

Ralph A. Alpher, Ph.D. 2/3/21 - 8/12/07

Dear White Oak Alumni Association:

I have been doing some research about my father's work during and after WWII, at the Naval Ordnance Laboratory and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory.

I took care of my father after my mother passed away in 2004. I discovered then a manuscript on the VT Fuze in a file in my mother's filing cabinet. I asked my father about this. Prior to that time, he had only told me that he had worked for the Navy as a physicist during the War, but nothing else.

I spent a week in the National Archives II, College Park, going over Bureau of Ordnance and Bureau of Ships correspondence files during the War. This gave me some ideas about further things to discuss with him.

From late 2007 through this summer I have been hard at work organizing material and writing several papers. I would like to invite anyone who is interested to visit this website: www.ralphalpher.com

You will see there some of the papers I have written. Three are in the American Institute of Physics journal RADIATIONS, available online! You will find another online at Physiconline.ru, a Russian journal. I also published two papers on work he did starting 8/1/44 at JHUAPL on Torpedo Exploders. This information rewrites the history of submarine warfare during WWII. He worked under Wilbur Goss and Freeman Hill, and was at one time Project Supervisor of Production Problems. After the War, he became involved in guided missile research at JHUAPL. The two papers are in THE SUBMARINE REVIEW, official journal of the Naval Submarine League.

Another two-part series should be upcoming in THE SUBMARINE REVIEW on degaussing. My dad went straight from working with Scott Forbush at the Carnegie Institution's Department of Terrestrial Magnetism to Degaussing research and applications. The two-part series is about a third of a much longer and detailed paper that I may publish elsewhere.

Ralph, my dad, never discussed this work with me. He frankly was surprised I was interested, despite my longtime interest in military history!!! Well, we got that straightened out. All of this Classified and Secret material would still be sitting undiscovered in the NARA, except for his

generosity in breaking his silence, and my diligence. Once I discovered the obituary in the White Oak Alumni Association's journal, I felt that perhaps there would still be people there who would take an interest.

As you may know, he left APL for GE Research and Development in 1955. Yet, he continued to work on missile guidance projects. I have a paper under review at RADIATIONS that should be published soon on this phase of his career.

I would be grateful to hear from anyone who recalls my father or worked with him.