

C.W. "Wink" Mays

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Question: The first thing that I'm gonna have you do just so I can get it on tape is if you could just give me your first, middle and last name and the correct spelling of it and then I can set audio levels at the same time so if you want to do that, go ahead.

Answer: All right. My name is Claris, first name; middle name is Winford; the last name is M-A-Y-S.

Question: And you go by C. W.? What's that?

Answer: By "Wink."

Question: By Wink?

Answer: W-I-N-K.

Question: Okay.

Answer: It's short for Winford and I get a lot of letters addressed Dear Madam. No lie. Made me tough.

Question: Are you from Washington originally or?

Answer: Originally I came from, I was born in Arkansas, raised in Texas and lived in Washington for.. since 1946.

Question: Oh really?

Answer: So yeah, yeah.

Question: So when did you get into the service then?

Answer: I went in the service in, well I went, signed up in November of 1940 but I didn't get in. They were pretty choosy until January 16, 1941. I was in the San Diego class, 4116 or something like that they called it.

Question: And how come?

Answer: In San Diego.

Question: How come you decided to join up into the service?

Answer: Well, two reasons. I had a couple of football scholarships coming, one is Texas Christian University and the other was Junior College in, what's the name of the town, anyhow, but my brother had already gone in the Navy and jobs were so hard to find. I couldn't accept these scholarships because it was so dang hard. You had to work and feed yourself and the whole bit in those days. About the only thing they furnished was the scholarship and you had to play football for that so that took a lot of your time. So I didn't accept them. I went on in the Navy and times were really hard. I took a job washing dishes in a café until I got in the Navy for \$12 a week. And that was about the size of it. It was either root hog or die so we, I joined the Navy.

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Question: How come the Navy of all the services?

Answer: Cause I loved it and I wanted to see the world. I was adventuresome you know and crazy.

Question: So how old were you at that time?

Answer: I was just barely 18. I was 18 on November 19th.

Question: Still wet behind the ears?

Answer: Oh yeah. I didn't think so though.

Question: I know, at that time you think you're an adult.

Answer: Yes.

Question: Now in joining, did you have any idea that World War II was coming?

Answer: Well yeah. My football coach is about the closest thing I ever had to a Dad.. and he practically cried when I joined the Navy and left because he knew it was coming and a real good friend of mine got killed in Holland in the airdrop. He was in the Air Corps in the paratroopers, a fellow by the name of Thornbloom, Billy Joe Thornbloom. He got killed over there. So there was quite a few of the guys got killed on the football team and one or two of them was captured in Germany but yeah, my football coach kind of prepared us for it and everything. He was a nice guy.

Question: So did he give you, you said he was the closest thing to a Dad?

Answer: Yeah.

Question: So did he set you down and..?

Answer: Yeah, he sat us all down. And then uh... I had vocational agriculture teacher was quite an old guy too. He taught us about everything you'd want to know about caponizing, castrating, running terraces in the fields for soil conservation and you name it. Fat stock shows and the whole bit. He stepped out of the classroom one day and a couple of guys were scuffling and he walked back in and both the guys were sheepish and they went and set down. He didn't say a word to them. He sat down at his desk and he says, some of you guys will start growing up when you're about thirty and some of you never will. And I've always remembered that as my kids to this, you know, and my grandkids and all of them.. until they get thirty they don't know which end their rear end is on and they think they know it all but they don't. And I was probably the same way so, but anyhow that was my high school deal there.

Question: Cause you, you were a pretty good size kid going into the..

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Cause you're about how tall, how tall were you?

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Answer: I was 6'3-1/2"

Question: Yeah.

Answer: In high school and uh. I got a job one summer for a dollar a day breaking polo ponies there in Texas out on a ranch and all I did all day was break these polo ponies and cool them out and walk them and get on another one and swing a mallet by their head and get them used to stopping and turning. And it was a great job. When I went out there.. the old, the old rancher he was always saying, Hey boy, you ain't learnin' nothin' when you're talkin' and so I didn't talk to him too much but anyhow when I went out there he looked me up and down. I had a 36" inseam and a 28 waist. The old rancher he says, my God boy when they built you they split you plumb to the shoulders. I knew a lot of the old time cowboys. One old fellow, he had a. He had a quarter horse that he was really proud of and he died in the saddle and that old quarter horse he brought that guy back to the house without, without him falling of. He balanced him up there and brought him to the house in his saddle... didn't even let the guy fall off. A lot of those old cowboys were really neat. I grew up with a lot of them; a lot of them were always teasing the younger guys. It was a great life; yeah, it had downs and uppers you know like anything else but during the depression it was, it was kind of rough but we had a big garden and did our own butchering and smoking the meat and the whole bit, did your canning and didn't have a hot water heater. Had the fire, make a fire out of the watch pot for wash clothes and stuff. It was rough but you know. You look back on it; it wasn't all that bad.

Question: Did you, before you joined the Navy; had you ever been out of Texas?

Answer: Been to Arkansas a few times because I was born in Arkansas and my Mother used to take us occasionally back to Arkansas and had quite a lot of fun there. Boy a bunch of old hillbillies and most of them were whittlers and carvers and that's where I got to whittling when I was about seven years old and a master carver today. And, but anyhow it's great fun, carving is great. It saves you from dying, dying inside and outside and all that stuff. There's two things that I've found that'll settle you down when you're all up tight and ready to kill somebody. I used to have a bull dozer and I had a back hoe also and I would come home ready to bite my wife's head off and get on my bulldozer or my backhoe and ten, fifteen minutes I didn't know what I was mad about you know. And the other was carving when the weather's real bad I'd get to carving and if you sell your carvings you're, you know, you lose a lot of the joy of it. But I used to restore antiques and that sort of thing, aged the wood and replace a leg or something that was broken and on the antiques and I shipped all over the, over the West coast for that because nobody else was doing it and nobody could age the wood and match the antique to get it back. But that's what I did for about forty years and had a business in Issaquah. But also taught upholstery, interior decorating over there for Bellevue Community College for seventeen years nights. And I've been real busy. I never have, I never have cared too much about looking about looking back at Pearl Harbor because I always get sad and ticked off you know. And I get a downer and I love jokes and uppers and you name it, but..

Question: It's a fine balance isn't it because if it's not documented and future generations don't know about it, it could happen again or something similar could?

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Answer: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. And you fight and fight and fight to wake up the young people you know and they think it's never gonna happen to them like I did but it does.

Question: How did you end up in Pearl Harbor? Where did you..?

Answer: Well, I went in the Navy like I said and then I went to boot camp and they offered me a boot leave and I, nah, I don't want to do that so I wanted to go to sea.. and my brother was already on the Nevada. He was a fire-controlman, went to Pearl Harbor. On the day it was attacked he was in the fire control, yeah, aircraft fire control on top of the bridge and that's where he was all day. And he didn't get hurt but boy the bombs hit all around him.

Question: Where were you?

Answer: Me... my battle station, my No. 1 battle station was on a fourteen-inch gun. I was a loader on a fourteen-inch gun and No. 1 turret. And my second battle station was on a, in case the crew got killed on that, which they did, was on the No. 1, five inch 25 caliber gun. It was right above, it was on the boat deck, the five inchers were and so that was my secondary battle station. So they secured the turrets; they were no good. Fact is, we didn't have anything to fight with except five inch 25's and there was two machine guns, water-cooled and the water got knocked out on them and the barrels burned out. They were up in the birdbath, up in the main mast and so we, we were just kind of, kind of helpless.

Question: So where, let me back up just a little bit, okay, was it a younger or older brother?

Answer: My older brother.

Question: Older brother. And is the ship so big that you didn't see each other that much?

Answer: Oh we saw each other quite a bit.

Question: Oh you did.

Question: So you were both real aware of where you were and who did what, and..

Answer: Oh yeah, yeah. When Pearl Harbor happened I couldn't find him anywhere... and so I went to all the dead bodies and looking for him and all that stuff. We were mustering and finding out who was dead and who wasn't in the first division on the deck.. and here he came in his dress blues; he'd gotten ready to go to.. dress whites. He'd gotten where he was going ashore at 8 o'clock. He was going ashore in the first liberty launch and so he didn't have a spot on him and boy, I was sure glad to see him. After pawing through all the dead guys and everything. We had a, some guy got killed in about his compartment there and he was in a pile of debris and he's just hanging out face down like that and so I got him by the armpits. I was gonna pull him out of this pile of debris and half a body came out. He was blown in half and half a body came out and it went over backwards you know on top of me. I don't know what his name was or who he was.. I never did find out but he was, we laid him in the line of the corpses and everything.

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Question: Where were you without, just briefly let's kind of go through the day how it started for you.

Answer: Through the day how it started for me. I was reading a girlie book as a matter of fact settin' in a porthole. We'd had our breakfast and we were waiting for colors because we didn't, weren't supposed to be top side, you know, unless everybody was up, it was on a Sunday so everybody's kind of relaxed and all the guys, the color guard was, the bugler and everything was back on the fantail by the colors.

Anyhow I was reading this girlie book I was sitting around under a porthole and I heard this rat-tat-tat-tat-tat and I jump and look out the porthole and just in time to see a Jap zero bank and show those rising suns on the wings. So then I headed for my battle station which was of course No. 1 turret and started to step out on the top deck and machine gun bullet hit a big old galvanized water bucket and blew a hole in it, oh that big I guess, and it went a whirling across the deck and uh uh.. So I went back down below and came up through the turret. And then we weren't in the turret very long until they secured the turret and needed us outside. I don't know why. There wasn't anything we could do except keep from getting killed. And the.. I think there was 1, 2, 5,... 5 bombs I think up in my area. One was right in front of No. 1 turret and we would hear... somebody would holler seek cover and so we'd dive under the overhang the back overhang of the turret and the last guys under there were getting shrapnel you know so we made a point to get under there. And one of the guys in my division he, we kind of, it was... Funny things happen even in a battle you know. This guy dove under the turret and he missed and broke his collarbone to get the Purple Heart. We razed the hell out of him for getting it, getting the Purple Heart for diving under the turret. It went on, the battle went on and a torpedo hit, blew a hole about forty feet, wide enough to put a box car into... on the port side right under where we were, and boy, that was quite a jar I'll tell you for sure.

And the Arizona of course blew up and I saw that. It looked, the bomb looked like it right down the stack but it didn't; it missed the stack and went down right behind No. 1 turret but it.. the Arizona looked like it blew right in half... blew several of our guys over the side. And we didn't have any officers on board except Warrant Officers. The line officers were all at a party over in Hawaii as if they were not expendable you know and we were. So it was set up... we, you'd had to been awful dumb to not see that it was a set-up thing. And the, where was I..

Question: How close were you to their... you said you could see the Arizona and that some of your men...?

Answer: I was on the, what you call the starboard quarter, quarterdeck. That was my place of work and the whole bit, was the starboard side of the forward quarter. That was our area. And we rigged out the officers' gangplank and all that stuff. The officers had a different gangplank to go down to go ashore than we did. And it was one of those things. We had an old boatswain mate by the name of (Sioux Daddy - Phonetic). He had been in the Navy something close to thirty years at the time. He was the first division boatswain mate and you didn't dare talk back to these guys. He was a good old boy. He was fair. But we was riggin' up the officers' gangplank and we had taken the lifelines down. They were just oh maybe going five knots or so coming into Pearl Harbor and this one smart-aleck recruit he gave (Sioux Daddy - Phonetic) a bad name. I never did find out just what he said, bad time. Old (Sioux Daddy - Phonetic) he just reared back and kicked that kid in

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the rear end and he did the prettiest swan dive over the side you ever seen. And the skipper was standing up on the bridge and he just laughed and turned around, didn't say a word to (Sioux Daddy - Phonetic). He fished the kid out and boy he wasn't very smart after that. He was kind of quiet. Then we had an old boy one-day. He was a boxer and he was middleweight champ in the Navy.

We used to have all kinds of fun things before the war. We had a sailing crew, which I was on, and a rowing team... and I was on that and a wrestling team. It was like a, it was a neat place for a young man. No money but it was a neat place to stay... you got fed all the time. But shoot there was so many things; there was another guy, this guy that was a boxer. He went over in Honolulu and got drunk and had the top of his head, a haircut and shaved, and left the front and had an eight ball tattooed on the back of his head. So the next morning was inspection, a Saturday, we had an Admiral at the inspection and the old Admiral he come down the front you know and everything was great and he come around behind this guy and you could hear him a half a mile, he restricted that guy on the ship until the hair grew back out and covered that eight ball. But there was a lot of fun things... we had much, much fun even though it was a lot of work and, but it was neat. And then the gun crew on the that I was supposed to replace if they got killed, man it.. they had the five-inch ready box. You had a box full of five inch 25 caliber ammunition and it came up a hoist from down below. And that sucker blew up... from.. got hot and blew up and killed that whole gun crew and on the side of the gun. One side is the trainer and the other side's a pointer. The trainer of course turns this way and the other guy has the elevation and it's all set, not set automatic but you, you set it by what the fire control tower tells you to do, and on the side of this gun it blew all the paint off of it, of the gun and all the shrapnel and stuff. And it just left a, the paint, a silhouette of paint on the gun where the trainer was looking in his sights, bent over and just left a print there. One of my good friends got burnt, flash burned so bad in that... he came around to me and his skin was just burned and hanging over his elbow and from here everything and over his hands and his skin was just all... he was just black, eyes were burned open and he come up to me and he says, help me Mays, help me and man, that was the most helpless feeling, I still see that guy in my sleep at night. He died of course but his eyes were burned open and there was some morphine around and it was in a little tube with a needle on it and, but I couldn't find any anywhere. And you'd give the guy a shot of that morphine and then you take the needle and stick it somewhere in his clothes so that it don't overdose him. But I couldn't even find that. The poor guy...

Question: And you're, at this time you're what, nineteen?

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Nineteen years old.

Answer: Yeah, just nineteen.

Question: Do, it's so hard to conceive what is going on in your head at this time. Is it?

Answer: Now or then?

Question: Then, yeah, as a nineteen kid coming from Texas..

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Answer: You grow up dam quick. Of course, I was more grown up than most kids in those days anyhow because I'd had to work for my bread and butter, even shining shoes on the street when I was a kid for a nickel a pair... a good Saturday was 40 cents. Some of the old, old ranchers come in to town there. Had this one old guy, he come by, he was a beer drinker and he was a tough old rancher, single, know he'd never been married, old Will Perry. He was a shirttail relation of mine and he said what he thought, man. But he was.. My sex education was nothing you know. Animals and that sort of thing on the ranch is about the only sex education we had. But he was, this old guy, he was gonna teach me how to seduce a girl. He said, oh, hell he says, you just slap 'em down climb on 'em and then you say, now try to get up. He was quite an old guy. And during football games we had a superintendent at school that smoked cigars and his thing was before the game to strut up and down the sidelines before the game started with a big cigar in his mouth. Well old Will Perry he was in the stands one day and here come the old superintendent strutting up the sidelines and old Will Perry says, my God folks it's gonna rain, the hogs are carrying cobs. You could hear him a half a mile away. Oh yeah, a lot of fun.

Back to December 7th I really don't care, you know, I don't like to talk about it. I'm more of a what you gonna do today and what're you gonna to tomorrow type of guy cause you put that stuff in the back of your head otherwise you'll, you'll go nuts thinking about it. It's bad enough as it is you know. But after the Nevada got sunk why we stayed on topside it just went down to the topside and we still manned the anti-aircraft guns manually. There was no power of course on the ship. And so they sent all of us excess guys, just kept a skeleton crew on the guns and the rest of us went over to the armory and stayed in the armory.

And boy that night it was somethin' else. Fact is before there was dark at the time we went over the armory and just before it got dark here came I believe it was three of our planes, scout planes, they were the spotting planes off of the ships. They were biplane on pontoons and they came in with their lights on and they came right over the Nevada and everybody was so jumpy that we opened fire on them. We shot down two of our own planes and things like that happened all night, all night long there'd be settin' up machine gun nests all over the island and then they'd set the machine gun up and then would test it right straight up in the air with the tracers and stuff. Well when they'd do that everybody'd fire right up and then it was quite a night show. They'd fire right up where that guy had tested his machine gun.

Everybody was really jumpy. We had one guy that went on the sentry duty.. and anyway his friend was running messages around and he was running at the time and his friend hollered halt, and the kid didn't even, didn't hear him... he was running, so he shot his friend, killed him. But it was bad, bad, bad, bad. Things like that you try to forget. But it don't work too well.

Question: Even over sixty years?

Answer: Oh Lord no, you never, it doesn't go away, it doesn't go away. I still have nightmares seeing this friend of mine that got burned.

Question: So in your mind, you still the young..

Answer: Oh yeah, oh yeah, yeah. And you know that we, we (Inaudible) Pearl Harbor survivors, our motto was to keep America safe and keep everybody alert and not let it happen again and it keeps happening and happening and happening. And the Marines in Lebanon got killed... that was a Pearl Harbor if you ever saw one. And then of course the towers, the twin towers on September 11...

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that was another Pearl Harbor. And we just keep having Pearl Harbors. There's no way you can stop it. You can holler till you're blue in the face and you... it's like urinating in a snowball, all you do is just leave a little yellow hole. You don't, don't do any good; they just keep having it over and over and over so it's just real discouraging to try to stop it. So all you can do is just put the young people up, as much as you can. Pump them up and make them as maybe patriotic as you can. I have a park, Marlin Wayne Nelson Memorial Park, I re-dedicated that and Marlin got killed on the California. His sister just recently died about three weeks ago, maybe even less and she was 86 but Marlin got his lungs burned, took four days to die, and, but he was raised here in Sequim. We had two guys at Pearl Harbor got killed from Sequim, one was Marlin Wayne Nelson on the California and the other one was Henry Eckterkamp from.. he was on the Arizona. And apparently he's still on there. But Marlin Nelson, they exhumed his body and he's buried over here in a cemetery at Port Angeles. And his sister gave me his casket flag so I still have that and I display that. I'd like to get that somewhere where you know it'd be a permanent memorial. But it took me 500 bucks and six years of work to run this park down and re-dedicate it. Nobody knew who it was and they knew it was Marlin Nelson Park and that's all it says and his name was spelled Marlyn and everybody thought it was a woman, even the County Commissioners thought it was a woman that got killed in a car wreck. So I got wind of that it was a guy that killed at Pearl Harbor and man, I had a heck of a time... nobody had any records of it. It was a little park and the park department was, said they would never name another park after an individual and they didn't have any history on it. So I called about every Nelson in the phone book and finally I called a lady, an elderly lady, and I says, you don't happen to be related to Marlin Nelson, do you. And she says, no but I know his sister. And oh boy, that was a gold mine. So I looked his sister up and she already had one leg off from diabetes and she was the parade queen in 1936 here in Sequim in the Irrigation Festival, which is the oldest parade in the state. But we have a real nice parade and people are real patriotic here. I like this town. It's, it's the best.

Question: Did you choose to take care of this park for Marlin, do you think or for?

Answer: For everybody. But it's a shame, the way it had gone to pot here the... All I have down there is the rock. So I had to get permission from the Park Department to, County Park Department to do anything to it. All it had was a copper plate that said Marlyn Nelson Memorial Park dedicated November 11, 1944; and the rock was just in terrible shape. So like I say everybody thought it was a woman so they still do, spelled Marlyn and it's, that's not like Marlin so you go heavy on the R. A lot of people still call it Mary Lynn Park and stuff like that. They don't realize that it is. But anyhow I bored about sixteen holes in it by hand and got plaques on it and the whole bit, and then I drilled three holes and put a bolt in the rock, eye bolt in there so I can screw the eye bolt in and take it out when you take the flag down. Then I have kids, a lot of the older guys, you know, like I said they want to be a big frog in a little pond. They want to raise the flag and I won't let them so this is where I came a cropper with the, some of the Pearl Harbor survivors. They wanted to take the park over and take the flag raising ceremony on.. and so I have little, everything from little Brownies to the senior class president raise the flag down there every January 1. And then I carved the little award for them, it's not little, it's about that big, it's got a couple of wolves on it. Their mascot is wolf and it has space for eleven names of class presidents and every year I take it and have the name of that year's class president put on the monument. So I got seven years to live yet and keep that going. And the park to keep it from dying, why I have the notary, or Rotary Club had a board meeting and they agreed to keep it alive after I expire so that it'll

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hopefully never go down. I re-dedicated the park and had the County Sheriff and a bunch of notables out there to help me re-dedicate it. So it's a permanent thing now and I'm proud of it.

Question: I think that again preserves so that it won't be forgotten.

Answer: Yeah, yeah.

Question: Someone who..

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Did you, you went into the armory for awhile. Did you stay on shore the rest of the time or did you get put back on another..?

Answer: No I immediately went, a day or two later, I don't remember just the exact time because everything was so up tight but I went on the USS Indianapolis heavy cruiser and of course you couldn't, the guys couldn't light a cigarette or anything else as we took on a thousand rounds of five inch 25 caliber ammunition. We had to carry them up the gangplank in the dark because you knew you couldn't operate the cranes or anything in the dark. So we load them all by hand and the next morning we went to the South Pacific. And it was 55 days before we ever got provisions down there. And our first battle was in New Guinea. We were in Task Force 11. We were operating with the old Lexington and the Saratoga and we sent the planes in. The Japanese were gathered at Salamaua and Papua New Guinea on the west side of New Guinea and they were prepared to... preparing to invade Australia. So we sent the planes over the hump, over from the east side and dropped down on the harbor and they sunk about fourteen of the Japanese ships. Well of course they came back and some, the Japs, somebody spotted the planes where they went. And so here came fourteen Betties, that was a Japanese medium bomber and this is when Eddy O'Hare became a, his first Navy ace. He shot down six of the fourteen. But they were all shot down by the planes... they got every one of them. And of course I got a battle star for that but we were, fired all these five inch 25 caliber ammunition at them, fired a lot of them at them, but they weren't exploding. The anti-aircraft shell has a fuse screwed in the nose of the shell and it has a clock mechanism in it. Well the range finder sets the distances this clock will go off up in the air automatically as it comes up this empty hoist. It's set automatically to go off at that height. So these shells that we had so meticulously carried on were not exploding and so after the, after the battle we were lucky that we were with the planes or we would have certainly gotten killed. We headed for the ammunition locker and the Japanese had gotten into, or somebody had sabotaged the whole thousand rounds of ammunition that we had. They poured syrup in the clock mechanism, so we had to turn around and come back to Pearl Harbor all by ourselves and get fresh ammunition. But that was in February of 1942, yeah, February, I believe it was about the 20th around in there sometime when Eddy O'Hare became a Navy ace. Well it was within a day or two of that that they put all the Japanese Americans in the camps here in the states. And I never could find out and I still would like to find out if that wasn't the impetus to put the Japanese Americans in the camps because they didn't know who was where and to this day of course they deny, the government denies that there was no sabotage. But I know better. A fellow that was the.. a fellow by the name of Lieutenant J. G. Tausig. T-A-U-S-I-G was the officer of the deck on December 7. He lost a leg but he later became Captain and after he got out of the Navy he became Assistant

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Secretary of the Navy for years and I even wrote to him... I knew him. I wrote to him and asked him if he couldn't find out anything. So it, I don't know, it was kept quiet. I never even found out if they caught the guys.. who did it or if that was the impetus that put the Japanese in the camps. But I voted for Roosevelt his last term. I was old enough by then, no, yeah I was. And I don't know if I had known the exact truth I think he.. he and Churchill really fixed us up cause they had the, Roosevelt's idea was to put three of our old destroyers out there in the ocean between us and the Japanese to intercept the Japanese fleet and was going to sacrifice them. He called his, they called it the tethered goat deal and here he was going to sacrifice these ships and three crews instead of being up front about it and telling us that he was part of the scheme. But anyhow, somehow that got, well he put that idea out... that didn't go anyhow. But can you imagine somebody go sacrifice three crews and three ships instead of coming out in the open about it. So we were, we were really sabotaged ourselves because that was the first time that the battleships, all the battleships had been in Pearl Harbor at the same time in eighteen months. We always relieved each other. We had picket duty and we couldn't come into Pearl Harbor until we were relieved out on watch but that day they were all in there so, you'd had to been awfully dumb not to know that it was set up. The skipper off the Nevada got credit for getting the ship under way. The Nevada was the only battleship to get under way and but we didn't get far. They ordered us to ground and he got credit for getting the ship under way and he wasn't even on board. If he had have been he'd have been killed. It was a Quartermaster 1st Class that got the ship under way and nothing even mentioned in the history books about that guy. The skipper got the credit and he was over at a party. There was a bomb went down through the captain's cabin and killed a Marine who his station was at the door of the captain's cabin and all they found of him, he was completely burned, the only thing they found of him was his belt buckle and his forty-five. And you know, some of the guys cheered that he got killed. He was one of these guys that would loan the sailors and Marines that were recruits he'd loan them \$5 and payday he'd collect back \$10. So he'd stand at the end of the pay line when they'd come through with his hand out. I hear a lot of guys hey, he got killed... I won't owe him anymore. But there was some gruesome, gruesome things went on too. We was on a, I was on a party picking up the bodies around the Arizona the next day and this one guy... I was so glad to be alive I wasn't even thinking about material things. But I see this one sailor he, this body was all bloated and floating and had a real nice cameo ring on his finger. And this guy reached down and pulled off the ring and all the flesh came off and he just rinsed it out in the water and put it in his pocket. God, I was so glad to be alive I thought that guy was a real jerk to do that sort of thing... Got a real good friend, we had an ammunition barge along side like I said all our ammunition, all that was off and the USS Pyro he was on the USS Pyro ammunition ship and he was on the way over. They were on the way over to put this fresh ammunition on the Nevada and this ammunition barge was tied up along side the Arizona was in front of us and that was this ammunition barge was along side on the starboard side by the keys where we were tied up and I asked this friend of mine, he lives up here in Happy Valley that was on the USS Pyro ammunition ship. I says, what would happen if they would hit that barge? And he said, it would have made, made the Arizona sound like a firecracker. So I think they must have known, that's my opinion anyhow, that that ammunition was sabotaged so they were going to let it go right back on the Nevada or they would have hit it. Boy that would have, that would have really made a mess. But they didn't, they let it go. They let the oil, the fuel tanks all go and they made big mistakes here. But they could have practically walked on that island right away if they would have followed it up with a landing force. They would've, wouldn't have had any problem

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at all because all our guns and everything on the ship, the handguns and the machine guns, stuff were all locked in the armory. Some other white guys went down and took a ball and spike and twisted the lock off the armory and the guys come out of there with mostly pistols and that wouldn't have been much good except up close you know. I was qualified on BAR but I didn't get down there to get one so.

Question: Cause being in port and with some ships being in dry dock you guys were pretty much at a..

Answer: The armory was locked at all times. Yeah, we were just sitting ducks. We were just sitting ducks. We had, and the government was squabbling. Roosevelt was a Democrat and Congress was Republican and they were squabbling just like they are now... same thing. Nobody get anything done.. and we had 1.1 anti-aircraft guns, they were quad mounts and they were on for awhile but we, they were setting over on the dock over here in Bremerton and we, they.. Congress wouldn't give enough money to go back and get those guns on. If even one of the ships had of had those guns why it would have been a neat deal.

Question: So they were all the way back here in Washington?

Answer: Yeah. They were setting on the dock over in Bremerton waiting for us to come back and get them on but there wasn't money enough to bring them back.

Question: Just looking at, I've got a couple of notes here..

Answer: What you got there?

Question: Well, he, Adolph gives me questions and.. On December 7, the flag raising, did they, I started talking to a boatswain and they did it differently or something.

Answer: They went ahead and raised it right away without the quick bugle and all that stuff. They went ahead and raised the flag that day. But, by then they were scattering because they, they hit us at 5 minutes till 8 and the colors were going up at 8. So the first thing we hear, this is not a drill... this is a real thing, general quarters and all hell broke loose.

Question: Was it out of control? I mean, was it just chaos or were you..?

Answer: No, everybody, it just went by the book, I mean everybody knew what we so drilled that everybody went to their battle stations but we didn't have anything to fight with once we got there you know. We were just.. But we were sacrificed is what we were. But the officers of course like I say weren't... they were all over at a party. So they came back aboard and they only knew what we told them. So they came back in their dress uniform and everything and we were sitting around, blood and oil and crap all over us on the deck and so they was asking us, you know, who did what. And this one kid when the bomb hit close and blew him over the side, it was either then or when the Arizona blew up, it was chaotic right in there and I don't know which it was... it blew his buddy over the side and the guy was floating face down and he just, this kid just dove over the side and flipped him on his back and pulled him over to Ford Island and pumped the water out of him and saved his life. So we thought, hey that guy deserves a metal. So we put his name on the list and guess what happened. He got court-martialed for leaving his battle station during

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battle instead of a metal. He says, I don't care, he says, I saved my friend's life so. But things like that happened you know that kind of make you sick.

Question: When did the Captain get back on the ship before?

Answer: Oh it was way after the raid.

Question: So after you had..

Answer: Yeah, we were set down on the top, just our top deck out of water. See, we were told to ground instead of stopping up the channel so we grounded bow first at the shipyard, right by a floating dry dock with the USS Shaw in it. Well, they hit us with everything they had because we were coming out of there, they were trying to stop the channel up and the Shaw got its bow blown off... it was in a floating dry dock. It got its bow blown off by a bomb that was supposed to hit us. They weren't very accurate, these were higher bombers, high level, what they call the high level bombers. They weren't all that high but anyhow that one missed us and hit the Shaw and blew that, blew that off, blew the bow off. So then the Admiral of the yard figured, or whoever is in charge of the yard, thought that wasn't too good a place so he ordered a tug up... I got a picture at home, a real good one of.. it's official Navy photo, ordered the tug to get us off ground so he pushed the stern around and then we backed under our own power over and... grounded, over by a cane patch, stern first, ruined one screw. But the Oklahoma was our sister ship and so that one screw was sticking out of the water on the Oklahoma it turned upside down. So they got the Nevada back. It was on its way back in February. It was the first one they got up out of the way so it wouldn't. But we had to run anchors out by hand out on the cane patch, both from the bow and the stern and the..

Question: Oh, okay, I'm looking at your picture here okay.

Answer: Which one?

Question: This one here.

Answer: Oh yeah, yeah here we go. Here's your ammunition barge here.

Question: Go ahead and you can sit back and I'll lean forward. Then I keep you in the picture there.

Answer: See, this is the Nevada here, and this is the ammunition barge and I was right in here. These are torpedo wakes going to the Oklahoma. The Oklahoma is still upright and this is the Arizona right here. These are canvases. You spread out canvases to keep the shade where the guys could relax on Sunday while we were in port. This is a vestal; it was a supply ship (repair ship) that was along side the Arizona. This is before it all happened of course and these the boats where the yardarm was out, where we had it rigged up for the boats and of course it's on up here. They're all listed there where they were and everything.

Question: Wow.

Answer: That's a Jap photo.

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Question: I was gonna say, I'm reading here... it was taken by a Jap General on the way to.

Answer: Uh huh.

Question: Could you, now you talked, there were some came in low and some came in high.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Can you see the bombs coming?

Answer: Oh you could, yeah. I saw the bomb go down and hit the Arizona. Yeah I was up, up on the bow of the Nevada. We were right behind the Arizona and we saw it, we swore they went down the stack but it didn't. It missed the stack and went down between the stack and the mainmast there.

Question: And you feel the shock wave from that?

Answer: Oh man, it blew some of our guys over the side, quite a few. Matter of fact I don't know just how many it was, quite a few that got blown over the side. But we were up there and there was another bomb that hit right forward of the No. 1 turret there, the 14 inch turret, and we were under the overhang when everybody, when somebody would say seek cover we'd dive under that overhang and that turret and it hit forward of the turret, just forward of the turret and it, boy it blew a heck of a hole in the ship. But most of the bombs were and the torpedo were, was in the area where we were up forward. I don't think there was, there was a bomb hit mid-ship but most of them hit forward in, forward area where we were.

Question: Did you know that your No. 2 battle station those people you lost. In your No. 1 battle station, did you lose people from there too or..?

Answer: No, I don't think we lost a one in there, a lot of them got shrapnel but I don't think any more of them got killed. But these guys were from the, that ordinarily manned the anti-aircraft guns were from the 5th Division. We were from the 1st Division and like I say if the crew got killed there we were to man No. 1. That's where the ready-box. We went and called a whole crew there, the whole gun crew.

Question: When you think back, how loud is war? How loud is what's going on at Pearl Harbor or in your memory does the sound disappear?

Answer: You can't imagine the noise. You can't, especially when the Arizona blew up. And when that torpedo blew that hole big enough for a boxcar to go in, in the port side of the Nevada. Man, that was a jar. Yeah, it's something you don't forget it, you don't forget it if you're right in the middle of it.

Question: Do things like.. seeing a fireworks show, does that trigger?

Answer: Not so much. Fireworks doesn't bother me so much as just a powerful... single engine plane comes over now and that still, that even to this day, 61 years ago, over 61 years ago and you still have this... duck when you hear a powerful single engine plane coming over you fast that's coming over fast you, it's...

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No, it's something that stays with you as long as you live I guess. You're stuck with it so just thinking positive you know is all you can do.

Question: Are there certain smells?

Answer: Oh God yes, all kinds of smells, especially dead bodies and dead flesh. Pearl Harbor stunk like crazy after the hit. It didn't take any time for the flesh to rot in that heat and it was a real stinkin' place.

Question: And it's different than say, being out hunting and getting a deer and a deer's guts have rotted away for awhile. There's a difference between human bodies and animal body smell or..?

Answer: No dead flesh is dead flesh. One guy, he was an all Navy football player. We used to have all Navy guys you know. All Navy football players. All Navy wrestlers. We had inner ship contests and all that stuff. He had all four limbs blown off. I'll never forget him. He wasn't even out, he wasn't even out. He had tourniquets on all four studs. He died later. And he was laying there cussing the Japs and laying on his back and no way to duck for cover. And another guy over in the gutters, the gutters where the water drains off the top deck. This one guy looked like somebody's scalp over there and the guy went over and picked it up and there was a guy's penis and balls... it was blown off... in the gutter.

Question: Does it just become surreal where you kind of dissociate human being with that or has it always stayed human?

Answer: Nooo. It's all very real I'll tell you for sure.

Question: Now I know you don't like talking about a lot of it... serious parts. Now this sounds like this might have been one of the enjoyable ones.

Answer: That was great fun.

Question: Tell me about this certificate here.

Answer: Okay, this is an Arm Bender's Certificate and before the war we only had bars and whorehouses in Honolulu that the sailors went to and so we went to the bar and this Waldorf Bar was a place where the 1st Division hung out. Of course we all had our favorite bars and then we'd drink until everybody else passed out and the last one standing got this Arm Bender Certificate and so I won that fair and square. It's got a couple of my buddies' names on it and this fellow by the name of Mackavane up here. He's the guy that dove over the side and saved his buddy that was in the water.

Question: So you played hard when you weren't working hard?

Answer: Oh yeah.

Question: Did you..

Answer: I never had a drink before I went in the Navy.

Question: Is that right?

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Answer: I never smoked a cigarette in my life.

Question: Did you mingle with the civilians much before December 7 or were you (locked?-Inaudible) down or?

Answer: No, no, no, no not in Hawaii, not in Honolulu. Those Kanakis hated us with a purple passion and the Japs man they, we didn't, if we could've gotten to shore at that time we'd have shot everything with slanty eyes I think because the Japs used to hate to see us coming, the Japanese did in Honolulu. And we hated to go in.

Question: It's interesting cause I think a lot of people don't realize how large a Japanese population there was in Hawaii.

Answer: Right, and they don't realize how we were treated. We were treated worse than dogs, the servicemen were, especially the sailors. And I guess we had it coming but didn't have anything else to do, we'd get drunk or sometimes we'd go out on Waikiki Beach and go swimming. I stayed all night in the Royal Hawaiian after the war started for 50 cents, no it was 35 cents, for a \$50 suite. That's where they took over the Royal Hawaiian for the R&R guys that had been out there. They first started, just the submarine guys and they had it tough, real tough. I tried to get in the sub service before the war and I was too tall, thank God. Oh man, I don't know if I could handle that or not.

Question: Yeah, that's the crazy breed.

Answer: Oh man.

Question: Once earlier you started to tell me about this, but this belt?

Answer: Okay, this was a, taken off a dead Marine. I didn't take it off a dead Marine. A good buddy of mine name of Johnny Johnson from Minnesota. The uniform of the day was white shorts and tee shirt and that was all and a hat, little white hat. So those that could get to a locker... my locker was just out of the water; it was a top locker and the water was waste deep in that compartment and I went down and got the stuff out and I had a pair of dungarees that were too big around the waste and too short in length cause I was a tall character and I couldn't get them to.. This was after the battle and I couldn't get them to stay up you know so my friend Johnny Johnson, he says, just a minute and so he goes back on the fan tail, all the dead people, one whole Marine gun crew got killed. They were on a five inch 51 caliber gun that was a broad side gun, it wasn't an anti-aircraft gun but they were firing these five inch 51's and they were going over in Honolulu and everybody thought it was Japs bombing and one of the Japanese guys says, a bomb over here and a plane a way over there. Well it was these five inch 51's. These guys were shooting what we had at them, which was very inadequate. But anyhow Johnny Johnson went back on the fan tail where there was a whole row of dead guys laying on the fan tail and none of them had their ID's on and pulled this belt off a dead Marine and it was a brand new belt. He gave it to me; I wore it up until oh, not too many years ago, maybe 20, 25 years ago I quit wearing it. But that's the story of that.

Question: I got to switch tape.