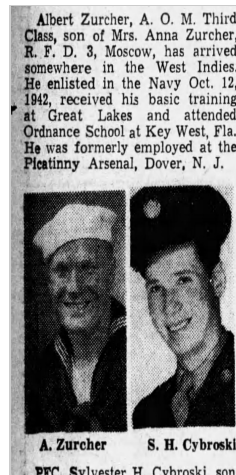


“Armed and Ready”

Albert Sebastian Zurcher

Aviation Ordnance Man 2nd Class, US Navy

Born October 27, 1921, Died March 29, 1987



Albert was born on October 27, 1921, in Spring Brook Twp. to parents Albert and Anna Ott Zurcher. Both Albert Sr. and Anna emigrated from Switzerland around the turn of the century with Albert's surname indicating he was from the city of Zurich. Both spoke German before learning English. They raised four children in Spring Brook with Albert being the only male child. Albert Sr., like many in Spring Brook Twp., was a farmer.

Albert Jr. enlisted in the service on October 13, 1942. At the time he was employed by Picatinny Arsenal in Morris County New Jersey. The Arsenal is a sprawling 6,400 manufacturing and military research center. There Albert was involved with making weapons which would serve him well in his naval career.

Albert did his basic training at NAVTRASTA, Ill in the Great Lakes after which he attended Ordinance School in Key West, Florida. After beginning as a third-class seaman, Albert was promoted to second class and then became an Aviation Ordnance Man (AOM) in April 1943. Eventually he would be promoted again to AOM 2nd class in 1944.



Aviation Ordnance Men were specialists who managed the armament and ammunition of Naval aircraft. They were responsible for the maintenance, inspection and handling of all aircraft weapons and ammunition. They worked in a variety of environments to include hanger decks, flight decks, air station flight lines and shops. Simply put, Albert made sure every plane was armed and ready to go.

Albert worked with several Naval units during the war. They included Fleet Air Wing 11, Fleet Air Wing 12, Carrier Aircraft Service Unit 25 and Carrier Aircraft Service Unit 21. Primarily, he worked out of Memphis, TN and Norfolk, VA which was one of the Navy's largest domestic ports. Albert also served in the Caribbean sailing to the British Virgin Islands and Cuba. Albert was honorably discharged on November 19, 1945.

Albert did not see combat duty, but it should in no circumstance diminish his contribution to the war effort. There were myriad roles our soldiers and sailors had to assume to ensure that those on the front lines were trained, well equipped and properly led. Further, a naval presence had to be maintained stateside to ensure our country was well defended on its home shores. Albert performed these duties with devotion.

After the war he would marry the former Antoinette Benvenuto, and they would go on to have two sons and a daughter. He was a self-employed carpenter for much of his working life in support of his family. He was a shining example of "The Greatest Generation."