



**Alfred E. Pellerin III, Capt. USN (Ret.)**  
 “Gene”

Hometown: St. Petersburg, Florida

School and College Career:

High School: St. Petersburg High School (1953)

College: University of Florida (1957)

Date Commissioned/Source: 13 June 1958 Aviation Officer Candidate (AOC)

Date of Designation: 22 June 1959 NA # T-7134  
 Rotary Wing # 4812

Total Flight Hours: 5,966

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 11 Rotary wing: 959

Approximate Flight Hours by type:

Jet: 40, Prop: 600, Rotary Wing: 5,326

Combat Tours:

Vietnam 1966 USS *Yorktown* (CVS-10) H-3's  
 Vietnam 1968 USS *Yorktown* (CVS-10) H-3's  
 HA(L)-3, 04/71-02/72, In Country Vietnam, H-1 Gunships

Combat Missions: 270

Aviation Commands:

CO, HS-6 1973 – 1975

Awards:

Legion of Merit  
 Bronze Star with Combat V  
 Air Medal (9 Strike Flight Awards)  
 Navy Commendation Medal (With Combat V)  
 Navy Achievement Medal  
 Presidential Unit Citation  
 Navy “E” Ribbon (HS-6)  
 Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation



National Defense Service  
 Antarctic Service Medal  
 Navy Sea Service Deployment  
 Vietnam Service Medal  
 Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal  
 Vietnam Civil Actions Unit Citation

**Duty Assignment Chronology**

02/58-06/58	Pre-flight NAS Pensacola
06/58-08/58	NAS Saufley Field (T-34)
09/58-02/59	NAS Whiting Field (T-28)
02/59-05/59	NAS Pensacola (C-45)
05/59-07/59	NAS Ellyson Field (H-13 & H-19)
08/59-06/60	HU-2 NAS Lakehurst NJ (H-19)
06/60-07/62	HU-4 NAS Lakehurst NJ (H-19)
08/62-06/65	HT-8 Ellyson Field (H-13, H-19, H-34, C-45, T-28)
08/65-12/65	HS-10 (H-3 RAG)
01/66-12/68	HS-4 NAS Imperial Beach Quality Assurance & NATOPS Officer SH-3A and SH-3D
01/69-06/69	Armed Forces Staff College
06/69-03/71	Naval Safety Center NAS Norfolk
03/71-06/71	H-1 Transition Fort Rucker
04/71-02/72	HAL-3 Vietnam - UH-1B, C, M, & HH-1L
05/72-08/73	ASWWINGPAC NAS North Island
08/73-12/73	HS-10 H-3 RAG
12/73-11/76	HS-6 (XO/CO) SH-3A
11/76-03/77	COMNAVSURFPAC
03/77-03/79	USS <i>Okinawa</i> LPH-3 H-46, UH-1N
04/79-12/79	Naval War Collage
12/79-04/82	COMNAVPAC H-3/ASW desks
04/82-10/82	Senior Officer Ship Material and Readiness Course
10/82-05/84	USS <i>Vancouver</i> (LPD-2) CO
05/84-08/86	COMASWWINGPAC Chief of Staff
08/86	Retirement

## Summary of Significant Career Events

(1) Following a last-minute change of orders from HS-7 to HU-2 I arrived at NAS Lakehurst NJ. Three months later I was on-board the ice breaker USS *Atka* (AGB-2) headed to the Antarctic in support of Operation Deepfreeze V.

(2) After this deployment I deployed to Patrick AFB in support of the USS *George Washington*'s initial underwater Polaris shot. Upon return from Patrick AFB, I was transferred to a newly formed squadron HU-4. I served as Officer-in-Charge of a detachment onboard the USS *Mt. McKinley* deployed to the Mediterranean Sea.

(3) While attached to HU-4 a strong tropical storm ravaged Atlantic City NJ. We spent several days recovering people and their pets stranded in the flooding and destruction of homes. We made numerous rescues and awarded the Sikorsky Winged "S" for them.

(4) Duty in HS-4 included division officer responsibilities and NATOPS Officer. After a briefing from a Sikorsky test pilot regarding an RH-3 (Mine Sweeper) tail rotor failure, the Safety Officer and I researched two accidents an HS-4 Detachment had experienced. Our conclusion was that the two H-3's had experienced tail rotor buzz resulting in total failure of the tail rotor. Both aircraft were lost at sea, but all crew members survived. We reported our findings up the Chain-of-Command.

(5) During our Yankee Station tour my Executive Officer and I were conducting a flight in the northern area of the South China Sea. An A-6 coming off the North Vietnam coast from a strike in North Vietnam was hit by ground fire. We responded to the call for help closing the area of the downed crew. We located the A-6 BN (LTJG. Brian Westin) and after recovering him, he directed us to the pilot Lt. Bill Westerman. He was injured and required assistance to recover him, so the BN went into the water to put LT. Westerman in the rescue sling. Following recovery, we flew him to the USS *Topeka* for medical care. That was an 11.5 hour flying day with only two landings and several inflight refueling/HIFAR sessions.

(6) During my tour at the Naval Safety Center, I evaluated an accident report that reported a tail rotor failure caused by the inherent instability of a symmetrical air foil. I consulted with LCDR Ron Jesberg (COMNAVAIRLANT H-3 Maintenance). We decided to visit Sikorsky Aircraft to talk to an aerodynamic design engineer. The engineer reported that they had experienced a tail rotor failure on the test stand the day before we arrived. He explained that the H-3 tail rotor was not able to deliver sufficient thrust when the aircraft was at high gross weight and high power and the relative wind is across the tail at a critical angle. The fleet pilots were not aware of this problem. After returning to the Safety Center a report went up the Chain-of-Command to fix the problem as soon as possible. Soon thereafter all H-3 aircraft received new tail rotor blades and a couple of other changes to provide the required tail rotor thrust.

(7) A problem that the SH-3D experienced was the Power Management System. HS-4 received the first SH-3Ds on the west coast. During flight operations several engine problems occurred. The most serious problem was that one of the engines would unexpectedly go to ground idle. Finally, after one incident that occurred during a landing aboard ship the faulty engine was placed on a test stand. During engine testing the engine would go to ground idle. Each time it did the maintenance crew noticed that the ships radar antenna was sweeping the engine test stand. It was determined that one of the connector plugs was affected by electromagnetic interference. More investigation revealed several other problems with the PMS unit. Until NAVAIR could make the necessary engineering changes the PMS was disconnected to prevent more malfunctions and resulting mishaps.

(8) These events as well as others could not have been discovered and resolved without the guidance and help of my seniors and subordinates alike. Each was truly a team effort.

## Post Military Work

(1) After retirement from the Navy, I was employed by a company to draft Navy Reserve Ship Power Plant operators training courses.

(2) Following that I joined an engineering firm involved in design and support of underwater vehicles. This job included engineering and testing projects aboard the Navy deep diving submarine *Dolphin*, (AGSS-555).

(3) The last ten years of employment I served as a Program Engineer and Contract Manager for the Southern California Offshore Training Range (SCORE). During this time, the first squadron launch of a Hellfire missile from an SH-60 helicopter was accomplished. Additionally, we procured and employed a remotely operated jet ski to tow an inexpensive target for live fire exercises on the SCORE training range. The jet ski was controlled from the SCORE operations center over 80 miles away.

## Personal

(1) None of the events that occurred during my Navy career and civilian employment would have been possible without the support of my Navy wife and children. We have made many life-long friends because of the years spent in the U. S. Navy.