



Frank H. Austin, Jr., Captain (MC), USN (Ret)
 “Frank”

Date of Designation: Flight Surgeon (FS), January 1951;
 Naval Aviator (NA) 1954; Dual
 Designated NA/FS T-4155

Dates of Active Duty: May 1948 - Nov. 1978

Total Flight Hours: 5,500

Carrier/Ship Landings: Fixed wing: 59

Approximate Flight Hours:

Jet: 4,200 Prop: 1,300 VF/VA: 5,100
 VS: 150 VT: 250

Combat Tours:

Korea: Jan. 1951-Jun. 1951, Pohang Korea; K3, 1st
 MAW, VMF-212; Flight Surgeon/ Crew Only.
 July 1951 - Jan. 1952, VMF-212. Deployed
 aboard USS *Rendova*, Yellow Sea.

Vietnam: During Vietnam, had four extended ADDU
 assignments to carriers in Gulf and USMC squad-
 rons ashore at Danang: Special Flight Surgeon
 missions for DCNO Air (OP-05). Leader of Field
 Research Aeromed Monitoring Team; Studies to
 develop Monitoring Indices of Stress & Fatigue.
 Flew as crew on Marine helo interdiction flights:
 eight missions in combat areas under fire.

Combat Awards:

Bronze Star with combat “V” (Korea)
 Air Medals with 2 stars (Vietnam)

Duty Assignment Chronology

- 5/48-7/50 Medical Corps Internship and Surgery
 Residency; Naval Hospitals.
- 6/50-1/51 Naval Flight Surgeon Training, NAS
 Pensacola FL. Designated Flight Surgeon.
- 1/51-1/52 Flight Surgeon, VMF-212 Korea, ashore
 and afloat.



- 1/52-1/53 Flight Surgeon, MCAS Kaneohe Bay & NAS
 Corpus Christie, TX.
- 1/53-8/53 Training as Naval Aviator, Pensacola &
 Corpus. Assigned Dual Designator.
- 8/53-8/56 Flight Surgeon/Aviator (FS/NA), VX-3, NAS
 Atlantic City, NJ.
- 8/56-3/57 Naval Test Pilot School, Class 17. 1st Flight
 Surgeon Graduate.
- 3/57-3/59 Aeromedical Branch Director, Service Test,
 NATC Patuxent River, MD.
- 3/59-7/63 FS/NA/Instructor Pilot, CAG-4/ VF-174, NAS
 Cecil Field, Jacksonville, FL
- 4/60-9/62 Assigned ADDU to NASA for first thru
 seventh NASA Project Mercury missions;
 Medical Monitor in Atlantic & Indian Oceans,
 Hawaii & Australia.
- 7/63-8/65 Senior Medical Officer, USS *Enterprise*
 (CVAN-65), Atlantic/Med, Nuclear Task Force
 1, around the world cruise.
- 8/65-5/68 Director, Aeromedical Safety, Bureau of
 Medicine, Washington, D.C., with ADDU to
 DCNO Air (OP-05), Pentagon and the Naval
 Air Systems Command.
- 5/68-6/70 Head, Aeromedical Branch, Naval Safety
 Center, NAS Norfolk, VA.
- 6/70-7/72 Force Medical Officer, Naval Air Forces
 U. S. Atlantic Fleet, NAS Norfolk, VA.
- 7/72-4/77 Director, Aerospace Medicine, BUMED;
 ADDU Naval Air Systems Command
- 4/77-9/78 Navy Staff, Director Environmental & Life
 Sciences, USDRE Pentagon.
- Oct. 1978 Retired USN. [Continued in FAA and NASA;
 SES until retirement 4/30/94].

Summary of Significant Career Events

- (1) I deferred my goal of becoming a Cardiac Surgeon
 when the Korean conflict started, and requested Flight
 Surgeon Training. Volunteered for 1st. MAW/VMF-212, and
 had the experience of serving with some of the finest of
 - Continued -

Summary of Significant Career Events continued

Naval Aviator Marines. I was unable to convince the Skipper that I could fly the F4U-5, based on my solo in the SNJ during FS training. He was wise, the first of many aviators who saved my life during the next thirty years of flying. However, I set my sights on requesting full Naval Aviator status as soon as possible. Following my tour, I applied for Naval Aviator Training, and was accepted, then designated in 1954.

(2) For my first FS/NA assignment, I was one of three "nuggets" assigned to VX-3; me being the difficult type, a LCDR, and a Flight Surgeon at that. I was mentored by some of the finest; among them Hawley "Monk Russell", Don Engen, Whitey Feightner, and later Bob Dose. I was able to fly all the aircraft in the squadron at the time, including the FJ3, F9F-2/7/8, F3H, F7U, AD4/4N, T2V. Project flying included early TACAN missions, many carrier operations on straight and angled decks, and Mirror Landing evaluations. Many flights were associated with my serving as Project Officer for developmental life support, protective and survival equipment (exposure suits, helmets etc.) I flew numerous 6 hr. long, low level nuclear weapons delivery missions, especially evaluating new sound attenuating helmets. Again, my mentors probably saved my life many times. They certainly saved my flying career on several occasions, like after some unfortunate "mishaps" (read Aircraft Accidents). By their pleas on my behalf to Skippers and others that, "He can hack it". Fortunately, their confidence was rewarded. This accelerated "seasoning" enabled me, even with no formal background in anything approaching Aeronautical Engineering, to applied for and be accepted to Naval Test Pilot School. This opportunity set the stage for my career long efforts in the Human Factors Safety, life-support/survival equipment fields.

(3) Graduated in Class "Boomer 17", Navy Test Pilot School, then assigned as Director of Life Support Branch, Service Test. Numerous projects in all types of newly developed safety and survival equipment, including ejection seats, and particularly the newly mandated Full Pressure Suit. I was project pilot for the final certification of the Goodrich Full Pressure suit, a cumbersome but slimmed down version of the "Mark 1, really gross one, which we rejected. The flights were all conducted in the F8U, both ashore and aboard Carrier. I flew a variety of project aircraft including the F8U, F3D, F4D, S2F, F11F, F3D, FJ4B, S2F, TT-1, T2V, F9F8T, T2J & F101.

(4) CAPT Bob Dose, who had been my last skipper at VX-3, was at the Replacement Training Squadron Four, and requested I to be transferred there, cutting short my fun and gratification at NATC, but offering new challenges at the RAG. I flew the F8U as a VF-174 instructor pilot, and Fam-pilot for introduction of the Full pressure suit. Zoom climbs to above 60,000 feet, and the not infrequent flame-outs which occurred were thrilling; to say the least. I was also able to fly the other CAG aircraft including A4D, F4D and F3H, F4H and others. During this period I was selected for the first group of Flight Surgeon Medical Monitors for NASA's Project Mercury. I was on extended TDY for the flights of Al Shepard (Atlantic Ocean Ship), John Glenn (Indian Ocean

Ship), Enos the monkey (Hawaii Station); to prove to the National Academy of Sciences that man would not die in Zero Gravity, then Perth Australia for Scott Carpenter's Mission. Thereafter, my flying was limited to "Proficiency", mostly S2F, except for when I could snivel a flight from my old shipmates; many now COs ashore, including F8U , A7, F4H and others.

(5) My assignment following "Residency Training"; to become Board Certified, was to the USS *Enterprise* (CVAN-65), with Captain Mike Michaelis as Skipper, and CAPT Jack Christianson as CAG. We completed the Med Cruise, then conducted the "Sea Orbit Mission", with Nuclear Task Force One. I flew from the carrier as Co-Pilot in the C2/E2, and was even able to get some F8 time ashore towing the banner for the squadron. The aggregate of these assignments, and the outstanding aviators I was privileged to serve with, were the highlight of my Navy career; particularly the flying part.

(6) During my tour at the Naval Safety Center, and at COMNAVAIRLANT, I was able to fly for the VR Ferry Squadron in a variety of aircraft, including ferry of the last F8 Photo to San Diego. I had to bow to George Watkins as being even a bigger "sniveler" when it came to these missions. I also continued in the F8 which was being overhauled at the NARF Norfolk, my being the rare qualified available F8 pilot on the east coast after the F8s were all moved to NAS Miramar. When on duty in D.C., and when proficiency flying was cut off, I was one of a small number who were given OP-05 authorization to continue beyond the 45 year limit; albeit without Flight Pay. It was worth it. I recall one of us asked a Pay Officer why we weren't allowed to get Flight Pay. He replied, "Oh, you are getting Flight Pay, its just that the rate of pay is zero. " Of course, we willingly continued to fly anyway. I loved it all!!!

(7) My other most gratifying activity was to be able over the years to facilitate the acceptance of a cadre Flight Surgeon/Aviators to be allowed to follow in this dual designation career. Most came from the ranks of Naval Aviators who had gone to medical school after leaving active duty; then chosen to return to become Flight Surgeons. They remain a viable and productive asset to Naval Aviation, particularly in RDT&E, where they have been able to demonstrate the value of this combination. We did not always get support from the Medical Corps, and even find isolated non-support from some of the aviators. The refresher training of the FS/NA has recently been deemed to be too expensive to accommodate; which in tight budget years is understandable from the Bean Counters Mentality, and then some aviators and Medicals feel the Flight Surgeon should be in the dispensary caring for their Dependents; that is until deployment of course. ... Ah Well, it was a Great Career!!! (I'm still able to associate with aviators in my FAA Medical Examiner role; Simi-Retired we call it!