

1
00:00:00,560 --> 00:00:01,660
...it was some kind of...

2
00:00:01,660 --> 00:00:05,440
Okay we're taping this.

3
00:00:05,440 --> 00:00:16,380
...old wives tale, but you get a group of seventeen or eighteen people, there's going to be two people with birthdates the same months or even on the same day.

4
00:00:16,380 --> 00:00:18,380
Huh, yeah.

5
00:00:18,380 --> 00:00:19,560
Let's go ahead and get started.

6
00:00:19,560 --> 00:00:20,400
Go ahead.

7
00:00:20,400 --> 00:00:25,140
Good afternoon, we're recording the interview of Paul McClain.

8
00:00:25,140 --> 00:00:31,640
This interview is being conducted by Jeff Briggs and Jim Mitchell from Wright State University's Veteran Voices Program

9
00:00:31,640 --> 00:00:38,420
and this interview's being recorded at Bethany Village in Kettering, Ohio and it's 1 o'clock.

10
00:00:38,420 --> 00:00:40,860
Excuse me, Centerville, Ohio.

11
00:00:40,860 --> 00:00:42,720
Centerville.

12
00:00:42,720 --> 00:00:46,440
True, Kettering's just down that way.

13
00:00:46,440 --> 00:00:53,620
and it's one o'clock on the eighth day of... the eighth month of... [lip noise]

14
00:00:53,620 --> 00:00:54,400
[laughing]

15
00:00:54,400 --> 00:00:59,340
Well I screwed that all up. It's August 14th, [background yelling] on '15

16
00:00:59,340 --> 00:01:04,140
and congratulations on this being the 70th Anniversary of VJ Day.

17
00:01:04,140 --> 00:01:06,780
Oh it is, right. Yep, very good.

18
00:01:06,780 --> 00:01:17,140
Well to begin with Paul, it says here you're from Waterloo? Why don't you tell us a little bit about growing up in Waterloo,

19
00:01:17,140 --> 00:01:21,980
your parent's names, what they did, if you had any siblings?

20
00:01:21,980 --> 00:01:35,200
Yes, grew up in Waterloo, Iowa. My siblings are an older brother and two younger sisters.

21
00:01:35,200 --> 00:01:46,260
They're all living and interspersed here with the fact that my older brother was a navigator on the B-24 and he's the real hero

22
00:01:46,260 --> 00:01:52,040
He was in the Ploiești raid and survived it, fortunately.

23
00:01:52,040 --> 00:02:04,960
So anyway, Waterloo was the home of the largest wheeled tractor plant in the world: John Deere.

24
00:02:04,960 --> 00:02:11,180
My brother and I carried papers like everybody else did.

25
00:02:11,180 --> 00:02:21,560
I enlisted in 1943 in the Navy, the summer of '43

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00:02:21,560 --> 00:02:34,980
mostly with a desire not to be drafted where I would become a foot soldier and I thought knowing where I was going to

sleep every night was very well to my thinking.

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00:02:34,980 --> 00:02:45,640

And then so I attended the University of Iowa that fall until I was called up in December

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00:02:45,640 --> 00:03:01,860

and in December on December 15th I had my 18th birthday, was in boot camp in Farragut, Idaho

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00:03:01,860 --> 00:03:20,920

and that lasted for six months. Well let's go back to Waterloo. I'm not sure... growing up there was fine, my parents Ila, my mother's name, James, my father's name

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00:03:20,920 --> 00:03:33,460

and my father worked for the Northwestern Bell Telephone Company, retiring after something like 47 years.

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00:03:33,460 --> 00:03:46,040

He was an engineer by self training. He only got to the eighth grade in Dubuque, Iowa where he was born

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00:03:46,040 --> 00:03:55,520

and just... he was in World War I as a lineman running communication cables,

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00:03:55,520 --> 00:04:03,160

came back and got a job as a lineman with the Bell Company

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00:04:03,160 --> 00:04:12,740

and through that kind of job our experience during the depression was

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00:04:12,740 --> 00:04:21,440

probably not typical, because he had a steady job, he was not laid off.

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00:04:21,440 --> 00:04:37,760

So he.. the one memory I have about that thing is my father coming home one day after work and literally crying,

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00:04:37,760 --> 00:04:47,120

because a friend of his had asked for a loan and Dad couldn't do it.

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00:04:47,120 --> 00:04:59,780

Anyway, that was our experience. Fortunately, other people certainly suffered of our age.

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00:04:59,780 --> 00:05:09,760

So I've covered, let's see, my brother, older brother enlisted in Air Force after a couple years in college,

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00:05:09,760 --> 00:05:18,260

wanted to be a pilot, but they washed him out on his solo flight, because they didn't need pilots anymore.

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00:05:18,260 --> 00:05:32,140

So he became a navigator and that was his... At one time was the youngest captain in the European theater.

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00:05:32,140 --> 00:05:45,920

I think he was like 20 years old, which was not unusual, because all those men were young, really young.

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00:05:45,920 --> 00:05:53,480

Anyway, picking up again, went to University for Iowa for that semester in boot camp

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00:05:53,480 --> 00:06:16,800

and I was assigned to be a radio operator and was assigned to the University of Wisconsin in Madison for six months to learn Morse code and typing

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00:06:16,800 --> 00:06:27,580

and that probably was the best place I've ever been in the service,

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00:06:27,580 --> 00:06:37,080

mainly because of the very close... we were very close to the girls' dorms...

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00:06:37,080 --> 00:06:38,700

[laughing]

48

00:06:38,700 --> 00:06:48,320

and that fact that the University did the food and typically... well...

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00:06:48,340 --> 00:07:02,500

Here's what was best about it: there was a... the dietitian would stand near the place where we cleared our trays and if something kept appearing as being thrown away, we never saw it again.

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00:07:02,500 --> 00:07:22,780

It was something else. So anyways, that was great duty. Then we were assigned to amphibious force and sent to, went to Solomons Maryland for training.

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00:07:22,780 --> 00:07:24,460

Am I getting ahead of where you want to go?

52

00:07:24,460 --> 00:07:26,100

No, keep going. You're doing great.

53

00:07:26,100 --> 00:07:41,800

There we just had amphibious training on different ships, different boats. Although, we were the... as it turned out... well I'll get to that.

54

00:07:41,800 --> 00:07:52,680

But that was an adventure also. We lived in temporary quarters in tents.

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00:07:52,680 --> 00:08:04,180

When the rains came, why the water flowed right through the tents, but you know, we were young. We got along fine.

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00:08:04,180 --> 00:08:18,120

From there they put our crew together there and then we went to Boston to wait for our ship to be built, actually

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00:08:18,120 --> 00:08:29,840

and we were assigned guard duty down at that ship yard. I don't know what we were guarding, but it was around the clock and

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00:08:29,840 --> 00:08:40,680

sometimes I'm night duty, that sort of thing. We were fitted out with a gun, a little .22 pistol

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00:08:40,680 --> 00:09:03,640

and like Barney Fife, we had one bullet and the ship was commissioned on November 9th, 1944 in the Boston Massachusetts Shipyard

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00:09:03,640 --> 00:09:21,200

and from there we did sea trials for not very long and then left Boston on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 1944.

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00:09:21,200 --> 00:09:33,840

And that was significant to me in one small way in that the cook had prepared a great Thanksgiving feast

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00:09:33,840 --> 00:09:49,260

and so we headed out through Boston Bay and of course the bay being shallow and our boat floats on top, we don't go through the water. So it was going like this.

63

00:09:49,260 --> 00:09:59,820

So a lot of the crew wound up experiencing their first sea sickness right out of Boston except me.

64

00:09:59,820 --> 00:10:10,700

And from then on they said you know, "this farm boy from Iowa who never saw an ocean until they got here, he isn't sea sick, how come?"

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00:10:10,700 --> 00:10:21,300

So we proceeded to Norfolk, Virginia to have the ship painted camouflage

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00:10:21,300 --> 00:10:39,360

and we got... it was there long enough for several of us to have liberty and one memorable liberty for me was I had surprised my family

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00:10:39,360 --> 00:10:50,360

by not telling anyone I was coming, but I got home and found my grandmother had just died and so I was there for that.

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00:10:50,360 --> 00:11:08,920

The we went from Norfolk around, heading for the Panama Canal, around Key West, stopped at Key West and we were in a group of these ships are our flotilla,

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00:11:08,920 --> 00:11:22,180

only about four or five ships. So we pulled into Key West for refueling and so forth, but

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00:11:22,180 --> 00:11:39,200

for us one night the generator room became flooded and so our flotilla took off without us and we stayed there for another couple weeks getting our generator running back in shape.

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00:11:39,200 --> 00:11:50,520

From there on through the canal to San Diego where we did a lot of exercises at sea

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00:11:50,520 --> 00:12:07,740

and eventually... and our flotilla had steamed on without us so we were kind of on our own. So as we headed out toward Pearl Harbor

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00:12:07,740 --> 00:12:14,580

we were with just a miscellaneous bunch of ships headed the same way.

74

00:12:14,580 --> 00:12:28,560

Our fast... our at sea speed was somewhere around ten knots so we took a long time getting from place to place.

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00:12:28,560 --> 00:12:37,660

The one memorable thing, I think it took us seven, ten days to get to Pearl

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00:12:37,660 --> 00:12:48,100

and as we were leaving San Diego I guess we had been at sea for maybe a day.

77

00:12:48,100 --> 00:12:56,460

At night we were trying to station and a fog came in and so happened to be doing in the radio shack

78

00:12:56,460 --> 00:13:11,840

and the officer on the deck wanted to wake up the radar man so we could keep station and of course radar in those days was a scope about so large with the sweep going around.

79

00:13:11,840 --> 00:13:20,900

I said "oh he and I had been messing around and I know how to operate it and I could do that." He said "okay."

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00:13:20,900 --> 00:13:28,420

So he turned it on and kept in station, but here I was rolling back and forth, typing here, and then rolling over to look at the...

81

00:13:28,420 --> 00:13:37,020

and the ship was going like this and the sweep was going like this. So that was my first time to get sea sick...

82

00:13:37,020 --> 00:13:39,020

[Laughing]

83

00:13:39,080 --> 00:13:48,540

watching that going every which way. Anyway, got to Pearl which of course was a fantastic site to see.

84

00:13:48,540 --> 00:14:00,600

The Arizona was still just about the way it got sunk at that time. So that was 1944.

85

00:14:00,600 --> 00:14:19,740

Arrived at Pearl Harbor March 12, 19 -- no -- 45, yeah '45 and we left them. I think we did, we did some exercises at sea as well there, while we were there.

86

00:14:19,740 --> 00:14:28,840

We left Pearl Harbor on April 13, 1945

87

00:14:28,840 --> 00:14:44,140

and by the way, this is the chronology put together by the quartermaster who he and I, he lives in Utah and we've been keeping close touch with each over the years

88

00:14:44,140 --> 00:14:51,800

and he was very interested in gathering a lot of stuff about out time.

89

00:14:51,800 --> 00:14:53,800

Very thorough.

90

00:14:53,800 --> 00:14:58,940

And so anyway, he has here:

91

00:14:58,940 --> 00:15:08,540

"April 19th, 1945 we passed the 180th Meridian and became" -- what was it they called it?

92

00:15:08,540 --> 00:15:09,440

Shellbacks.

93

00:15:09,440 --> 00:15:27,820

Yeah and "we arrived at Eniwetok" which was a Navy stop point and we all partied and we got ashore and

94

00:15:27,820 --> 00:15:40,400

got our one beer and things like that. "We left Eniwetok April 28th, '45. Arrived on Guam,

95

00:15:40,400 --> 00:15:53,920

left the same day. Arrived in Saipan on May 4, 1945

96

00:15:53,920 --> 00:16:10,360

and we left for Okinawa on May 6" and in route to Okinawa we ran into the edge of a typhoon

97

00:16:10,360 --> 00:16:21,160

and we had to go with the sea for three days in order not to get blown down, really.

98

00:16:21,160 --> 00:16:36,440

And then of course we being a flat bottom ship, we didn't go through the waves, we went over and [falling noise] came down the other side with a great bang

99

00:16:36,440 --> 00:16:49,040

and very large shaking of the whole boat. If we were in our bunk and the bunk in our ship were

100

00:16:49,040 --> 00:17:00,000

canvas on metal frames that folded down form the wall, so we'd be bouncing up and down on that mattress.

101

00:17:00,000 --> 00:17:16,580

"Arrived Okinawa May 10, 1945" and that brings to mind one of the construction flaws of the LCS

102

00:17:16,580 --> 00:17:29,480

was on the bottom were two very large skids that allowed when we went to the beach

103

00:17:29,480 --> 00:17:45,580

not to get all the way up stuck and these -- I forgot what they called them --- anyway, they were very thick, made of steel welded together

104

00:17:45,580 --> 00:17:58,500

and the screws for our propulsion were inside that, that's where the screws were and that was what and you know, that's what the skids were for to protect the screws.

105

00:17:58,500 --> 00:18:00,260

Oh.

106

00:18:00,260 --> 00:18:14,580

And through the force of the screws the -- and this happened a couple times to us -- where the steel plate would just curl right back into the one screw or the other

107

00:18:14,580 --> 00:18:21,480

and so we went without one bank of engines.

108

00:18:21,480 --> 00:18:36,000

And so we, they had the ship, they called it LSD, which was "landing ship dock" and which allowed landing ships to float into the LSD

109

00:18:36,000 --> 00:18:47,580

and then they would close the gate, pump up the water and we'd be in dry-dock and that's how we got them repaired.

110

00:18:47,580 --> 00:18:56,800

And as I say, that happened once, well it happened twice and one of them was when we arrived in Okinawa, because during that typhoon.

111

00:18:56,800 --> 00:19:12,380

Same thing happened to one of the screws and one of the skids. So we were... there we were in dry dock getting that fixed and that's when we saw our first combat.

112

00:19:12,380 --> 00:19:25,460

Japanese suicide planes coming in and every ship in the harbor firing at them, flack falling all over the place,

113

00:19:25,460 --> 00:19:41,340

cling, cling, cling, cling on the ship and of course we were ordered to stand side, but none of us could. So we were out on the deck protected, watching all of this, watching these suicide planes

114

00:19:41,340 --> 00:19:51,260

and one hit the fan tail of the USS West Virginia not causing much damage

115

00:19:51,260 --> 00:20:03,300

and another one we saw plunged head first into the bow of a transport, which was carrying lumber

116

00:20:03,300 --> 00:20:14,940

and the bomb on the plane did not explode. So all you saw was the tail sticking up out of the...

117

00:20:14,940 --> 00:20:31,600

And we learned later that that ship went back to the West Coast and they extracted -- first thing they had to do was defuse the bomb --

118

00:20:31,600 --> 00:20:42,260

but that ship went back in service eventually, but they had to get that airplane or that bomber.

119

00:20:42,300 --> 00:20:52,880

So that was our experience then and then we were assigned to picket line around Okinawa, which was composed of different ships,

120

00:20:52,880 --> 00:21:06,940

mostly destroyers to ward off the suicide planes coming in if they could and it was pretty effective. And we did that for a period of time.

121

00:21:06,940 --> 00:21:23,400

And then we were brought back to Buckner Bay and our duty was to patrol the harbor to prevent any suicide boats

122

00:21:23,400 --> 00:21:32,480

from penetrating and we did see several of them.

123

00:21:32,480 --> 00:21:39,640

We were not able to do anything about, because they would zoom, but

124

00:21:39,640 --> 00:21:55,060

remember one night though, a suicide plane did get in and went over our, I bet our, from the sound of it you couldn't see it, but from the sound of it, it must have been not very far above our radar mast

125

00:21:55,060 --> 00:22:11,640

on its way in. I don't know whatever happened, but the suicide boats, as I was telling a friend here that our machinists on board did find one each on an island

126

00:22:11,640 --> 00:22:32,000

and they brought it aboard and working on it, come to find out the engine in it was Chevrolet straight six engine. So somehow that had gotten to Japan in scrap before the war, out to that use.

127
00:22:32,000 --> 00:22:44,880
So then we left Okinawa June 2nd, 1945. We went back to Saipan

128
00:22:44,880 --> 00:22:57,240
and looking back we probably saw Enola Gay,

129
00:22:57,240 --> 00:23:08,360
because they flew out of Tinian but we would see those B-29s come and go

130
00:23:08,360 --> 00:23:17,440
and one of them must have been that plane that carried the bomb

131
00:23:17,440 --> 00:23:27,620
and we experienced VJ Day there on August 14, 1945, interesting.

132
00:23:27,620 --> 00:23:28,520
Yeah.

133
00:23:28,520 --> 00:23:35,460
I never thought about that. I'm glad you brought that to mind. [laughing]

134
00:23:35,460 --> 00:23:42,500
The treaty was signed aboard the Battleship Missouri on September 2nd, 1945.

135
00:23:42,500 --> 00:23:55,380
September 14th, 1945 we left Saipan and arrived in Tokyo Bay being towed,

136
00:23:55,380 --> 00:24:08,360
because one of those skid plates disabled us again and then we were assigned to Sasebo,

137
00:24:08,360 --> 00:24:19,580
which was clear at the end of the Island and they had a big shipyard there. We went into one of the biggest dry docks, I guess

138
00:24:19,580 --> 00:24:34,380
ever built and here was this little ship that we were looking up to the sky from down there and we had, somewhere along the [inaudible]

139
00:24:34,380 --> 00:24:51,180
CB has "arriving in Saipan... Arrived Tokyo Bay September 20, '45 anchored off Yokohama"

140

00:24:51,180 --> 00:25:02,120

Then we went down to Sasebo and out of Sasebo... and by then of course, the war was over.

141

00:25:02,120 --> 00:25:16,120

But our assignment then was to follow the mine sweepers as they towed their cutting cable

142

00:25:16,120 --> 00:25:23,360

and as they cut the... and those of course, mines in those days were you know, very large balls with horns on them

143

00:25:23,360 --> 00:25:36,120

and not very far below the surface. Of course now they're all different, but those were... they would cut the cable and they would pop up to the surface

144

00:25:36,120 --> 00:25:41,860

and so our duty was to explode them and that was a lot of fun.

145

00:25:41,860 --> 00:25:42,440

[laughing]

146

00:25:42,440 --> 00:25:50,520

Used the .50 Caliber machine guns that were mounted on port-starboard

147

00:25:50,520 --> 00:26:00,380

and also we had some old Springfield Army rifles aboard that the gunner's mates had

148

00:26:00,380 --> 00:26:15,300

you know, firing, exploding them. It became a little precarious when the mine sweepers ran into a nest and they were popping up all over

149

00:26:15,300 --> 00:26:27,360

and of course we were still floating inside and they were floating all over, but we would of course evade them and they were all exploded.

150

00:26:27,360 --> 00:26:40,060

We left Sasebo for Seattle -- I'm not sure what date -- December of '45 and arrived January '46.

151

00:26:40,060 --> 00:26:51,460

In February of '45 we went to Astoria, Oregon to begin the decommissioning process

152

00:26:51,460 --> 00:27:10,380

and that took -- let's see, April... -- several months. April 1945, was officially decommissioned and the crew scattered to be discharged and I wound up in Minneapolis

153
00:27:10,380 --> 00:27:19,800
and discharged from there and back to Waterloo in May of '46, 1946

154
00:27:19,800 --> 00:27:20,480
Hmm.

155
00:27:20,480 --> 00:27:22,160
I wanted to ask you two questions, Paul.

156
00:27:22,160 --> 00:27:22,980
Sure.

157
00:27:22,980 --> 00:27:33,460
Okay, what were you doing on December 7th and how did that impact you?

158
00:27:33,460 --> 00:27:43,900
On December 7th I remember we had -- still in Waterloo of course --

159
00:27:43,900 --> 00:27:52,380
out in the front yard on Sunday afternoon and I don't know, we were just messing around

160
00:27:52,380 --> 00:27:59,880
and I remember my parents coming out and "the news is on the radio, you've got to hear this".

161
00:27:59,880 --> 00:28:12,500
And you know, the impact at that time was not what it is now, because how much we know now,

162
00:28:12,500 --> 00:28:26,860
but as far as it, I guess it did subconsciously, because when it came to, when I got to be 17

163
00:28:26,860 --> 00:28:31,880
we were ready to go, so.

164
00:28:31,880 --> 00:28:34,540
Yeah, well I was going to say, you were only...

165
00:28:34,540 --> 00:28:35,380
17...

166
00:28:35,380 --> 00:28:36,640
Yeah, 17.

167
00:28:36,640 --> 00:28:37,180
When I signed up.

168
00:28:37,180 --> 00:28:39,800
Right, so 16 when that...

169
00:28:39,800 --> 00:28:40,300
Yeah

170
00:28:40,300 --> 00:28:43,560
Well let's see, well what was that, 19...

171
00:28:43,560 --> 00:28:44,460
'41

172
00:28:44,460 --> 00:28:52,100
Well December 7th, 1941 I was doing that.. wasn't that Pearl Harbor Day?

173
00:28:52,100 --> 00:28:53,040
Yeah, yeah.

174
00:28:53,040 --> 00:28:57,620
1941. So I was about 14-15.

175
00:28:57,620 --> 00:28:58,720
Oh 15, okay.

176
00:28:58,720 --> 00:29:00,960
So you were still in high school?

177
00:29:00,960 --> 00:29:07,000
Okay.

178
00:29:07,000 --> 00:29:08,060
[inaudible]

179

00:29:08,060 --> 00:29:20,840

And but the fellow that put this chronology together, C.B. Call was his name, Clifton Boyd Call.

180

00:29:20,840 --> 00:29:29,600

We all called him C.B., was a Mormon and he'd be, he and I became buddies.

181

00:29:29,600 --> 00:29:41,580

So he kept me out of trouble the whole time, on every liberty, but the one... I do have to tell a tale on him.

182

00:29:41,580 --> 00:29:53,280

We were in, that's when we were in Norfolk and we got liberty and decided to go to a movie.

183

00:29:53,280 --> 00:30:00,740

So we went to the movie and got out tickets and next thing is where's C.B., where did he go?

184

00:30:00,740 --> 00:30:05,980

Well he already spied a couple of ladies, women

185

00:30:05,980 --> 00:30:14,040

and they joined us for the movie and a soda afterwards and then we sent them on their way.

186

00:30:14,040 --> 00:30:20,220

He was a great guy, great guy, but anyway that was fun.

187

00:30:20,220 --> 00:30:25,120

So in May of 1946 you separate with in honorable discharge.

188

00:30:25,120 --> 00:30:26,840

Honorable discharge.

189

00:30:26,840 --> 00:30:29,900

You got your little rubber, what was is, ruptured duck?

190

00:30:29,900 --> 00:30:30,560

The ruptured duck.

191

00:30:30,560 --> 00:30:33,800

[laughing] yeah, right?

192

00:30:33,800 --> 00:30:37,840

So what did you do with your self after you got out of the Navy?

193

00:30:37,840 --> 00:30:51,400

Well I remember for a month I played golf, because where we live, it was just a walking distance to a public course and...

194

00:30:51,400 --> 00:30:53,400

One second guys, I'm going to...

195

00:30:53,400 --> 00:30:57,040

And what did you decide to do with your life?

196

00:30:57,040 --> 00:30:58,300

Pardon?

197

00:30:58,300 --> 00:31:00,980

And what did Paul decide to do with his life?

198

00:31:00,980 --> 00:31:19,540

Well I enrolled with the University of Iowa for the summer session and picked up where I left off in December of '43 when I left University.

199

00:31:19,540 --> 00:31:36,160

So I went to, completed, graduated in 1950 with an undergraduate degree and at that time they called it Bachelor of Science in Commerce.

200

00:31:36,160 --> 00:31:38,160

A business degree.

201

00:31:38,160 --> 00:31:55,960

And then began interviewing for jobs toward the end of the semester of 1950, May of 1950.

202

00:31:55,960 --> 00:32:10,680

Interesting thing happened was that we entered a whole bunch of men... to be a salesman, that was it then, that's what you did. Salesman in plastics, you know?

203

00:32:10,680 --> 00:32:14,040

What was the movie? Hoffman.

204

00:32:14,040 --> 00:32:16,280

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. Bernie

205

00:32:16,300 --> 00:32:20,900

You know his father, "plastics, plastics" Anyway.

206

00:32:20,900 --> 00:32:23,120

The graduates?

207

00:32:23,140 --> 00:32:24,320

Yeah the Graduates.

208

00:32:24,320 --> 00:32:25,720

The Graduates, right.

209

00:32:25,720 --> 00:32:28,960

Classic, cult movie almost.

210

00:32:28,960 --> 00:32:46,960

Then interviewed a whole bunch of guys for Proctor & Gamble and they interviewed us all and it came down to two people for one job

211

00:32:46,960 --> 00:32:56,400

and the other person besides my self, was my roommate [laughing] in the fraternity house and he got the job.

212

00:32:56,400 --> 00:33:11,700

I did get a job with a small company in Des Moines Iowa, two of us. We were the first outside salesmen that they hired.

213

00:33:11,700 --> 00:33:21,760

The company made carbon paper of all kinds and

214

00:33:21,760 --> 00:33:30,720

that developed into a career there and seventeen years

215

00:33:30,720 --> 00:33:43,220

I was a traveling salesman for about three or four years and I came back to Des Moines at an office job.

216

00:33:43,220 --> 00:33:51,020

Did that until 1969 when in a short period of time

217

00:33:51,020 --> 00:33:58,220

our company was bought and sold by two different companies and I thought "well, this isn't going to be so good."

218

00:33:58,220 --> 00:34:08,380

So I decided to leave that job and then came to Dayton to interview the Mead Corporation

219

00:34:08,380 --> 00:34:15,120

who were looking for sale promotion merchandising type people

220

00:34:15,120 --> 00:34:26,180

and did get hired by one of their divisions at that time, which made school supplies.

221

00:34:26,180 --> 00:34:34,640

It was a combination of four or five small plants around the country that made school supplies.

222

00:34:34,640 --> 00:34:41,060

If you've ever used a spiral notebook it probably was made by that company.

223

00:34:41,060 --> 00:34:48,000

Big Chief Tablet with the red cover on it with the Indian chief on it.

224

00:34:48,000 --> 00:35:00,540

That was a trademark of the company and I stayed with them 23 years in various middle managements jobs.

225

00:35:00,540 --> 00:35:09,880

Retired when they decided to -- what did they call it then? -- right sizing,

226

00:35:09,880 --> 00:35:24,020

a euphemism for "we'd like you to retire". Well it coincided with being 65 and they made it very profitable so I did retire

227

00:35:24,020 --> 00:35:39,560

December 1950 and then went back to work on a part time basis with a partner at Mead.

228

00:35:39,560 --> 00:35:50,660

He had a... he was an executive director of a trade association. worked for him for about three or four years

229

00:35:50,660 --> 00:35:55,780

and that more or less ended my work career.

230

00:35:55,780 --> 00:35:57,340

What about family?

231

00:35:57,340 --> 00:36:10,260

I met my wife Mary at University of Iowa on a blind date.

232

00:36:10,260 --> 00:36:20,420

One of my fraternity brothers and one of the sorority sisters, both Mary and I had recently,

233

00:36:20,420 --> 00:36:35,020

let's see, she dumped her boyfriend and I was dumped by my girlfriend. So we were moping around and they got tired of that so they just put it together and we...

234

00:36:35,020 --> 00:36:46,860

First date, blind date was a swim meet at the university swimming pool. The attraction was

235

00:36:46,860 --> 00:36:58,700

one swimmer was a gold medal winner at the previous Olympic -- what was it -- Wally Hertz. Anyways so

236

00:36:58,700 --> 00:37:04,720

students attended in great numbers before when they only had a hundred going to a meet.

237

00:37:04,720 --> 00:37:10,900

Anyway so there was Mary, humidity, hair straight

238

00:37:10,900 --> 00:37:11,700

[laughing]

239

00:37:11,700 --> 00:37:21,400

She wasn't sure about this guy, but she was... but anyway we stayed together and got married in 1951.

240

00:37:21,400 --> 00:37:30,900

Have three children, oldest, Mari lives and works in Mizzoula, Montana

241

00:37:30,900 --> 00:37:39,700

where she went to undergraduate school at University of Montana and also law school

242

00:37:39,700 --> 00:37:56,140

and was a practicing attorney. She was a deputy county attorney for and just recently retired and became a clerk for district judge, which she really loves

243

00:37:56,140 --> 00:38:12,560

and she and her husband have one boy. Her husband through a previous marriage had three teenagers so they have a nice size family.

244

00:38:12,560 --> 00:38:23,820

Middle son, Matthew, lives and works in Silver Spring, Maryland. He is a public health consultant who works for

245

00:38:23,820 --> 00:38:34,240

health departments like his biggest and longest client is the City of Philadelphia.

246

00:38:34,240 --> 00:38:46,300

The youngest, Sarah, lives just about a block and a half from us here at Bethany. She's not at Bethany, she's part of the civilian population

247

00:38:46,300 --> 00:38:54,500

and they have two children. So we have three grand children.

248

00:38:54,500 --> 00:38:56,500

Great grandchildren?

249

00:38:56,500 --> 00:38:57,000

Pardon?

250

00:38:57,000 --> 00:38:58,140

Any great grandchildren?

251

00:38:58,140 --> 00:39:09,220

No our family or our children are in that generational where

252

00:39:09,220 --> 00:39:15,100

they marry later than we did and so no.

253

00:39:15,100 --> 00:39:17,100

I thought I was doing good.

254

00:39:17,100 --> 00:39:17,820

[laughing] no.

255

00:39:17,820 --> 00:39:19,680

I did the same thing, so.

256

00:39:19,680 --> 00:39:30,520

No in fact, Hannah, our granddaughter just graduated from the University of Ohio

257

00:39:30,520 --> 00:39:37,620

and Ohio State University, excuse me.

258
00:39:37,620 --> 00:39:38,960
[inaudible]

259
00:39:38,960 --> 00:39:50,840
and grandson Andrew graduated from U.C. and he has a... works for a company in Cincinnati.

260
00:39:50,840 --> 00:40:06,420
He's a... well he was hired as an air conditioning engineer and during the interview told them "I don't know a thing about air conditioning" and they said "good,

261
00:40:06,420 --> 00:40:16,680
we'll teach you everything we need you to know". [laughing] So that's what he... and he's very computer literate and

262
00:40:16,680 --> 00:40:21,080
does a lot of things for them computer wise.

263
00:40:21,080 --> 00:40:21,880
Now...

264
00:40:21,880 --> 00:40:22,660
Sure.

265
00:40:22,660 --> 00:40:25,000
You mentioned your wife, Mary, are you still married?

266
00:40:25,000 --> 00:40:26,000
Yes.

267
00:40:26,000 --> 00:40:27,740
And she lives here on residence with you?

268
00:40:27,740 --> 00:40:28,240
Yes.

269
00:40:28,240 --> 00:40:29,780
Oh cool.

270
00:40:29,780 --> 00:40:31,320
Both of us, yeah.

271
00:40:31,320 --> 00:40:32,380
So you've now been married.

272
00:40:32,380 --> 00:40:33,580
64 years.

273
00:40:33,580 --> 00:40:35,520
Wow, congratulations.

274
00:40:35,520 --> 00:40:37,180
1951, right?

275
00:40:37,180 --> 00:40:42,140
So what do you do when you're not doing anything else around here?

276
00:40:42,140 --> 00:40:54,520
Well prior to reaching this age I am one of those who had to be active.

277
00:40:54,520 --> 00:41:03,120
So I've been a runner starting probably when I was in my 30's.

278
00:41:03,120 --> 00:41:09,960
I run a lot of 10Ks, I run 5ks, three marathons,

279
00:41:09,960 --> 00:41:11,220
[coughing]

280
00:41:11,220 --> 00:41:17,460
ridden a bike rider, ridden thousands of miles.

281
00:41:17,460 --> 00:41:18,900
Hmm.

282
00:41:18,900 --> 00:41:30,340
Just recent, most recent memorable one that I didn't do was at the Registers Annual Great Bike Ride across Iowa,

283
00:41:30,340 --> 00:41:37,520
which was in it's 43rd year and I've done four of those in the past.

284
00:41:37,520 --> 00:41:38,020

Hmm.

285

00:41:38,020 --> 00:41:47,140

They average about 470 - 520 miles over six and a half days.

286

00:41:47,140 --> 00:41:52,520

Is that I-80 across or is that North - South?

287

00:41:52,520 --> 00:41:57,920

East - West, you dip your rear wheels in the Missouri...

288

00:41:57,920 --> 00:41:58,680

Oh okay.

289

00:41:58,680 --> 00:42:00,680

and your front wheels in the Mississippi...

290

00:42:00,680 --> 00:42:01,380

Oh okay.

291

00:42:01,380 --> 00:42:03,180

on the last leg.

292

00:42:03,180 --> 00:42:03,840

Cool.

293

00:42:03,840 --> 00:42:08,420

So are you a member of any kind of veterans groups or anything like that?

294

00:42:08,420 --> 00:42:09,520

Any what?

295

00:42:09,520 --> 00:42:10,720

Veterans groups or..?

296

00:42:10,720 --> 00:42:21,680

No, nope I don't going way back to after being discharged of course there was a lot of talk about joining the reserves, but

297

00:42:21,680 --> 00:42:30,100

there wasn't as I recall, there wasn't much of an opportunity there in Waterloo,

298
00:42:30,100 --> 00:42:41,380
but no I... well I guess I belong to the AMVETS in Waterloo,

299
00:42:41,380 --> 00:42:48,620
because Iowa at that time did not have liquor by the creek, but you could go to AMVETS and get liquor by the creek.

300
00:42:48,620 --> 00:42:50,000
Of course.

301
00:42:50,000 --> 00:43:03,760
So in between the semesters at college, why the AMVETS club was a going operation then

302
00:43:03,760 --> 00:43:10,640
as well as Allegiant, which my father, which my father belonged to, so.

303
00:43:10,640 --> 00:43:24,260
Well one of the, as we begin to wrap up, what was your experience, what did you learn coming out of the service and had to spend three years including..

304
00:43:24,260 --> 00:43:25,220
Well yeah.

305
00:43:25,220 --> 00:43:27,220
time in combat?

306
00:43:27,260 --> 00:43:42,340
Well I guess the shipboard experience, we were 65 enlisted men and 6 officers. So you got to know everybody

307
00:43:42,340 --> 00:43:49,400
and you know, you just became a real group,

308
00:43:49,400 --> 00:44:06,840
supported each other, took care of each other, and I guess over... that just sunk in and I think it just became a part of my genes to respect that.

309
00:44:06,840 --> 00:44:09,220
Have you kept in touch with any of them?

310
00:44:09,220 --> 00:44:17,660
Yeah as I say, mostly with our quartermaster C.B. Call

311

00:44:17,660 --> 00:44:33,600

and we did have a couple reunions and I wasn't paying attention and haven't for some time, had a commission of our type of ships in Newport, Kentucky

312

00:44:33,600 --> 00:44:39,220

back in the 90's, which I missed.

313

00:44:39,220 --> 00:44:46,520

And oh, I did keep in contact with one of the radio men.

314

00:44:46,520 --> 00:44:57,000

We had three radio operators and kept in touch with one over a period of time, but

315

00:44:57,000 --> 00:45:09,300

he being a very private person. On board ship he was the best poker player and therefore he had all the money all the time. So people borrowed money from him

316

00:45:09,300 --> 00:45:14,840

and he used what they call a usury rate

317

00:45:14,840 --> 00:45:16,260

[laughing]

318

00:45:16,260 --> 00:45:36,300

to repay, but and the other radio operator, Phil Penzo came from Yonkers, New York and was a chorus boy at the Roxy in New York City.

319

00:45:36,300 --> 00:45:38,400

Really nice people.

320

00:45:38,400 --> 00:45:49,300

One last question before we close this up and that question would be for the people that are going to see this video tape, do you have a message for them, the younger people or

321

00:45:49,300 --> 00:45:54,000

other servicemen or women?

322

00:45:54,000 --> 00:46:20,920

Well not to be political, but I think that young people ought to experience something service like the military. Well Israel has you know, everybody spends what, two years in the military.

323

00:46:20,920 --> 00:46:29,720

Or some public service out of college or if they don't go to college, out of high school.

324

00:46:29,720 --> 00:46:38,160

I think because that kind of experience you can't get any place else.

325

00:46:38,160 --> 00:46:48,160

Knowing the values of hard work and paying attention and all those things.

326

00:46:48,160 --> 00:46:53,200

That would be what I would say to the younger people.

327

00:46:53,200 --> 00:46:56,080

Well thank you very much Paul, that was very enlightening.

328

00:46:56,080 --> 00:46:59,260

Well thank you for the opportunity.

329

00:46:59,260 --> 00:47:00,760

I always learn.

330

00:47:00,760 --> 00:47:02,760

[laughing] Well yeah.