



**Gerald G. O'Rourke, Captain, USN (Ret.)**  
"Gerry"

Date of Designation: 1947

Dates of Active Duty: 18 July 1941 - 1974

Combat Tours:

WW II: USS *Hancock* (CV-19), Pacific theater.  
Korea: VC-4, 1953 (OinC of first carrier-based jet night fighter squadron to see combat in Korean War).

Aviation Commands:

OinC, VF-101 Delta (F-4), Apr. 1960 - Apr. 1962  
CO, VF-102, Apr. 1962 - Apr. 1963  
CO, USS *Wrangell* (AE-12), Jul. 1967 - Jun. 1968  
CO, USS *Independence* (CVA-62), Aug. 1970 - Oct. 1971

Combat Awards:

Air Medal  
Navy Commendation Ribbon with combat "V"

**Duty Assignment Chronology**

7/41-6/44 Midshipman, U. S. Naval Academy.  
8/44-2/46 Junior Officer, USS *Hancock* (CV-19), Pacific war.  
2/46-10/47 Student, Navy flight training.  
10/47-1/50 VF-8A, VF-72, Junior Officer/Fighter Pilot.  
2/50-4/52 NAAS Milton, FL., Legal Officer.  
4/52-8/52 Student, FAWTULANT (Night Fighter Training).  
8/52-4/55 VC-4, A.W. Pilot (Korea tour, 1953).  
5/55-7/57 Test Pilot School (Class 15) and Test Pilot, Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, MD.  
8/57-6/58 Student, Stanford University (Masters Degree in Education).  
8/58-9/59 Flag Lieutenant, COMSIXTHFLT.  
9/59-3/60 Instructor, VF-101. All-weather VF Training.  
4/60-4/62 OinC, VF-101 Delta. First AIRLANT F-4 squadron.

4/62-4/63 CO, VF-102 (F-4). USS *Enterprise* (CVAN-65), Cuba 1962.  
6/63-6/64 CO, VF-121 (F-4), AIRPAC F-4 RCVW squadron.  
7/64-7/66 OPNAV Staff (OP-05W).  
8/66-6/67 Student, National War College, Washington, D. C.  
7/67-6/68 CO, USS *Wrangell* (AE-12). Deployed to Mediterranean.  
6/68-5/70 Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, COMSIXTHFLT.  
8/70-10/71 CO, USS *Independence* (CVA-62).  
11/71-1974 OPNAV, OP-05 Staff.  
1974 Retired from active duty.

**Summary of Significant Career Events**

Gerald Gerrard O'Rourke was born in Brooklyn, NY., on Sept. 13, 1924, the son of John J. and Geraldine G. (Reilly) O'Rourke. He was appointed to the U. S. Naval Academy in 1941 and graduated on 7 June 1944 as a member of the Class of 1945. His initial duty upon graduation was on USS *Hancock* (CV-19) during World War II in the Pacific, after which he entered flight school and was designated Naval Aviator in 1947. Other training included Naval School of Justice, Test Pilot School at NAS Patuxent River, MD., and the Naval War College.

During the Korean War, Gerry was assigned to VC-4 in Korea. It was during this tour that he was awarded the Air Medal and the Navy Commendation Ribbon.

In addition to his service in the Korean War, Captain O'Rourke commanded F-4 squadrons from 1960 to 1964, served two tours of duty in the Pentagon and two tours of duty in the Mediterranean with the 6th Fleet based in France and Italy. His sea duty included command of the USS *Wrangell* (AE-12) and USS *Independence* (CVA-62).

After retiring from the Navy in 1974, he lived in Fairfax, VA., and was Vice President of Maritime Associates, a consulting firm. He was also a consultant to Boeing Corp. He retired in 1993 and moved to Wayne, Maine. He died at his home on 30 December 1997.

His first wife, Willie Martin O'Rourke, died in 1965. He is survived by his wife Mary Bernadette (Bailey) O'Rourke of Wayne; five children from his first marriage, Marsha, Margaret, Gerald, Christopher and Bridget; two children from his second marriage, Lisa and Kevin, and four grandchildren.

Captain O'Rourke was a member of the board of Naval Institute and published numerous articles in its *Proceedings*. He published a book, "The F-4 Phantom", and contributed articles to the Readers Digest, Atlantic Monthly and other publications as follows:

“Vertigo Alley”,  
The Atlantic Monthly - Aug. 1955  
Reprint, The Readers Digest - Oct. 1955

“A Flight in the Fabulous Phantom”,  
The Atlantic Monthly - Jul. 1967  
Reprints, McDonnell Airscoop - Aug. 1967;  
The Readers Digest - Feb. 1968;  
Goodyear Profile - 1968

“Of Hosenoses, StooFs, and Left-handed Spads”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jul. 1968

“The Wondrous World of Jet V/STOL”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Nov. 1972

“Lightweights and Heavyweights”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Feb. 1973

“A New Vertical Approach”  
Air Enthusiast, London - Feb. 1974

“The Role of the F-14/AWG-9 Phoenix in Fleet Air  
Defense” Journal of Defense Research, Series  
B - Fall 1974

“Two Views on Navy Fighters”  
Armed Forces Journal - Nov. 1974

“New Naval Tricks from Old Sea Dogs”  
Armed Forces Journal - Jul. 1975

“Why V/STOL?”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jan. 1976

“Is TACAIR Dead?”  
Naval Institute Proceedings (NIP) - Oct. 1976  
Reprinted: Congressional Record - Oct. 28 1977

“Our Coming Air-Capable Navy”  
NIP Naval Review Issue - May 1977

“V/STOL and CTOL - Symbols of Future Power for  
Maritime Nations”, Ploy Mook, Tokyo - May  
1978

“Fighters that never got to the Fight - Part I, The F8F  
BEARCAT”, Naval Institute Proceeding - ??

“Look Ahead”  
Wings of Gold - Summer 1978

“The Navy V/STOL Concept”  
Sea Classics - Sep. 1978

“The Navy and V/STOL”,  
Marine Corps Gazette - Jan. 1979

“American Aircraft Carriers and their Aircraft”  
Navy International, London - Jun. 1979

“The Douglas Navy F4D Ford”  
American Aviation History Society - Sum. 1979

“The Role of the Aircraft Carrier”  
Nautilus, Bonn - Fall 1979

“Is there a Future Role for the Large Aircraft Carrier?”  
Navy International, London - Jan. 1980

“A Good New Idea”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Mar. 1980

“Fixing a Problem - Squadron Style”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jul. 1980

“A New Arrow for ARAPAHO - ARAPAHO Quill”  
Navy International, London - Oct. 1980

“Nothing but the Finest vs. Anything is Better than  
Nothing”, Armed Forces Journal - Dec. 1980

“Fighters that never got to the Fight - Part 2 , The F11F  
TIGER”, Naval Institute Proceedings - Jan. 1981

“A Sea-Going MX ICBM”  
Armed Forces Journal - May 1981

“Put the MX to Sea”, Christ Sc. Monitor - 16 Jun. 1981  
Reprinted: Widely in US papers - Summer 1981

“The Changing Roll of Naval TACAIR”  
Wings of Gold - Winter 1981

“CVN’s Forever! Forever?”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jul. 1982

“What’s in Store for ARAPAHO?”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jul. 1983

“Great Operators, Good Administrators, Lousy  
Planners”, Naval Institute. Proceedings - Aug.  
1984

“The V-22 OSPREY - A Breakthrough for V/STOL”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Jul. 1985

“The Forgotten Aircrewmen”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Oct. 1986

“The Blue-suited OSPREY”  
Marine Corps Gazette - 1987

“Innovation in ASW”  
Wings of Gold - Summer 1987

“The Logical Foundation for the SV-22”  
Rotor Review - Nov. 1987

“Tiltrotor Straight Talk”  
The Hook - Winter 1987

“The End of the Submarine’s Era”  
Naval Institute Proceedings - Feb. 1988

“Different Strokes with OSPREY Folks”  
Armed Forces Journal - Apr. 1988

List of promotions with date of rank:

|        |        |
|--------|--------|
| ENSIGN | 6/7/44 |
| LTJG   | 1/1/46 |
| LT     | 1/1/51 |
| LCDR   | 4/1/55 |
| CDR    | 5/1/60 |
| CAPT   | 7/1/65 |