



Aviation Machinist Mate Second Class Frank Kerr

Died August 5, 1945, Biak, Dutch Schouten Islands, New Guinea

Frank Kerr lived at 111 Post Avenue. In 1936 Frank entered Hawthorne High School, where he was mechanically inclined; for 3 ½ years took classes in mechanical drawing and wood and metal shop. At the end of 1939, he left high school to work as an engine inspector for Wright Aeronautical in Paterson, New Jersey.

In 1942 Frank enlisted, with his mother's consent, as he was under 21. He trained at the Naval Training Station in Newport, Rhode Island, where he excelled. On May 29, 1945 AMM2c Kerr reported to Air Transport Squadron 13 which was based at Momote Airfield on Manus Island, part of the Admiralty Islands chain in the southwest Pacific. The squadron's mission was the transportation of men and equipment within their general area. On August 5, 1945 AMM2c Kerr took off with the crew, and three hours later into their mission, the control tower at Biak Island lost contact with the plane. The local Air-Sea Rescue initiated a search at first light, which lasted five days. The crew was immediately classified as missing in action. On August 28, 1945 AMM2c Kerr's family was notified that he lost his life as a result of a plane crash. It is thought that thunderstorms in the area may have caused the airplane to lose radio contact and it would have been impossible for them to determine his position. The airplane veered off course and struck the mountainside. Frank Kerr was the last resident of Hawthorne to die in the Pacific during WWII.

**AMM2c Frank Kerr, USN Way
(Post Avenue at Hawthorne Avenue)**