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GERALD GLAUBITZ
December 8, 1978

Place of Interview: Las Vegas, Nevada

Interviewer: Ronald E. Marcello

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Oral History Collection

Gerald Glaubitz

Interviewer: Ron E. Marcello

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Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Gerald Galubitz for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on December 8, 1978, in Las Vegas, Nevada. I'm interviewing Mr. Glaubitz in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was aboard the cruiser USS San Francisco on December 7, 1941, during the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Glaubitz, to begin this interview, just very briefly give me a biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education--things of that nature. Just be brief and general.

Mr. Glaubitz: I was born in Murdock, Nebraska, on November 23, 1920. I grew up essentially in Nebraska and South Dakota. I went to grade school in Alvo, Nebraska, a small town of about 150 people in the eastern part of the state. I graduated from Alvo High School, which has since been torn down. From there, I went to Omaha to investigate employment after

my graduation from high school in May of 1938. I enlisted in the U.S. Navy in September of 1938.

Marcello: Why did you decide to join the Navy in 1938?

Glaubitz: As I said, this was during the Depression years, if you'll remember correctly. There was little employment to be had, and I had always had an interest in the Navy, and I felt this would be a good way to pursue a career.

Marcello: You know, this is a reason that a lot of people give for having joined the service at that time. We were still in the midst of the Depression, and the service offered a certain amount of security.

Glaubitz: It definitely did.

Marcello: Why did you decide on the Navy as opposed to one of the other branches of the service?

Glaubitz: I guess it was just a preference I always had--the Navy over the Army or the Army Air Corps at that time, or the Marines. The Navy also had better recruiting ads out and were out to the people more than the others.

Marcello: Where did you take your boot camp?

Glaubitz: I took my training at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, Company 23.

Marcello: How long did boot camp last at the time you went through in 1938?

Glaubitz: Boot camp ran from September until the middle of December, so it was three months.

Marcello: Was there anything eventful that happened in boot camp that you think we need to get as part of the record, or was it the normal Navy boot camp?

Glaubitz: It was probably your normal Navy boot camp. It was quite rigorous for some of the people, but being an old farm boy, it didn't bother me. I was in pretty good physical condition at that time.

Marcello: Where did you go from Great Lakes?

Glaubitz: Before my Christmas leave, they transferred a whole trainload of us down south through Texas to Long Beach, California, where I was assigned to the cruiser USS San Francisco.

Marcello: Were you strictly assigned to the cruiser San Francisco, or did you have any choice in the matter?

Glaubitz: I was strictly assigned. No, I had no choice in the matter. I was strictly assigned.

Marcello: What did you think about the idea of going aboard a cruiser?

Glaubitz: I was quite thrilled at the idea of going aboard a cruiser. Probably at that time, I would have preferred a battleship. As everybody does, they like to be on the biggest and the best. As it turned out, however, the USS San Francisco was the best.

Marcello: What sort of reception did you get when you went aboard the San Francisco? After all, for all practical purposes, you were still a "boot" so far as the "old salts" aboard were concerned.

Glaubitz: That's correct. I was a farm boy, and I guess I probably showed it. The reception, though, was very great. I was assigned to the Fire Control Division, not even knowing what it was or what it entailed, because of the G.E.D. or the scores. We had taken aptitude tests at the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, and that is why I was assigned to that particular division. If you are familiar with fire control, it is not in the sense that most people think of fire control as controlling fire. It does control the gunfire of the ship. I had supposedly exhibited a certain amount of aptitude in that line, and that is why I was assigned to that division.

Marcello: When you were in the Fire Control Division, would you have also been in the deck force at the same time?

Glaubitz: No, sir.

Marcello: You missed the deck force altogether, then?

Glaubitz: Yes, sir. I had no holystoning (chuckle).

Marcello: Describe the on-the-job training that you received there in the Fire Control Division. Would you have been striking for a gunner's mate?

Glaubitz: No, sir.

Marcello: Fire controlman?

Glaubitz: Fire controlman is a different rate than gunner's mate. Gunner's mates and fire control worked very closely together. The gunner's mates have the actual operation and the maintenance

of the gun turrets and the guns, while in fire control there are the computers and the range-finders and the range-keepers that put the technical information to the guns to fire them at the proper place.

Marcello: Describe the on-the-job training that you received there to become a fire controlman.

Glaubitz: I was assigned as an apprentice seaman coming aboard. Then, shortly thereafter, I became a seaman second class. I was assigned to a duty station in the Fire Control Division, which at that time turned out to be the after control, where the majority of the work, of course, for a "boot" is to clean and maintain the station under the supervision of the third class. Most of the maintaining was keeping the decks properly waxed and polished, keeping the paint cleaned, and repainting when necessary.

As you were aboard, more and more you were explained the operations and given a duty station in case of general quarters and also for a sea watch. Again, they did a certain amount of testing by the knowledge of the petty officers that you had on board. I was assigned to a range-finder station at that time.

Marcello: How rapid or slow was promotion for a fire controlman striker at that particular time? Now, I'm referring to the pre-Pearl Harbor period.

- Glaubitz: Very, very, very slow. There was a very slight turnover, as you can probably well realize, due to the war situation. Again, due to the economy of the country, since we were just coming out of a huge Depression, the money for the Navy was very tight, so the rates were very limited. The chances of making a rate of more than third class in four years was almost unheard of.
- Marcello: Did you find that most of the senior petty officers aboard the San Francisco in your division went out of their way to help you to learn the trade of becoming a fire controlman?
- Glaubitz: They very definitely did. We had some excellent petty officers. Again, we did not have a chief petty officer for a number of years during my first service aboard the San Francisco because, again, of the monetary restrictions, and there were no chiefs available. However, there were one third class and several second class and third class petty officers that were very, very knowledgeable and went out of their way to make sure that us recruits or "boots," as we were then called, did properly learn our job. They were very patient with us in the mistakes we made. We had, again, some very great officers, but the training was essentially left to the petty officers.
- Marcello: And, at that time, like you mentioned just a moment ago, these petty officers had many years in the service.
- Glaubitz: Many years. Some of them had sixteen and twenty years, and

they had never made the rank of chief yet.

Marcello: At the same time, I believe that most of the officers were Academy men, were they not?

Glaubitz: They were all Academy men until just immediately prior to Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: What was the food like aboard the San Francisco?

Glaubitz: Again, having gone through a Depression time, and growing up in a family with four children and my mother and stepfather, we had a total income to live on for six people of thirty dollars a month. I thought the food was great, There was plenty of it, too.

Marcello: Did you take a turn at mess cooking while you were aboard the San Francisco?

Glaubitz: I took a number of turns at mess cooking. As a matter of fact, I had a turn of mess cooking in the chief's quarters, which I enjoyed very much. I even asked for an extra tour of that. At that time, the mess cooks received tips from the people they served, and the chiefs were more generous because they had more money. Plus, they had better food in the chief's quarters (chuckle). At that time, I was a pretty good chow hound, and I liked to eat. I was a growing boy, yet.

Marcello: I assume, then, that the chow at that time aboard the San Francisco was served family-style.

Glaubitz: That's correct.

Marcello: I guess later on it changed to cafeteria-style.

- Glaubitz: Right. At that time, at least on the San Francisco, you had your mess table you were assigned to sit at, and you had a mess cook assigned for every two tables. He went to the galley, he got the food, and he brought it and served it to the tables. We did not get in any cafeteria line.
- Marcello: How long did a tour of mess cooking last?
- Glaubitz: A tour at that time was three months.
- Marcello: I also gather that the mess cooks usually rated a little bit better liberty than the other people. Did you not have liberty every night when you were in port?
- Glaubitz: When you cleaned up . . . you did not get daytime liberty, of course, being a mess cook. So when you had your job completed and everything put away and your mess station cleaned to the satisfaction of the senior petty officer, then you were able to go ashore. But you could not go ashore during the day, because you had to be there to serve the meals.
- Marcello: What were your quarters like aboard the San Francisco? Describe them.
- Glaubitz: The quarters were, in today's standards, I guess, quite cramped. Being a pre-war ship built under the restrictions of the treaty back in 1934--I believe that's when the San Francisco was commissioned--she was limited to 10,000 tons. We had bunks that were three high with not much space between bunks, We had a very, very small locker in which to keep your clothes. The

washroom space was quite crowded, to say the least; there was not much of it. The ship was not laid out for the comfort of the people; it was laid out for the job that it was to do, and that was to be a fighting ship.

Marcello: And I assume that you had the usual peacoat locker and the seabag locker and so on and so forth for the rest of your gear that you would not be using every day?

Glaubitz: That's correct. Along one side of our compartment was a peacoat locker and a seabag storage locker,

Marcello: When you were assigned to the Fire Control Division, you mentioned that, of course, you were immediately assigned to the menial tasks of cleaning and polishing and that sort of thing. What is the progression that one goes through in the fire control room in order to get more responsibilities?

Glaubitz: You are essentially assigned to clean, and will stay on cleaning, as you progress up through until you became a third class petty officer. Then you assume some supervisory responsibility. In the different stations, there was a third class petty officer assigned, and this rotated around. There would be one assigned to be in charge of the seamen cleaning the compartment or the seamen cleaning the after control or the forward control or the plotting room with the different range-finder stations. Of course, as you had more seniority, you could pick the better jobs. Again, the apprentice seamen

coming aboard had the harder tasks.

Marcello: Describe what the morale was like aboard the San Francisco during that pre-Pearl Harbor period. In other words, was it a happy ship, and if so, why?

Glaubitz: It was very definitely a happy ship. I never found the morale on the San Francisco at a low point in my estimation at any time prior to the war. I think one of the things was that the San Francisco was very fortunate. Immediately after boarding in Long Beach, we made the cruise up to San Francisco. That was in 1939, when the Golden Gate Exposition was being held. We were then assigned as the head of Cruiser Division Six, at that time the flag. We went around to the East Coast to Norfolk, where we stayed for a short time. We made a cruise up to Bar Harbor, Maine, and to New York for the World's Fair in 1939. We then were assigned--the cruiser division was assigned--the task of representing the United States in South America. So we made a complete cruise around South America, and it took most of the year of 1939. We had probably the experience that many ships had never had--going through the Panama Canal twice in the same direction before we went back. Like I said, we went completely around, got on the east coast of South America, through the Straits of Magellan, back up the west coast, and back through the Panama Canal again. Then we went down to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo Bay,

Cuba, and a number of other places there.

I thought it was fantastic. I was a country boy, again, from Nebraska and never having been anywhere, it was just astounding--the way other customs were, the way other people were--and I was certainly enjoying myself. The ship then went to the West Coast. We went to Bremerton, Washington, for a major overhaul. We were there approximately three to four months. Again, I enjoyed that part of the country, having never seen it. Then we were sent to Honolulu for the Hawaiian Detachment.

Marcello: When did you get out to Honolulu?

Glaubitz: The first time the ship went to Honolulu was in 1940, I believe, late 1940, when we were first sent to Honolulu,

Marcello: At the time that you were first sent there, were you being sent there more or less for an indefinite period of time or as a permanent station?

Glaubitz: Right. It was our permanent station, and we were sent there for an indefinite period of time. During this time, we were changed from the flag of Cruiser Division Six to the flag of Cruiser Division Seven. We picked up some different ships. I am trying to recall in my mind now the ships that went around South America with us. It was the New Orleans, the Vincennes, and the Quincy, I believe. I may be incorrect on that, but it was a four-ship division that went around South America,

and we were the flag.

We were then sent to Honolulu. Part of the division went, and there was one change, and I forget at this time the exact change. One ship changed in the division, but our division number was changed from Six to Seven.

Marcello: How do you account for the high morale aboard the cruiser? You mentioned that you were fascinated, of course, by all the travel and so on. Were there any other factors that might have been responsible for the morale?

Glaubitz: I think we were probably . . . when I talked to other people . . . it's scuttlebutt, of course, you know, as Navy talk is called. We were probably blessed with unusually good commanding officers. While having the flag aboard did entail some additional problems, such as extra visitors and things of this type, again, I think we had a very high morale on the ship because we were the flagship. We also, for years and years, won the gunnery "E" for excellence in both main battery and AA, which is when you compete in your division in gunnery practice against known targets. It is all recorded and scored. This was a few extra dollars every month in your paycheck if you were qualified to have the gunnery "E." The San Francisco had a great crew, and we used to come out on top year after year. Again, I think this was one reason the morale was high. It put a little extra money in your pocket.

Marcello: From everything that I have been told and read, there was a great deal of competition among the various ships at that particular time.

Glaubitz: Oh, there certainly was. For the engineering and the gunnery efficiency awards, this was, I think, a great thing. It instilled some spirit of competition. While it was all friendly, it would get very serious. Again, our senior petty officers and our officers worked very hard to make sure we were drilled and properly trained, that everything was set up and all the adjustments were properly made to all our gear. Again, we had an excellent crew, and I think this is why we, year after year, came out on top in the gunnery "E." We were not as fortunate in the engineering "E," although we did carry that several times. We didn't carry it as continuously as we did the gunnery "E." We had a great "gun boss," as we called him at that time, a gunnery officer, which at that time was Lieutenant Commander and later Commander Tyler, and then he made captain and left the ship.

Marcello: I also gather that athletic competition played a very important role in the life of that pre-Pearl Harbor Navy, did it not?

Glaubitz: It certainly did (chuckle). That, I think, kept down a lot of the boredom that would have existed because, as you well realize, the pay of the Navy was quite low. You were not, in most cases, looked on too high socially at that time, so

there had to be a lot of athletic competition. We had a basketball team, which I participated in, having played basketball in high school. There was a tremendous bowling alley in Honolulu that you could go to at the Fleet Landing, which we spent a lot of time at.

There were just different things like that. We had good boxing teams on board ship. I didn't box, but I did some wrestling, and I made out fairly well. I won a few and lost more, probably, than I won. But I enjoyed that. We had some excellent boxers. The San Francisco used to do very well against the battleships. This, of course, was always the competition. You always tried to outdo a bigger ship as well as the ships in your own division.

Marcello: And, of course, there was always the band competition, too, was there not?

Glaubitz: Oh, yes. We didn't do too well on that (laughter). That was not one of our great fortés.

Marcello: I gather that, as a result of the high morale, most sailors were very, very proud of their ship.

Glaubitz: That's correct. I think this is a very true statement. There were, I think, a few altercations on the mainland or on the beach when you went over. You'd run into sailors from another ship who had had a few too many beers. You'd get to talking about which ship was the best. But there was nothing real

serious. Nobody got hurt too bad, but we had a few friendly fights.

Marcello: What did you think about being assigned to the Hawaiian Islands on a more or less permanent basis?

Glaubitz: I thought it was great. As a matter of fact, I guess I was more fortunate than most people in that on my stepfather's side I had two aunts who were nurses that had a home there. I used to go over there to their home, and it made life quite a bit more enjoyable. Hawaii is a beautiful place, and I very much enjoyed it. It made it a little difficult on leave problems, because we only came back to the States approximately once a year or so, maybe not quite that often, to get home to see your other family. I guess this was a little bit of a hardship on some of the married people. Of course, not many were married at the time. Being footloose and fancy-free, I thoroughly enjoyed Honolulu,

Marcello: Then the fact that your aunts had that home there meant that you probably had an opportunity to get more overnight liberty than a lot of your other shipmates.

Glaubitz: Overnight liberty was not limited prior to the war, however; anybody could go overnight. It was just the question of having a place to stay or having the money to stay overnight somewhere. I took advantage of that probably more. As a matter of fact, I even bought an old automobile there, so I could travel back

and forth to their place easier. It was an old 1932 Graham-Paige, which, I think, I paid the outstanding sum of fifty dollars for. If you looked back in history, it was probably one of the better cars and compared to a Cadillac at that time. Of course, this was quite old at that time (chuckle).

Marcello: Did it serve you well?

Glaubitz: Yes, it served me very well. In fact, it entered quite a bit into my December 7th doings (chuckle).

Marcello: Normally, when you went on liberty there in Honolulu, what did you usually do?

Glaubitz: I usually went over with one particular shipmate, Mel Fuller, who had gone through boot training with me and been assigned again to the F Division. We used to go over and immediately, of course, put on civilian clothes so nobody would know we were sailors, or so we thought (chuckle). We'd many times end up at my aunts' house. Most of the time we'd end up at my aunts' house to have something to eat or something to drink and just wander around the island and just sight-see. We did a lot of sight-seeing, again, because of the fact that I did purchase an automobile. This allowed us to squander our few dollars to buy gasoline to tour the island and probably see more than a lot of other sailors did.

Marcello: In a case like that, where you did have an automobile, where

would you usually keep it when you were out at sea and so on?

Glaubitz: Being but third class at the time, I did not have the necessary liability insurance, so I could not bring my automobile on the base; I could not get assigned a parking spot on the base. They had a large area immediately outside the gate, where we parked our cars and left them. In that day and age, nobody ever bothered them. When I'd go to sea, I'd leave it there for weeks or months and come back, and the car would be there intact. We'd get in it and drive back off again. Then we'd have to either walk or catch the yard bus down to the ship.

Marcello: Let's talk about the routine training exercises in which the San Francisco would engage after it got out to Pearl Harbor. Describe one of these training exercises. In other words, when would you go out? How long would you stay out? What would you do when you went out?

Glaubitz: Again, since funds were limited, we didn't go out as much as, I think, everybody would have liked to, I mean, as the people in training would have liked to. Again, I guess for morale purposes, when we'd go out, we'd usually weigh anchor on Monday morning and be back by Friday evening. There would usually be a week of intense training for a period of time, and then there would be a period when you would do nothing, and we'd just sit in Pearl Harbor because of, I think, the lack of funds for fuel.

However, when we did go out, we would go out, we'd participate in competition with other ships. We'd split and go off at different ranges with different courses. One ship would be a target ship for maybe three or four, and he would not tell the others what he was going to do and how he was going to do it. Of course, this would mess up the whole problem. Then he would maneuver, and it was up to them to solve the course and speed and lay your gunnery problem out. Of course, everything was blanks, no shots. But when you did actually go to firing, we had what we'd call "off-set firing," You off-set either to the right or the left on a pre-arranged . . . so many degrees.

Sometimes the small arms would fire at a sled and record the hits on the so-called "sled," or a vehicle or a floatable object pulled behind another ship with a sight sail on it so you could have something to sight on. Then you would shoot and record your scoring. This was during the actual competition for the gunnery "E."

In the antiaircraft drills, the airplane would pull what we called a "sleeve," which was a large silk--I believe at that time it was silk because nylon wasn't yet invented--sleeve of a light weight and durability, behind the plane. Then the crews would shoot at that and when they'd come back, they recorded the hits in it. This, again, was how you determined it.

We were also fortunate immediately prior to the war. One of the battleships--and I'm trying to remember whether it was the Pennsylvania or the New York--came out with the first radar, which is the ranging device used and developed by Dr. Page, who I had the privilege of working under at the Naval Research Laboratory during and after the war. We would go out and use this ship for a target, and as a range-finder operator in turret three for my main battle station, we would continually be taking ranges. Everytime our range, which we took, agreed with the radar range, we were so notified. We had a very high efficiency. I personally had a very high efficiency. I don't know why, but I did. I was fairly good. I used to hit that number quite a bit, and, of course, I was very proud of it, and I still am (chuckle), even though my eyesight is not what it used to be. It was quite a mystery at the time, and to me it was quite a thrill when later on I got back and talked to the man who actually discovered radar. The radar was always there, but he just discovered the phenomenon of it.

Marcello: How much emphasis was given to antiaircraft practice on these exercises?

Glaubitz: Very much. There was a lot of emphasis. I was essentially assigned to the main battery for my general quarters station, but for sea watch I was assigned as a computer operator, or

we called it the range-keeper at that time, the operator in the after antiaircraft control. That's where I did all my sea watches. A lot of emphasis was, at least in our ship, put on antiaircraft training.

Marcello: Was there ever actually very much firing of the guns on these exercises, that is, with live ammunition and so on?

Glaubitz: Yes, but, again, as I said, this was limited to certain times of the year, again, due to financial restrictions. You had so many rounds, so many days of practice. Then you went into competition with the other ships for our gunnery "E," as we called them, efficiency awards. That again was a certain number of rounds. You usually would not do the scoring. Men from other ships would come aboard your ship and also be on the target ship. They would record all the rounds fired, the time it took, what the hits were, and the whole "nine yards," as we called it. That total composite score determined your award for efficiency.

Marcello: You mentioned that you normally went out on a Monday and would come back on a Friday.

Glaubitz: Right.

Marcello: Was this done like "clockwork," so to speak?

Glaubitz: Yes, it was, and I think it was not for our convenience, but for the officers that had to go back to their wives, and probably the captain and admiral (chuckle), so they could have

their weekends,

Marcello: In other words, it wouldn't have taken too much of a genius to figure out when the San Francisco would be leaving and when it would get in.

Glaubitz: No, it sure would not have.

Marcello: Did your training routine change any as one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as relations between the United States and Japan continued to deteriorate? Could you detect changes in your routine and exercises?

Glaubitz: Very definitely. We were in longer training hours, and we did things that were unheard of prior to that time when we were more or less on a relaxed basis. As we get closer and closer, I very definitely remember there were a number of times when we were out there training that we'd run right through chow and run through what we called our "water hours" for showers. This, of course, upset some of the crew.

But I think we all read the newspapers. I had corresponded back home, and somebody said, "Do you think you'll go to war?" I said, "Yes, but against who?" We looked at several things, and I don't believe any of us thought at that time that Japan was a very serious threat.

Marcello: You were still looking toward Germany, perhaps?

Glaubitz: Well, we were looking toward Germany and over that way. We were out there in the Pacific, and all the action was going

to take place on the East Coast. As a matter of fact, it was. Even prior to us coming to the West Coast, when we were out there, we had to be very careful because there was a war on. One of the German pocket battleships had been trapped in South America during the time that we were down there. We had run across several French ships at sea who were blacked out because they were in a war state. Everybody just thought the action was over there, and we were going to miss it all. I'm real serious. We were sort of "chomping at the bit." We wanted to get back to the East Coast where we thought all the action was going to be.

Marcello: Were you fairly diligent in keeping up with current events and world affairs at that time?

Glaubitz: Very definitely. I personally like to read. I listened to the radio. I think we were misled considerably because, again, as I say, nobody even dreamed that we would possibly get in a war at that time against Japan. At least I didn't.

Marcello: When you thought of a typical Japanese at that time, what sort of a person did you usually conjure up in your mind? Did you have a stereotype of a typical Japanese?

Glaubitz: No, not really, I guess, because there were many Japanese in Hawaii, as you know. As a matter of fact, I was going with a Japanese girl at the time. She was a beautiful woman. I had gone and met her family; I had gotten to know them. I

thought they were a very meek race. They seemed to be very, very courteous. As a general rule, I didn't find any of them at that time that I thought were aggressive. The young Japanese girl probably had the most beautiful features of any woman you ever saw. They just were like dolls to me.

Marcello: Did you have any of the old Asiatic sailors aboard the San Francisco who might have brought back sea stories about the Japanese from the Far East?

Glaubitz: Yes, we did, and I very much wanted to go there, as a matter of fact. I almost went shortly before Pearl Harbor. The Houston was in port at Honolulu, and over on the beach I got to talking to the few sailors off the Houston who had come back from there. I thought it would be great, and I'd like to go there, but the only way you could go, of course, was to arrange a transfer. I had found a third class fire control-man aboard the Houston, and he and I were going to do what you called "swap duty stations." You both put in and agree to change duty stations and ships. We put our requests in, but the time was not available that allowed us to do it before the Houston left. So I missed going to the Asiatics and getting sunk on the Houston by a couple of days.

Marcello: I guess those Asiatic sailors were really characters, were they not?

Glaubitz: Oh, they really were. They, again, seemed to enjoy it. They

were telling us how they essentially lived like kings over there. They'd have a "mama-san," and everybody would wait on them. They could have an apartment on the beach, and they'd come back with beautifully decorated clothing from there. I don't know if you are aware of it, but at the time we had the standard issue of uniform, and then everybody went out and bought what they called a "tailor-mades," with the bell bottoms. Inside they were satin-lined and silk-lined, and they had the hand-sewn pictures of the dragons and everything else in the cuffs and in the bands. Everybody just thought this was great. This they got, by American standards and dollars, practically for nothing.

Marcello: I understand those guys were just tattooed all over, also.

Glaubitz: Yes, they were. I have a few also myself, so I guess I can't say too much. I carry eight tattoos myself (chuckle). Most of them . . . well, all of them were gotten in either Norfolk or Honolulu.

Marcello: Is there any significance to the fact that they were all gotten in either Norfolk or Honolulu?

Glaubitz: Well, that's where the tattoo parlors were mainly, and that's where we had or spent the most time. Of course, as a young sailor, it was felt that you weren't really a seaman until you had at least one. Several of us ventured over to Norfolk early in 1939, having just come from the West Coast, and we decided

to get ourselves a tattoo, which we did. We got a small shield on the arm, which says "Mother." We then got one on the other arm that had the initials on it, and that was the extent until we did go to Honolulu later on.

Marcello: This brings us down to those days immediately prior to the attack, so let's talk about that weekend of December 7, 1941. This was, in a sense, a rather unusual weekend for the San Francisco, wasn't it? When you came in, weren't your boilers dismantled during this period or sometime around there?

Glaubitz: Prior to that, we were into the Navy yard. In fact, there was a great discussion as to whether we would go back to the West Coast--either Mare Island or Bremerton--probably Bremerton, because we'd been there before for a major overhaul. We were in for what's called a major overhaul. A major overhaul consists of, as you say, going through the ship from top to bottom and reconditioning everything. That means taking the ship out of the water and into dry dock, scraping and painting the entire bottom and the hull, and detecting all the weak spots and fixing them. All our gunfire control systems, the computers and everything, were taken off and sent over to the shops in the Navy yard to be gone over, and any worn parts were replaced, and everything was brought up to snuff. We were in that state, and, of course, when you do this, you take all the ammunition off the ship and all the fuel.

We were in that state. We were tied up to dock with no ammunition, no fire control gear, other than the main things that stay on there. All our computers and our range-keepers and everything were over in the Navy yard. The only thing we had aboard at that time was small arms that we could fire.

Marcello: I assume that this is not a very pleasant period to be aboard a ship.

Glaubitz: No, it is a very unpleasant period because the ship is dirty. It is in a continually torn-up mess, and it gets in your clothes locker, and it gets on you. You have to stand inspection before you go over, and the O.D. wouldn't let you go over unless you were spic n' span. You had to walk through a lot of dust generated by the chipping of paint and the sanding and the scraping by the yard personnel and your own personnel.

You had to work your tail off, practically, during the yard period. You had to remove many, many coats of paint that you put on to satisfy the inspections.

Marcello: When did the San Francisco go into the yard? Do you remember?

Glaubitz: No, I don't remember the exact date, but I think it was approximately a month prior to December 7th.

Marcello: Did you have duty that weekend?

Glaubitz: No, sir.

Marcello: You had liberty?

Glaubitz: Yes, sir.

Marcello: Describe the liberty routine that weekend,

Glaubitz: Myself and my friend had gone over, and earlier we had met some girls over there, and we had a date with them for that Saturday. We went over on Saturday, December 6th, and picked up these girls and went around the town and did very few things--took in a movie--because funds were limited, being in the Navy, We thought at that time--that night--we would go up to Diamond Head to do a little parking and a little petting or spooning or whatever we could,

As we tried to go up Diamond Head, however, we were stopped because the Army at that time was on maneuvers, and they had closed Diamond Head. So we did not get to go to Diamond Head that night, so we went out around some other country road.

Then we went back to town and went to one of the girl's apartments, where we spent the night. We were at the apartment the next morning when one of the girls turned on the radio and heard that Pearl Harbor was under attack and that all servicemen were to report back to their station.

Marcello: Before we get to that point, let me ask you this. When the San Francisco was in such a state, as it was when it went into the yard, would there be better liberty for the crew, or would it still be basically the port and starboard liberty?

Glaubitz: It was still basically be port and starboard.

Marcello: On a weekend would you have very many drunks coming back aboard

ship, or were these by far a minority?

Glaubitz: They were by far the minority. Of course, it would depend on how close it was to payday (chuckle). As you realize, the Navy only got paid once a month, and when you got toward the end of the month, there wasn't anybody drunk because they had no money left.

Marcello: How about on a weekend such as December 7th? This would have been maybe a week after payday,

Glaubitz: I think that is overblown in many cases. There are a few people that continually got in that state. Of course, they were after awhile weeded out when their enlistment expired. Mainly, if you had something to celebrate, you'd go over and do that; or if you hit a new port, such as we did going around South America, or the first time into New York, you'd go over and probably drink a little more than you would any other time. Otherwise, it was, I think, fairly sedate.

Marcello: So you're at this apartment in Honolulu, and that's where you hear about the actual attack on Pearl Harbor.

Glaubitz: Right.

Marcello: Pick up the story at that point.

Glaubitz: We were woke up by one of the girls and told that it had just come over the radio that Pearl Harbor was under attack and for all servicemen to report back to their stations. We immediately disbelieved this and said this was part of a drill.

We would pretend we hadn't heard it and go to a movie or something. So we got dressed, my friend and I, and we got in my 1932 Graham-Paige and headed toward downtown to go somewhere where we could say we didn't hear the orders to report back.

We just had, essentially, gotten in the car and proceeded, and I'm not sure if it was a bomb that was dropped. Later on, it was said it was one of the antiaircraft shells from one of the ships came over. Anyway, there was an explosion not too far from us.

This changed our mind in a hurry. We decided we'd better get the hell back to the ship. We were both in civilian clothes and in my car. We proceeded to drive from Honolulu to Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: About how far were you from the San Francisco?

Glaubitz: I was trying to remember the exact distance between Pearl Harbor and Honolulu, and I think it was eight miles; I believe. We were not too far downtown, so we were fairly close to the road going to Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: Describe your trip back to Pearl.

Glaubitz: Oh, that was a "doozie." The first part of the trip was quite uneventful, but when we got partway down the road, the traffic came to a sudden halt. Evidently, a number of people were trying to get back, and taxicab drivers and sight-seers . . .

I'm not sure which . . . of course, they were not letting anybody in on the other end, so the traffic immediately backed up. There were Army personnel on the road. While the other road, the road coming out of Pearl Harbor, was completely empty, they would not let us go over there and drive. Being partway back and wanting to get back, we could then see more of what was going on--seeing the smoke rising--but we couldn't see any of the action at that time from Pearl Harbor. We knew something serious was happening.

I got out of the traffic line and started through the canefields down toward Pearl Harbor in my 1932 Graham-Paige. As I went, other people that I knew from the ship and other sailors that I didn't even know started filling up the car. As a matter of fact, it had running boards, and by the time it reached the main gate, it looked like you wouldn't believe, because there were sailors hanging all over that car.

When we reached the gate, we were immediately challenged by the Marine sentries. We had luckily picked up an officer off of the ship, and I don't even remember his name at this time. He assured the Marine sentry we were all legitimate, and we all had our liberty passes. They scrutinized us quite long, I thought, because there was still an attack going on. We did, I think, arrive at sort of a lull point.

Just prior to coming to the gate, we came over a rise,

and we could see better. At that time, it was almost indescribable--the scene that laid before us--because there were fires burning everywhere, and there were explosions going off. Confusion looked like it reigned supreme. Finally, satisfying the Marines at the gate, they waved us on through.

I took my car and drove through and went down to a parking lot that was immediately in front of where the San Francisco was berthed. We pulled into the parking lot and had just gotten out of the car when some s.o.b. started strafing. We all made a mad dash for our different ships. Of course, most of us were on the San Francisco and made a mad dash, but I don't think anybody got hit then. We got aboard and nobody even slowed us down coming aboard. Believe me, there was nobody who worried about the gangway watch or anything else (chuckle), because everybody was too busy. We were still in civilian clothes, and, of course, having no guns aboard that could fire, we were sort of having a frustrated feeling.

Many of the guys went across the docks to the New Orleans. At that time, they had cut down the awnings that were spread when you were in such a port as Honolulu and had started firing and were firing.

I got a better look at the harbor and saw a great deal, because we had a very good view of the Battleship Row. The airplanes that came in had to come over the stern of us,

essentially over the stern of us, to make the torpedo attack particularly on the ships on Battleship Row. I was just flabbergasted. I would not have believed . . . I saw at least one battleship roll over. I don't remember if it was exactly at that time or later, but the Arizona was burning. You could hardly see her, of course, because of the flames. Some of the other ships were almost just as bad; they were almost blotted out. I just could not believe that that large a ship could be in that condition. It was just indescribable--the impact, I guess, at that time on me. I looked at a battleship as being almost indestructible. I think many of us did. To immediately see what was happening to our battleships was almost an indescribable impact, really. It really was.

Marcello: What particular functions did you perform once you got back aboard the ship? Was there too much you could do in that state?

Glaubitz: No, there was not a lot we could do. There were yardmen there, and we were due to do 1.1's on this ship, what they called a 1.1-inch antiaircraft, four barrels, so-called rapid fire antiaircraft gun. They were putting them on, and they just set them on and didn't even bolt them down. They borrowed ammunition from the ship next door and started firing,

Marcello: I understand you got a lot of help from the yard workers.

Glaubitz: Oh, they were tremendous. The yard workers ignored all the danger. They had a particular foreman down there, and I can't

even describe the man, except he was pretty lanky, and he really cracked a whip. He had those guys working. Since my battle station was in battle three, of course, there was nothing we could do there, so we didn't even go to battle stations. But I was on the fantail. Somehow or another, I got ahold of a BAR--and I don't know how or who or when--and I took my frustrations out on some passing planes. I don't know if I hit any or not. I got off some shots and felt better. Again, as I say, I was just awed.

Marcello: How low were these planes coming in?

Glaubitz: You could have thrown potatoes at them and hit them, they were so low. They were so close you could almost look and see the guy's face in the cockpit. I'm talking about the torpedo planes mainly. The other bombers made higher level runs. There were some strafing runs made also over us, and they again were very low.

Marcello: So what happens at that point now? You have the BAR, and you've been firing occasionally whenever a plane would come close enough.

Glaubitz: I guess about the next recollection that I can see . . . it sort of seems like a blank in a lot of ways, because things seemed to happen so quick. The attack just ended. Of course, everybody was braced and waiting for the next one. I gave the gun to somebody else, and I don't even remember who. I went down inside to change my clothes, which I did, and got out of

my civilian clothes into my dungarees so I'd look like a sailor, and I felt like I'd be better identified,

The New Orleans had gotten underway with part of our crew on it. There were boats running helter-skelter, and they were fishing people out and bringing them up to the docks to transfer them to hospitals. They were burnt and covered with oil. Not an awful lot transpired. Everybody was standing by, waiting. They did get the L.L.'s. I went back and assisted however I could in there. Otherwise, there was not an awful lot to do at that time. We all stood around waiting for the next wave, which did not come.

Marcello: What sort of scuttlebutt were you hearing in the aftermath of the attack? I'm sure the ship must have been one big rumor mill.

Glaubitz: Not really. Everybody was more or less shocked. We didn't believe it. We all said, "Where did they come from? How did they get here? How was it possible?" We knew we had a couple of carriers out at sea; we knew we had ships out there, submarines. It was just unbelievable to us how they could have gotten there. It didn't take us long to realize, of course, by seeing the planes as closely, that they were Japanese, because we had gone through many airplane identification drills. I think we were all convinced that the islands were going to be invaded. We were just doing as much as we could to wait for

the next one, and, of course, looking over and again shaking your head at the utter disbelief at what had happened to Battleship Row.

Marcello: Again, considering all the damage that had been done, and what you had just been through, there was no reason for you to think otherwise than that there would be a Japanese invasion.

Glaubitx: That's correct. If they had gotten that far with the airplanes, of course, knowing the limited range of airplanes in those days, most of us were well aware that those carriers had to be awfully close to that island in order for those planes to come over and make an attack and then return. We are talking about, in those days, airplanes with a very limited range.

Marcello: What did the surface of the water look like?

Glaubitx: After the attack, it was a complete mess. There was a lot of oil floating; there were fires burning, I think, all night long on the surface; there were all kinds of debris in the water. There were clothes, lifejackets . . . just a complete mess.

Marcello: In the meantime, is the crew aboard the San Francisco trying to get it shipshape again?

Glaubitx: Yes. Immediately that afternoon, the Navy yard started bringing back our equipment--our fire control equipment.

Of course, this then became our duty, and being a third class petty officer, we had to start installing this equipment, so we got immediately busy on that. They started bringing ammunition aboard; they started bringing fuel aboard. Even that afternoon, I don't think they started bringing ammunition, but they did start bringing our equipment back. They were just setting it on the ship, and it was up to us to try to get it hooked up and going. The yard was so busy with so many places that they had no way to do it, although they were normally supposed to do it. So we immediately turned-to. One thing I do remember is that there were no meals that day; I didn't get a thing to eat. I guess everybody forgot that there was even such a thing as food required. I remember we did not get any meals that day whatsoever.

Marcello: How long did it take you, then, to finally get the San Francisco seaworthy again?

Glaubitz: Actually, I don't remember the exact number of days, but I do know we worked almost twenty-four hours a day for weeks. As a matter of fact, we got underway to go to Wake Island without any of our fire control gear working. It is quite complex. There was a lot of wiring involved, a lot of things involved. Again, you have to realize we were essentially undermanned. Our crew was not near what it should have

been for the size of the ship for a wartime footing. You sort of lost track of time. At least I did. We were working as many hours as we could without even sleeping, trying to get this gear back together.

As a matter of fact, we went back to sea and were a hundred miles off of Wake Island when, I think, we got our first turret working. The antiaircraft guns, which we had concentrated on, were working prior to that time. If we had had to shoot at the enemy, it would have had to have been what we called "local control," because we had no main control.

One thing I might say about that day, and it sticks out vividly in my mind, is that evening, which turned out later to be a very sad thing. Everybody was very jumpy. They had rigged up some speakers throughout the Navy yard and on the different ships and were trying to pass the information along, and they said, "We have planes coming in and these planes will be from the carrier Enterprise. Do not fire!" The first three planes came in to land on Ford Island, and some idiot opened fire. You thought the whole war started all over again. One person--and I don't know if they ever determined who it was--fired, and guns started going off, and I think they shot down several of the airplanes.

Marcello: Where were you at that time?

- Glaubitz: I was up in the after control working, and I had a very good view of the whole harbor.
- Marcello: I understand that the harbor lit up just like the Fourth of July.
- Glaubitz: It certainly did. It really was better than any Fourth of July, if you want to call it better. The pyrotechnic display was better than any Fourth of July display you ever saw, but it turned up later to be a sad thing. Somebody was screaming over the P.A. system, "Do not fire! Cease fire! Those are friendly airplanes!" The firing just continued.
- Marcello: I'm sure you heard sporadic gunfire all evening.
- Glaubitz: Oh, yes, in different places. It wasn't so much on the ships, I don't think, but from other places on the island. We did not know in some cases where it came from. Again, we were sitting there with a big question mark. "Had they landed on the beach? Where are they?" Nobody knew.
- Marcello: According to my records, the San Francisco was the target of some shooting that night. Evidently some men were trying to install one of the antiaircraft batteries sometime during the night, and they put on a small spotlight. Do you recall that incident?
- Glaubitz: I remember that incident now that you reminded me. Yes, I do. Again, as I say, we were very busy at the time, and I was not in the vicinity where it happened, but I do remember

that. Yes, they were using a light to set a gun down on a ring mount, I think, and they had to have some light to see the bolt holes. When they did, some idiot opened fire because they'd turned on a light. I don't know if anybody was hurt or anything, but everybody was very jumpy.

Marcello: In the aftermath of the attack, how would you describe the morale at that point?

Glaubitz: I guess you would probably say that most of our morale was pretty darn low. We were mad. I think we were shocked. I looked out there, and I said, "There went all our battleships! What do we have to defend ourselves with?" To me, I was trying to mentally count how many more we had left and where they were, what their condition was, and if they'd been hit. Of course, we had very little information. We did hear that the Philippines had been attacked, that other ships at sea had been sunk, and that the President had declared war.

We did not know whether or not . . . and, in fact, there was a question and a rumor, if I remember correctly, in view of that day, that the Japanese had landed in California or on the West Coast. Of course, this immediately brought up a big question mark of what the hell could we do about it? We're sitting there on our battleships, and you couldn't move a one of them. The ones that were not sunk were trapped on the inside and couldn't get underway. While some of our cruisers

got underway, they were, if the Japanese were out there, certainly no match for a battleship. It was just a big question mark.

Marcello: Mr. Glaubitz, that exhausts my list of questions relative to the attack. Is there anything else you think we need to talk about to get as part of our record?

Glaubitz: I've been trying to think since the other day when I talked to you about this concerning what all transpired. I think the men came through tremendously. I think of the words that I saw . . . I believe it was Tora! Tora! Tora!, the movie, where the Japanese admiral said, "We have not won a victory; we have awakened a sleeping giant." I don't think that was the exact quote, but I believe it was a very apropos quote. We immediately became very mad and turned-on the best we could, but I say we were also very scared. I personally was very scared that we were going to be overrun and invaded. I kept wondering, "How in the hell could it happen?"

Marcello: This is probably a pretty good place to end this interview. I want to thank you very much for having taken time to talk with me. You have said a lot of interesting and very important things, and I'm sure that scholars will find your comments very valuable when they use them to write about Pearl Harbor.