeronautical Eng. 16 Aviation Engine School 8	
24. SERVICE (VESSELS AND STATIONS SERVED ON) Bureau of Aeronautics, Wash., D.C. USS Franklin, CV-13 NAAS Cecil Field, Fla.		25. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO CONTINUE INSURANCE Yes		26. AMOUNT OF PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH \$6.60		27. MONTH NEXT PREMIUM DUE Feb. '46	
28. KIND OF INSURANCE N		29. EFFECTIVE MONTH OF ALLOTMENT DISCONTINUANCE Jan. '46		30. TOTAL PAYMENT UPON DISCHARGE \$		31. TRAVEL OR MILEAGE ALLOWANCE INCLUDED IN TOTAL PAYMENT \$	
32. INITIAL MUSTERING OUT PAY \$100.		33. NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER P. B. BOCHER 51-653		34. REMARKS Asiatic-Pacific (4 stars) American Theatre Philippine Liberation (2 star) Navy Commendation Ribbon Soc. Sec. No. 130-10-5178		35. SIGNATURE (BY DIRECTION OF COMMANDING OFFICER) <i>Charles F. Duggins</i> Charles F. DUGGINS USNR	
36. NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST EMPLOYER Mason and Hanger Engineers & Contractors N. Y., N. Y.		37. DATES OF LAST EMPLOYMENT FROM: Aug. '42 TO: Sept. '42		38. MAIN CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND D. O. T. NO. Ass't. Engineer		39. JOB PREFERENCE (LIST TYPE, LOCALITY, AND GENERAL AREA) Back to School	
40. PREFERENCE FOR ADDITIONAL TRAINING (TYPE OF TRAINING) Structural Eng.		41. NON-SERVICE EDUCATION (YEARS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED) GRAD.: 8 H. S.: 4 COLL.: 4		42. DEGREES B. S.		43. MAJOR COURSE OR FIELD Civil Eng.	
44. VOCATIONAL OR TRADE COURSES (NATURE AND LENGTH OF COURSE) None		45. RIGHT INDEX FINGERPRINT 		46. OFF DUTY EDUCATIONAL COURSES COMPLETED Navy Regs. <i>William McGUIRE</i> 1-7-46 WILLIAM MC GUIRE		47. DATE OF SEPARATION 1-7-46	
48. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>William McGUIRE</i>		49. DATE OF SEPARATION 1-7-46		50. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED <i>William McGUIRE</i>		51. DATE OF SEPARATION 1-7-46	

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

SHIP, STATION OR ACTIVITY

U.S.S. FRANKLIN (CV13)

DATE OF ROSTER 1 March 1945

To: The Chief of Naval Personnel.

AUTHORIZED COMPLEMENT														TOTAL ON BOARD	
CAPT.	CDR.	LT. CDR.	LT.	LT. JG.	ENS.	W.O.	NST.	TOTAL							
1	8	11	23	26	29	25	3	126							144
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
FILE NO.	SEC. INST.	NAME (LAST)	NAME (INITIALS)	RANK	DATE OF PRESENT RANK	N.A. CLASS OR H.R. CLASS	NO. OF MONTHS ON BOARD	NO. OF MONTHS AT SEA THIS CRUISE	PRIMARY DUTY	COLLATERAL DUTIES	DUTIES IN TRAINING FOR--	PROSPECTIVE DATE OF QUALIFICATION	COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS (SEE INSTRUCTIONS B)		
34282	D	INGEHRES, L. E.		Captain	6/17/42	Line	4	4	40	Commanding	None			09 (18, 18a, N. Register)	
61280	D	IFTAYLOR, J. (n)		Comdr.	9/9/42	'27	13	2	13	Executive Off.	Welfare; Audits	Command, CVE	4/45	09 WD(18, 18a N.Reg.)	
203417	D	HATHAWAY, P.E.		Lieut.	7/1/44	Line	1	1	1	Aide to Ex.Off.	None	Present	Now	None	
70225	D	IFHALE, H.H.		Comdr.	11/1/42	'31	6	2	17	Air Officer	None	Exec.Off., CV	Now	09 WD	
79592	D	IFDAVIS, L.F.		Lt.Cdr.	3/1/44	(A1)	1	1	1	Asst. Air Off.	None	Air Officer CVL	9/45	09	
79639	D	IFHIZER, D.W.		Lt.Cdr.	3/1/44	Line	13	13	13	Air Oper. Off.	None	Asst. Air Off. CV	Now	09	
137513		STONE, G.L.P. Jr.		Lt.Cdr.	10/17/44	(AD)I	13	13	13	V-5 Div. Off.	None	Asst. Air Off. CV	Now	27 N2	
126988		WEST, J.W. Jr.		Lt.Cdr.	10/17/44	(A)	1	1	1	A.C.I. Officer	None	Present	Now	14	
136584		BERGER, D. (n)		Lt.Cdr.	10/17/44	(A)	1	1	1	Asst. Air Off. (Adm)	None	Present	Now	None	
126174	D	ANGELL, R.T.		Lieut.	10/1/42	(AD)L	11	11	11	V-4 Div. Off.	Legal Off.	Air Oper. Off. CVE	9/45	92	
128518	D	GRISWOLD, J.R.		Lieut.	10/1/42	(A)-F	13	13	13	F.D. Officer	V-4 Div. Off.	Task Group F.D.O.	9/1/45	34 AO	
84331	D	IFTUNEK, C.B.		Lieut.	12/1/42	(A1)	6	6	12	V-2 Div. Off.	None	Asst. Air Off. CVL	1/46	09	
107687	D	GUIDA, J.A.		Lieut.	3/1/43	(S)A	11	11	11	Aerological Off.	Asst. Air Adm. Off.	Present	Now	None	
142382	D	STALCUP, F.L. Jr.		Lieut.	3/1/43	(A1)L	2	2	2	Physical Tra. Off.	None	Manager Deck Off.	5/45	None	
142040	D	IFTAYLOR, V.W.		Lieut.	5/1/43	(A5)	1	1	1	Asst. A.C.I. Off.	None	A.C.I. Officer	6/45	09	
170158		SIMON, W.A. Jr.		Lieut.	10/1/43	(A)	0	0	1	Training Off.	None	Present	Now	AvGunSch, (Jax)12/42	
194218		WOODBURN, M.C.		Lieut.	10/1/43	(AD)L	13	13	13	Catapult Off.	Flight Officer	Flight Dk. Off.	Now	None	
152825		HARRIS, F. (n)		Lieut.	1/1/44	(AD)L	13	13	27	Flight Dk. Off.	V-1 Div. Off.	Present	Now	L6	
119015	D	POAT, A.A. Jr.		Lieut.	4/1/44	(AD)(F)I	13	13	13	Asst. F.L.O.	V-4 Div. JO	F. D. O.	Now	34 AO	
110240		FRANK, R.H.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(A)	12	12	12	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off	V-2 Div. Off.	Aircraft Mnt. Off.	12/45	None	
134517		CHENEY, G.W. Jr.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(A)-X	13	13	13	C.I.C. Watch Off.	Radar Training Off.	Asst. F.D.O.	Now	34 AO	
125109	D	IFWINTERS, D.M.		Lieut.	10/1/44	(A1)	12	12	12	Landing Sig. Off.	V-1 Div. JO	Flight Dk. Off.	6/45	09	
150542	D	ALLER, D.A.		Lieut.	10/1/44	(A)(X)I	13	13	13	C.I.C. Watch Off.	V-4 Div. JO	Asst. F.D.O.	Now	34 AO	
170761		GEIER, P.O. Jr.		Lieut.	10/1/44	(A)	12	12	12	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off	V-2 Div. JO	Aircraft Mnt. Off.	12/45	None	
276891	D	WENIGER, J.E.		Lieut.	12/1/44	(A)-F	3	3	13	Intercept Off.	V-4 Div. JO	Asst. F.D.O.	Now	None	
145113		McGUIRE, W. (n)		Lieut.	1/1/45	(A)	12	12	12	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off	V-2 Div. JO	Aircraft Mnt. Off.	12/45	None	

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3. "Courses and Qualifications" column 14, should be designated by the appropriate codes shown in Enclosure (A) of BuPers Circular Letter No. 217-44 of 31 July 1944. If an officer has completed any other course or school which is not listed, indicate the name of the course or school, the place and date of completion in column 14.

E. G. G. G.
E. G. G. G.
(SIGNATURE)

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

SHIP, STATION OR ACTIVITY

U.S.S. FRANKLIN (CV13)

DATE OF ROSTER 1 March 1945

To: The Chief of Naval Personnel.

AUTHORIZED COMPLEMENT														TOTAL ON BOARD	
CAPT.	CDR.	LT. CDR.	LT.	LT. JG.	ENS.	W.O.	NST.	TOTAL							
1	8	11	23	26	29	25	3	126							144
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
FILE NO.	SEC. INST.	NAME (LAST)	NAME (INITIALS)	RANK	DATE OF PRESENT RANK	N.A. CLASS OR H.R. CLASS	NO. OF MONTHS ON BOARD	NO. OF MONTHS AT SEA THIS CRUISE	PRIMARY DUTY	COLLATERAL DUTIES	DUTIES IN TRAINING FOR--	PROSPECTIVE DATE OF QUALIFICATION	COURSES AND QUALIFICATIONS (SEE INSTRUCTIONS B)		
161351	D	BUHL, V.C.		Lieut.	1/1/45	(E3)T	13	13	13	Shipborn Rdr Mnt Off	V-4 Div. JO	V-4 Div. Off.	Now	60 61	
207103	D	ABELL, R.E. Jr.		Lt(jg)	1/1/44	(A)(X)I	13	13	13	C.I.C. Watch Off.	V-4 Div. JO	Asst. F.L.O.	Now	34	
158249		HASSIG, G.L.		Lt(jg)	3/1/44	(A)	13	13	18	Arrest Gear Off.	V-1 Div. JO	Asst. Flt. Dk. Off.	Now	None	
131810		ROBINSON, B.O. Jr.		Lt(jg)	4/1/44	(A)	12	12	12	V-2 Div. JO	None	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off.	Now	None	
139908		WALKER, M.C.		Lt(jg)	4/1/44	(E3)T	13	13	13	P.C. Radar Off.	V-4 Div. JO	Present	Now	35 60 61	
244906		BARNABY, D.R.E.		Lt(jg)	4/1/44	(E3)T	13	13	13	Asst. Rdr Mnt Off (Ship)	V-4 Div. JO	Shipborn Rdr Mnt Off.	Now	60 61	
294622		SHERIDAN, J.B.		Lt(jg)	9/1/44	Line	1	1	1	Aircraft Ord. Off.	V-5 Div. JO	V-5 Div. Off.	6/45	None	
254933	D	DUNLAP, D.R. Jr.		Lt(jg)	9/1/44	(A)-X	13	13	13	C.I.C. Watch Off.	V-4 Div. JO	Asst. F.D.O.	Now	34	
292508		KALLSTROM, D.W.		Lt(jg)	12/1/44	(02)	1	1	1	Asst. Aircraft Ord. (Rockets).	V-5 Div. JO	Aircraft Ord. Off.	3/46	AvGunSch. (Jax)1/44	
296498		PETERSON, A.J.		Lt(jg)	1/1/45	(A)L	3	3	3	Photo. Officer	V-2 Div. JO	Present	Now	None	
334487		MORGAN, L.E.		Lt(jg)	1/15/45	Line	12	12	12	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off.	V-2 Div. JO	Aircraft Mnt Off.	Now	None	
196723		BOWMAN, M.K.		Lt(jg)	2/1/45	Line	13	13	79	Asst. Rdr Mnt (Ship)	V-4 Div. JO	Shipborn Rdr Mnt Off.	Now	61 62 643	
391570	D	LARSON, P.O.		Ensign	6/23/44	(A)L	4	4	4	V-2 Div. JO	None	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off.	6/45	None	
408363		McCLELLAN, W.A.		Ensign	7/29/44	(A)X	0	0	0	Night Fighter Dir.	C.I.C. Watch Off.	Present	Now	34	
284881		HALL, F.M.		Ensign	12/15/44	Line	13	13	13	Asst. Arrest Gear Off.	V-1 Div. JO	Arrest Gear Off.	Now	None	
202745		McALISTER, L.G.		ChCarp	7/15/43	Line	13	13	13	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off.	V-2 Div. JO	Present	Now	None	
284918		REID, C.B.		ChMach	8/1/44	Line	13	13	13	Gasoline Officer	V-5 Div. JO	Present	Now	None	
300124		KALVIN, J.M.		ChThorp	11/1/44	Line	13	13	79	Asst. AvOrd (Torp.)	V-5 Div. JO	Present	Now	46 68	
349982		FRISBEE, M. (n)		Bos'n	1/15/44	Line	9	9	9	Flight Dk. Bos'n	V-1 Div. JO	Present	Now	None	
405970		HALE, R.G.		Gunner	7/15/44	Line	4	4	4	Aviation Gunner	None	V-5 Div. JO	Now	None	
427118		BYRNES, R.S.		Carp.	9/15/44	Line	1	1	1	Asst. Aircraft Mnt Off.	None	Present	Now	None	
85170		McKINNEY, W.R.		Lt. Car.	10/17/44	'40	13	13	56	Gunnery Officer	None	Present	Now	WD	
136275		WHITAKER, J.D.		Lt. Car.	10/17/44	(D)L	13	13	22	Asst. Gun. Off.	None	Gunnery Off., DD	Now	23	
103187		VAUGHAN, J.A. Jr.		Lieut.	10/1/43	(D)	13	13	31	5th Div. Off.	None	Gunnery Off., DD	Now	WD	
123590		ROBERTSON, F.S. Jr.		Lieut.	10/1/43	'42	13	13	34	1st Div. Off.	0.0.D.	Gunnery Off., DD	Now	WD 35	
120530		RODGERS, E.B.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(D)	13	13	31	4th Div. Off.	0.0.D.	Gunnery Off., DD	9/45	WD	
120619		BARR, J.B.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(D)	13	13	31	2nd Div. Off.	0.0.D.	Gunnery Off., DD	9/45	WD	
120895		TAPPEN, M.M.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(D)	13	13	31	8th Div. Off.	0.0.D.	Gunnery Off., DD	9/45	WD	
128626		CANNEY, F.C.		Lieut.	7/1/44	(D)L	13	1	13	"L" Div. Off.	None	Present	Now	46	

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E. G. G. G.
E. G. G. G.
(SIGNATURE)



COMMANDER FIFTH FLEET

The Commander FIFTH Fleet, United States Pacific Fleet,
commends

LIEUTENANT WILLIAM MC GUIRE,
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For distinguished service and meritorious achievement while serving aboard an aircraft carrier which was striking the main Japanese Islands near Kobe on 19 March 1945. After his ship was hit in an enemy air attack, there followed a series of violent explosions of ready bombs, rockets, and ammunition which threatened complete destruction of the carrier. In the face of continuing explosions and raging fires, he led a valiant group fighting the fires until forced by flames and smoke to go overboard. His courageous conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Commendation Ribbon authorized

R. A. SPRUANCE,
Admiral, U.S. Navy.

B

Figures 1 through 3 are part of the copyrighted book by J. A. Springer, *Inferno, the Epic Life and Death Struggle of the USS Franklin in World War II*, Zenith Press, MBI Publishing, St. Paul, 2007.

The captions and page numbers in Springer of the figures cited in the text of McGuire's account are:

Figure 1: Position of Aircraft, March 19, 1945 – 07:08 hours (page 279)

Figure 2: Bomb Hit Locations (page 280)

Figure 3: Flight Deck Damage / Hanger Deck Damage (p. 281)

Please refer to this book for these figures.

The remaining figures are from Bill McGuire's personal collection, although some derive from U. S. Navy official photographs.



Figure 4

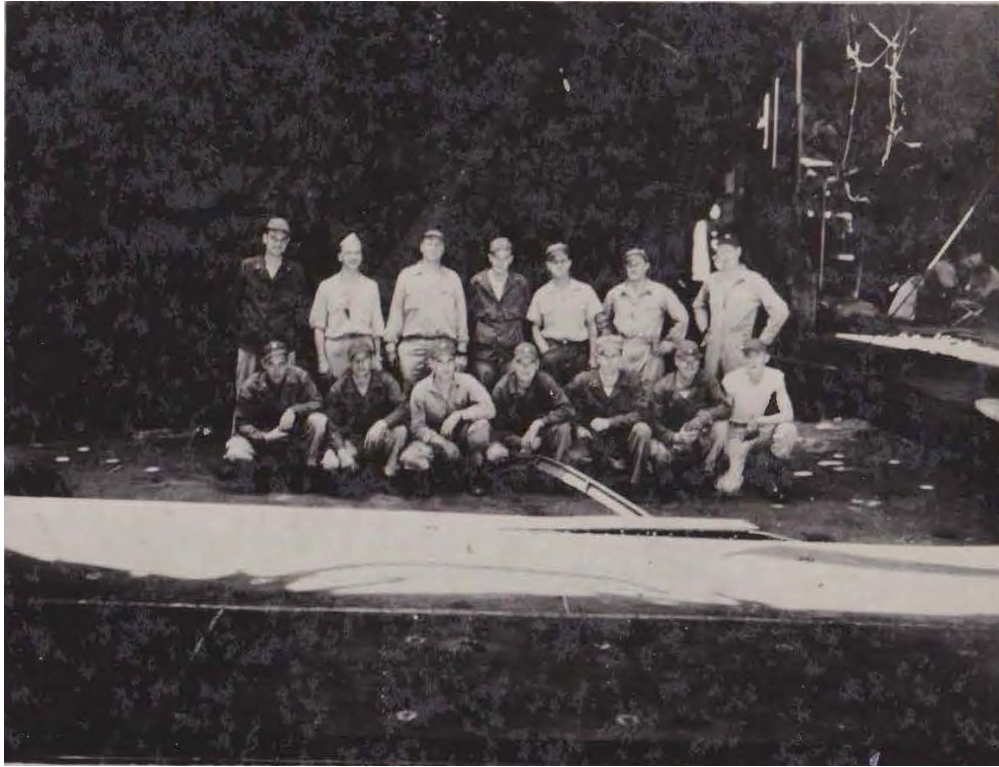


Figure 5 (a)



Figure 5(b)



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

WILLIAM MCGUIRE, P.E.
CONSULTING STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

121 SIMSBURY DRIVE
ITHACA, NEW YORK 14850

PHONE 257-6151
AREA CODE 607

June 9, 2008

Mr. Joseph A. Springer
RR1, Box 14
Pleasant Hills, Illinois, 62366

Dear Mr. Springer,

Would you kindly send me a note that acknowledges the fact that I, and not Bob Frank, was the one who was standing behind the flight deck officer in the incident described on page 199 of the *Inferno*?

I put off making this request until I had the opportunity to meet with Bob and to find out whether we really did have different recollections as to what happened that day. Unfortunately, for reasons of health on both sides (Bob's and my wife's) we haven't been able to make it. After aborting the last trial I decided to spell out mine in detail, which I did in the attached letter. I followed this up with a phone call the other day and found that he is in complete accord with me: The SB2C's were my responsibility and he wasn't the one behind the flight deck officer. His job was with the TBM's.

This request is the follow - up referred to at the end of my letter to Bob. Your book is an important one and I want to refer to it. But when I do, I shouldn't have to add, "On page 199 that wasn't Bob Frank that was me; believe me" As a lifelong academician I'm used to that sort of questionable defense. And here we are talking about real life.

Sincerely yours,

Bill McGuire

COPY

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Dear Bob,

Sorry we missed getting together two weeks ago. We had some physical problems here. But I still hope we can make it – somewhere - in the near future. I hope the tests you've had, or scheduled to have, turn up nothing worse than the normal age effects we're all experiencing.

There is a lot to go over, both on old times and on where we've been in the intervening years. You did mention a DVD on the ship. But more than that, I'm curious about what you, Phil, and Robbie have done since then.

(Two paragraphs of notes on my own work deleted here. WM)

As I said on the phone, I do want to talk about and clarify one of the events of March 19th as described in Springer's book, the Inferno. It's an excellent book. And it has fine accounts of your response to the October kamikaze attack and your attention to the TBMs and F4Us on the after part of the flight deck on March 19th. You fully deserve the award you received for that action and it is good to have it on record this way. But the quotation attributed to you on page 199 of the book is not correct. Since it does affect me I have to respond.

In so far as I know, the spotting of the planes at 07:08 was as in the figures on page 279 of the book. I am sure that, as shown, the SB2Cs were being launched. They were my responsibility and I was the officer standing directly behind the FDO, Red Harris, and charged with hitting him on the back to abort the launch if the engine did not sound right. Among other things, they had an exhaust valve seat problem: seats could come loose and a cylinder lose compression. We had learned to detect it by pulling the prop through on a stopped engine or listening to the sound of a running one. It was infrequent, but it could crop up quickly and not be evident in the cockpit. The pilot could read takeoff rpm and manifold pressure and give the thumbs up for take off. Hence the need for listening to it running.

My recollection of the sequence of events is as follows: There was no problem with the Helldiver taking off and as I was watching it go I saw a plane coming in low and straight over the flight deck from fore to aft. It went by so fast that I couldn't identify it. We'd had no warning so I assumed it must be one of ours and my reaction was: what is that crazy son of a bitch trying to do! Then all hell broke out - the general alarm Klaxon and explosions started almost simultaneously. I went to the island and unreeled a hose with some of the flight deck crew (I had been to fire fighters school during our stay in Bremerton). Fires were starting and we tried to fight them but got neither water nor fog. We continued to try but soon decided the riser had been destroyed. The fires and explosions were increasing in intensity and we were engulfed in smoke. We abandoned

the hose and went to the starboard side to get air. There was little there so we went to the catwalk and from there down a ladder on the side to the hangar deck. By then it too was an inferno of explosions and fire. The external 40 millimeter gun mounts were nearby but not reachable from where we were. We went over the side – and were later picked up by the Hunt.

That's what I did, that's the account of it that I gave when we were returned to the ship in Ulithi, and it's the basis for the Letter of Commendation that I received.

As I said, Springer's book is an excellent one. It will be referred to for years to come. And, for precisely that reason (maybe conditioned by the fact that I've done detailed research into the Civil War record of a great-grandfather) I want to be able to pass on to any of my descendants who might be curious as to what I did confirmation that my account and not the book's is the true version of the incident.

When I first read the book I was more amused than concerned about this. I read it as a useful, relevant account of a detail of the launching procedure and that, even though the attribution of source was not correct, since the author did not know me I was willing to grant him editorial license to work it in. I wasn't bothered by lack of recognition in the book then, nor am I now. But as time has gone on and for the above reason, I do plan to get in touch with Mr. Springer. But before I do I want to talk to you to see whether we are in accord as to what happened. We're having a conference here but I'll try to give you a call sometime in the middle of the week.

Very Best Regards,.

July 1, 2008

Mr. William McGuire
121 Simsbury Drive
Ithaca, New York 14850

Dear Bill –

Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your June 9 letter. The flood of 08 has preoccupied my mind, body and soul for the past month or so. We have been waging our own war of attrition – one sandbag at a time. Pleasant Hill is just one mile from the Mississippi (as the crow flies) and our community was directly threatened. It was an exhausting affair since I am not as young and healthy as I used to be. But things are looking up, thank God (literally).

I understand your concern pertaining to Bob Frank's account on page 199. This type of narrative conflict between two veterans inevitably raises its head from time to time. It is entirely realistic when one interviews combat veterans that must rely on memories that were forged in combat and the fog of war more than six decades ago. (I can't remember what I did yesterday.)

I will be glad to jot down a note for your records per your request, except a note from Bob explaining the inconsistency should be sufficient. In fact Bob should be the origin of such a correction to his oral narrative. As a forty-six year old living in Illinois it is impossible and perhaps improper for me to confirm (officially) what happened to either you or Bob aboard *Franklin* that terrible morning. But as a student of history I am well aware how important it is to correct the record for future generations.

Other than writing a note for your records, Bill, my options are utterly nonexistent. INFERNO will never be reprinted either in hard cover, trade paperback or mass-market paperback owing to various marketing factors that are beyond my control. If this were not the case I would gladly correct the matter with a footnote on page 199 during reprinting.

By nature oral history (as is all history) is inherently filled with inaccuracies or contradictions. During the interviewing, editing and writing process I have attempted to keep such errors to an absolute minimum. Indeed, I have several thousand pages of *Franklin* records and individual after action statements, though I did not have yours for comparison. After action records are the standard by which historians and authors must rely upon, as they are usually the only accounts accepted by the U.S. Navy as a matter of record for all combat actions. (They were written shortly after the event when the memory was less clouded and actions were clear.) Yet I have discovered that even these reports are innately inaccurate since each involves the frailty of human memory (or in rare cases the

reports were altered or fabricated with intent, such as Captain Gehres' own March 19, 1945 written action report). Ultimately the absolute historical truth is always difficult to reach. The passage of time just makes it too complex. I tried my best to do so regardless.

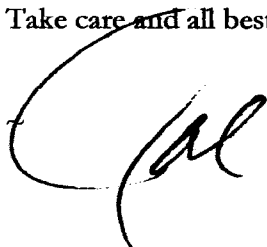
Eventually I knew this problem would most likely surface. Accordingly I made a point to address such conflicts discovered within the crew oral narratives – on behalf of all crewmen who eventually made print – by *intentionally* including a disclaimer in my Author's Note to avoid an occurrence such as this.

I am pleased you enjoyed the book, Bill. I certainly gave it my best shot. Additionally I made a point to cover the air group and maintenance division because I felt both had been somewhat overlooked in the Pacific War. And without you men up front the carrier war would not have been possible.

I have enjoyed our past chats about the SB2C and its design flaws. I look forward to future contact. I only wish I had found you sooner Bill, but we mustn't dwell on the past. At least INFERNO reconnected you with your lifelong buddies Bob Frank and Byron Robinson. Knowing that I, as the author, had a hand in it gives me solace to keep going when the chips are down.

Lastly, I am sending you a few pages from *Franklin's* records mentioning the maintenance record for VB-13. I would love to talk to you about it since I know you worked these issues directly. (I was an Aircraft Weapons/Maintenance Specialist for twenty-two years. I understand the difficulties associated with maintaining a flight schedule under adverse conditions. So it never ceases to amaze me how your teams were able to operate successfully with little supply or with minimal resources, especially when the SB2C's mediocre engine and temperamental airframe is taken into account. Fabulous!) I have more material but it takes awhile to work through the thousands of pages, and time to transcribe. But I thought you might enjoy what I found thus far.

Take care and all best –

 Springer ~

Joe Springer
RR 1 Box 14
104 East Liberty Street
Pleasant Hill, IL 62366-9701
217-734-9209
gettysburg@pikenet.net

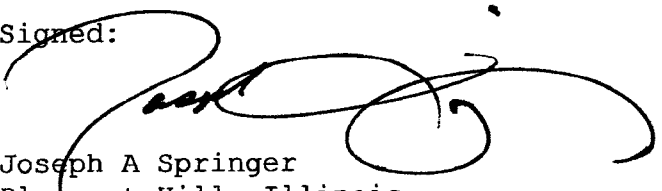
cc/Bob Frank
ssp/INF/res

July 01, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

As author of **INFERNO: The Epic Life and Death Struggle of the USS Franklin in World War II** I, Joseph A Springer, declares that the events as detailed on page 199 in Bob Frank's account and recalled by him (specifically the officer standing behind the SB2C-4 during takeoff) was instead, according to Bob Frank, the actions of, or events witnessed by William McGuire, the maintenance officer for VB-5.

Signed:



Joseph A Springer
Pleasant Hill, Illinois

To: gettysburg@pikenet.net
From: William McGuire <wm20@cornell.edu>
Subject: Your 7/01/08 letter
Cc:
Bcc: wm20@cornell.edu
Attached:

Dear Joe,

Many thanks for your letter and the enclosed statement. It is very satisfactory to me and also to Bob (I called and read it to him).

Thanks also for the accompanying material. It opened a floodgate of memories - more sea stories than you'll want to hear (the bouncing tail hook, Kibbie's problems with the cockpit, Barksdale (I think it was) spinning in on takeoff, Dan Winter with his hands in his pockets, etc.).

We followed the news of the flooding on TV and have some feeling for what you had to go through. I hope that the worst is behind you and that the damage is not irreparable.

Sincerely,

Bill McGuire