



**Albert K. Earnest, Captain, USN (Ret.)**  
"Bert"

Date of Designation: 15 October 1941 NA # 9371

Dates of Active Duty: 2 February 1941 - 1 July 1972

Total Flight Hours: 4,532

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 242

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 347 Prop: 4,185 VF: 540 VA: 2,082  
VP: 850 VT: 1,060

Combat Tours:

WW II: VT-8, Battle of Midway - landbased, June 1942;  
VT-8, USS *Saratoga* (CV-3), Guadalcanal landings, Battle of Eastern Solomons, Jul.- Aug. 1942;  
VT-8, Guadalcanal Operations - landbased, Sep. - Oct. 1942 - 28 missions.  
WW II: VC-7, USS *Manila Bay* (CVE-61), Central & So. Pacific Operations, Jan.- Aug. 1944 - 55 missions.

Aviation Commands:

CO, VA-14A, May 1947 - Jun. 1948  
Commander, Air Task Group 181, Aug. 1957 - Sep. 1958  
CO, NAS Oceana, VA., Oct. 1966 - Nov. 1968.

Combat Awards:

3 Navy Crosses  
3 Air Medals  
Purple Heart

**Duty Assignment Chronology**

6/34 -6/38 Enrolled as student, Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA.  
6/38 Graduated with B.S. in Civil Engineering. Commissioned as Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery, U. S. Army Reserve.



8/38-2/41 Assistant Engineer, Virginia Insurance Rating Bureau, Richmond, VA.  
2/41-3/41 Elimination Flight Training, NAS Anacostia. Released from USAR to USNR (Seaman 2/c, V-5).  
3/41-5/41 Pool, NAS Jacksonville.  
5/41-11/41 Aviation Cadet, Flight Training at NAS Jacksonville and NAS Miami. Received Navy Wings 11/21/41. Commissioned Ensign USNR 10/8/41.  
12/41-12/42 Torpedo Squadron EIGHT (VT-8). Commissioned Lieut.(jg), USNR 10/1/42.  
1/43-7/44 Composite Squadron SEVEN (VC-7). Commissioned Lieutenant, USNR 10/1/43.  
8/44-4/47 Tactical Test Division, NATC, Patuxent River, MD. Transferred from USNR to USN April 1945. Commissioned LCDR, USN 10/3/45.  
6/47-6/48 CO, Attack Squadron 14A (VA-14A).  
7/48-7/49 Student, Naval Postgraduate School, Annapolis, MD.  
8/49-6/50 Student, General Line School, Newport, RI.  
7/50-7/52 Air Development Squadron Four (VX-4).  
8/52-6/53 Student, Naval War College (Command and Staff).  
6/53-9/55 Project Officer, Attack Design Branch, BUAER. Commissioned Commander, USN 4/1/54.  
11/55-7/57 Air Operations Officer, USS *Ticonderoga* (CVA-14).  
8/57-8/58 Commander, Air Task Group 181 (ATG-181).  
9/58-7/60 Flight Test, NATC, Patuxent River, MD. Commissioned Captain, USN 6/1/60.  
8/60-6/61 Student, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Washington, D. C.  
7/61-8/62 COMSTRIKFLTANTREPEUR, SHAPE Headquarters, France  
8/62-8/64 SACLANTREPEUR, Paris, France.  
9/64-9/65 Attack Design Officer, BUWEPS.  
10/65-10/66 Commanding Officer, USS *Estes* (AGC-12).  
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11/66-12/68 Commanding Officer, NAS Oceana, Virginia Beach, VA.  
12/68-8/69 Operations Analyst, INSGENLANTFLT.  
9/69-6/72 Assistant Chief of Staff (Logistics), SACLANT, Norfolk, VA.  
7/1/72 Retired from active duty.  
8/72-10/73 Executive Secretary, Operational Test and Evaluation Study Group, Cerberonics, Inc.  
11/73-7/82 Real Estate Salesman and Broker, Professional Realty Corp., Virginia Beach, VA.  
7/82 Retired.

### **Summary of Significant Career Events**

- (1) Flew Grumman TBF-1 in its first combat use in the Battle of Midway. Was only pilot to survive. Was awarded 2 Navy Crosses for the flight. (*Editors note: a post flight examination of Bert Earnest's airplane showed that it had been hit by 64 - 7.7mm machine gun bullets and 9 - 20mm cannon shells.*)
- (2) Was first U. S. pilot to fly Japanese Torpedo Bomber "KATE" in project at Tactical Test, NATC, Patuxent River, Md. in 1944.
- (3) Was Navy Jet Pilot #61. Flew the P-80A, P-59 and FR-1.