

Admiral Nimitz Historical Site
National Museum of the Pacific War

Center for Pacific War Studies

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Mr. Levin B. Barbour
(Pearl Harbor Survivor)
December 8, 2001

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This is William G. Cox. Today is December 8, 2001. I am interviewing this morning SSgt Levi B. Barbour, who was in the Marine Corps during World War II. This interview is taking place in the Bethany Lutheran Church in Fredericksburg, Texas. This interview is in support of the Center for the Pacific War Studies, Archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Parks and Wildlife, for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

Mr. Cox: Good morning Mr. Barbour. How are you today?

Mr. Barbour: I'm fine.

Mr. Cox: Have you enjoyed your visit to Fredericksburg?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, I have enjoyed this trip a lot. I enjoyed the parade yesterday.

Mr. Cox: Did you meet by chance any your buddies that you were in the military with?

Mr. Barbour: The only I met was in the 4th Defense that I was in, but he was in the "A" Battery and I was in "B" Battery. They were separate guns – 5" coast artillery.

Mr. Cox: We will get into a little more detail on some of that. Right now I think it is appropriate to find out a little bit about when you were born, where you were born, names of your parents, etc. Can you help me with that.

Mr. Barbour: I was born March 9, 1919 at a small place Toshes, Virginia, Pittsylvania County.

Mr. Cox: What were the names of your Mother and your Father?

Mr. Barbour: My Father was Ed Barbour, my Grandfather was Ben Barbour. My Dad had two brothers, Al and Cliff Barbour. My Father had two sisters, Annie and Inie. My Mother was a Doss. I had one brother

and three sisters. My brother has passed away and my three sisters are still living.

Mr. Cox: Were you the oldest?

Mr. Barbour: No. My brother was older. I was the youngest boy. I had two sisters younger than me and one sister older than me. We were all born in Virginia. Later, my Daddy died when I was six years old, and my Mother had five children to support. She had a job, but her health went down after his death, and the Doctor told her it would be better if she went somewhere and stayed with some of her family until she regained her health. After she got her health back, she went back to work in North Carolina in a factory. That is when we moved to North Carolina.

Mr. Cox: How old were you at that time?

Mr. Barbour: Seven.

Mr. Cox: Had you started to school yet?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, I started school in Virginia and went almost a full year in the First Grade when we moved to North Carolina. It was toward the end of the school year. I remember they put me back in the First Grade the following year. They would not promote me because I had not been to that school that long. Then we moved back to Virginia for another two years. I finished my education in North Carolina. I lived there until I joined the Marine Corps.

Mr. Cox: OK, so you did have an opportunity to complete High School, or at least school?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, but I didn't finish High School. I made it into the Marine Corps.

Mr. Cox: How old were you when you went into the Marine Corps?

Mr. Barbour: Twenty-one. June 1, 1940.

Mr. Cox: So the war had not started yet, but they were drafting people and doing miscellaneous activities. You knew they were beefing

up for the war.

Mr. Barbour: When I finished Boot Camp I went to Cuba for extensive training on the 5" artillery because Paris Island didn't have the operations where we could fire the 5" artillery.

Mr. Cox: So you took your Marine Corps Boot Camp at Paris Island?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: How was your training when you were at Paris Island? How long did the training last?

Mr. Barbour: Thirteen weeks.

Mr. Cox: I'm going to ask you a question. I noticed today on television they will show the Drill Instructor with his campaign hat on and he is yelling in the face of the individual. Did you ever have a Drill Sergeant do that to you?

Mr. Barbour: Quite often.

Mr. Cox: So that was typical?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: You got the message pretty quick?

Mr. Barbour: Oh yes.

Mr. Cox: So that training was pretty extensive? What types of training did you do there?

Mr. Barbour: When I went through it was seven days a week. We didn't have canteen privileges. The Drill Instructor would have to send one man to the canteen to get what you might need in toilet articles and that type of thing, get your cigarettes for you. We were not free to go anywhere in boot training. At that time, when you finished at the rifle range, everybody would do duty in the Mess Hall until they received their transfer papers to where they were going to be stationed. They were filling the Fourth Defense Battalion at that time. When I say it was boot camp, we went into the Forward Defense and just about filled it up, and then we went to Cuba for that

extensive training. We were supposed to be down there for ninety days and then return to the States and get our furlough, but we didn't. Instead of sending us back to the States, they decided they would relieve the Third Defense Forces, which was on Wake Island. We were on our way there and we arrived at Pearl Harbor a few weeks before the Japs bombed Pearl Harbor. It might have been 6-8 weeks that we were there before they bombed Pearl Harbor. We didn't get to relieve the Third Defense because the Japs took Wake Island from the Third Defense. They made our operations Secret. We were an Assault Battalion.

Mr. Cox: More of an Infantry type of unit?

Mr. Barbour: Landing.

Mr. Cox: OK, landing.

Mr. Barbour: On small islands.

Mr. Cox: Taught you on landing craft techniques?

Mr. Barbour: We had Liberty Boats like the Navy. We would go ashore on them.

Mr. Cox: So you climbed down the nets?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. We landed in the New Hebrides group of islands, 90 miles below Guadalcanal. We did away with the Japanese Coast Guard. They had a station there and there were a lot of Japanese personnel there.

Mr. Cox: When you were in New Hebrides, was that before or after Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Barbour: That was after Pearl Harbor. That was in 1942.

Mr. Cox: OK. Can we back up a little? Were you actually at Pearl Harbor when it was attacked?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, I was at the Marine Barracks.

Mr. Cox: What barracks was that?

Mr. Barbour: I was down there on detached duty. They were short of personnel

and they wanted some volunteers from our unit because we were outside the gate preparing to go to Wake Island. There are a lot of people that don't like inside training, schooling, etc., so I volunteered to go down to help them at the Marine Barracks on detached duty. A buddy of mine and I volunteered for that help and then when they bombed Pearl Harbor we did not know what we were supposed to do. When they dropped the bombs, the planes banked around and strafed the barracks and parade field. We were in the wooden barracks right beside the brick barracks, which was the main barracks. We were there as a Guard Company and the Guard House was on the ground floor. In the corner of the wooden barracks the Sick Bay was on the second floor. When the bombs started falling and they were strafing the barracks, someone yelled, "everybody out of the barracks." By the time they got to the walkway, planes were coming around strafing them. One man fell and I was right at the screen door and I ran down to the corner to the Sick Bay and told them to send a corpsman up there. They sent two corpsman. They put the man on the stretcher. One guy was hit in the back and he fell right on top of the man on the stretcher. I went back and told them that we needed some more corpsman up there. Two more men came up and they put some men on stretchers and got them inside before the strafing started again. It was little while before the second squad of planes came around. During that time, the others did not know what we were supposed to do or how to get back in touch with our outfit. I told them "we will see the Officer of the Day." I went to the Guard House and talked to him. Of course, I was a little shook up like the rest of the fellows. The Officer of the Day was just as calm as he could be. He was just giving orders about what he wanted done, and he told me, "Don't you worry about that, we'll take care of your outfit. You go in the

Stock Room and start breaking out some equipment, machine guns, or whatever you find.”

Mr. Cox: Was this an officer or a sergeant?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, he was an officer. He was the Officer of the Day.

Mr. Cox: Do you recall what his rank was?

Mr. Barbour: He was a 2nd Lieutenant. I don't remember his name because I had not been with the Company that long. I said, “Who has the keys to the Store Room?” He said, “Don't look for the keys, just break the door down and get in there and get it out.” So, Davis and I started around the corner of the building. All of the power was off, no lights, etc. We went into the kitchen and got a meat cleaver, or something to hammer on the lock. Davis said, “You don't think we will get locked up for breaking this lock?” I said, “Davis, that is the Officer of the Day, today under these circumstances, the way I see it, whatever he says goes. Let's break this lock off and get in there.” We got three 30 caliber machine guns out of there and set them up on the parade grounds. We couldn't find the water tanks for them, but we left them there. We put the 50 caliber on top of the corner of the brick barracks. When I got them set up, ready to go, a big Master Sergeant patted me on the shoulder and said, “You let me have this thing.” I said, “You can have it, here.” That is when a lot of the sailors were coming off the ships. Some of them didn't have any way of getting off so they dived over on the land side toward the barracks, and then they swam up there. There were 8-12 in the first group. Somebody told them they might be able to get some dry clothes to put on because they were soaking wet. They only had their underwear on. They got right out of bed and went into the water. There was a young boy in the second bunch that came up and he was crying and a couple of them were trying to quiet him down. I told him where the store room was and he

should go in there and get some clothes. He seemed to get worse and was hysterical. Finally he quieted down enough to tell this other guy, “You just don’t know.” The other man said, “Know what?” He said, “I’m the one that the officer demanded me to lock down that hatch. I could have gotten two or three more men out of there, but he told me he would lock me up if I didn’t drop that hatch. I shut it, but I didn’t want to.” I’ve thought a lot about that. The other squad of planes that came around didn’t stay as long as the first ones did. They did a lot of strafing. You could see the tracer bullets all over the barracks. The Guard was pulling colors when this first started. I looked up at the Bugle Boy after it was all over. There were strafing bullets flying around there like a hail storm and he kept blowing that bugle until he finished Colors and then he did an “about face” and called to arms. I didn’t see anyone go out there and give him an order to do so, but he did it. The Sergeant of the Guard might have told him, but then he had to run through tracer bullets to get into the barracks. At least he didn’t get hit.

Mr. Cox: Was it the Bugler that raised the flag?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, they raised them all of the way to the top.

Mr. Cox: OK.

Mr. Barbour: There were tracer bullets flying, but they didn’t stop.

Mr. Cox: How many people were in that detail? The Bugler and...

Mr. Barbour: The Bugler and the Sergeant of the Guard, and two men pulling rope.

Mr. Cox: Did any of them get hit?

Mr. Barbour: No, none of them were hit. I stayed around the store room to show the sailors where the uniforms were and the clothes that they could get. There were no more bombers coming over at that time. That was the last squad. I think I learned quite a bit from that by being in a little bit of that before I went to the landings on the other islands.

I learned how to get busy and stay calm.

Mr. Cox: Do you think those Drill Sergeants in Basic Training, the fact that they were so “tough” had something to do with the way you handled the emergency when the strafing was going on?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, we learned a lot in Boot Camp about keeping calm. The Drill Instructors gave us a lot of lectures on different things.

Mr. Cox: So the harder the training is, the better the man is equipped to do his duty?

Mr. Barbour: Oh yes. Toward the end you began to see his point of view on everything that he said.

Mr. Cox: He is trying to keep you alive.

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: Now you mentioned that you finally did get the munitions out of the storage room, the machine guns, and got them set up. Did you get to shoot at the Japanese during the rest of the attack?

Mr. Barbour: No. We didn’t fire the machine guns after we got them set up. We could find any water tanks. The 30 caliber ones needed a water tank.

Mr. Cox: Oh, they were water-cooled 30 calibers.

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: How about the 50 calibers?

Mr. Barbour: We got them set up, but we never did fire them.

Mr. Cox: Now, the water tank – you are talking about the container that carried the water, and then the hose goes up to the cooler on the barrel so you won’t burn out the barrel?

Mr. Barbour: That’s right.

Mr. Cox: I wanted to make sure what you were talking about. When things calmed down, at what point did you realize that the Japanese were not going to be back for a while? Did you realize that or was it always in the back of your mind that they may be back?

Mr. Barbour: As rumors get started, we had sent a truck out to Diamond Head Ammunition Dump for more ammunition. Nobody in the harbor had any ammunition. The ships had just returned and they had used all of their ammunition on maneuvers. Most of the men that returned from maneuvers went to town. A lot of them weren't there that morning on the ship. If they had been, there might have been more casualties.

Mr. Cox: The next day after Pearl Harbor, which would be December 8th, was there anything eventful?

Mr. Barbour: We were doing our details. The next morning we were down in the store room to get some steel helmets out in front where people that didn't have one could get one. We stocked a bunch of them out there. They sent a Guard down there to tell us to go back to the barracks and get ready to go to our outfit outside because we wouldn't be staying there any more because they didn't know when they would get electricity back. What little cooking they were doing, they were doing it on portable things outside and they didn't want any extra men to feed. So went back to our Company then.

Mr. Cox: That was the Field Artillery Unit?

Mr. Barbour: Coast Defense Battalion. We were right outside the gate in the salt flats. The first thing they told us when we got there, they said, "Get all of your clothes together and put them in your sea bag and go to the canteen and restock yourself with toothpaste, soap, etc., because you are going to get your footlocker and put all of your possessions in the footlocker to be shipped back to your hometown. You can't carry anything with you. Get your seabag packed and have it ready. Have it packed and locked down. When the truck comes up here, you are going to throw it on and get aboard ship."

Mr. Cox: Did they tell you what you could put in that seabag and what you couldn't not?

Mr. Barbour: Put clothes and toilet articles. We were told if we had any cameras to turn them in. We were told that if we were caught with one we would go to Leavenworth and that would be it. We couldn't have any cameras or radios.

Mr. Cox: How long did you wait until you got orders and were put onboard the ship?

Mr. Barbour: It seems it was about four weeks. We were restricted to the camp.

Mr. Cox: Do you remember the name of the ship that you boarded?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. Crescent City. It was a freighter.

Mr. Cox: Suppose that is named after the City of New Orleans?

Mr. Barbour: I don't know.

Mr. Cox: Just a guess on my part, but it could be.

Mr. Barbour: They came down about 3:30 one morning and said for us to put our seabag on the truck and get on it. That is all they said. Go down to the docks and get on the ship. They rushed us to get on that ship. When we got onboard that ship they pulled anchor and we were gone. We were on the ship 3-4 days and still didn't know where we were going.

Mr. Cox: Were there any other ships in the group?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, there was a destroyer out in front of our ship. Also, there were two small cruisers on each side. As I recall, we had a tanker going with us for fuel.

Mr. Cox: Was it pretty much Marines on board, or was it a mixture of troops?

Mr. Barbour: No, just Marines. I think that the crew on that ship were Merchant Marines. The destroyer and light cruisers were Navy.

Mr. Cox: Were you given specific duties while you were on board the ship, such as man the guns, work in the kitchen, etc?

Mr. Barbour: I don't think the ship had any guns on it.

Mr. Cox: Depended on the other ships?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: When you finally landed, what was your destination?

Mr. Barbour: Early that morning the Captain announced that we were supposed to get our things on deck, everything out and we were going to unload the ship at daylight. It was still three or four o'clock in the morning. He finally told us that it was an island in the New Hebrides Group. I don't think they announced the specific name of the island. We got the ship unloaded and then it started raining. I never did know whether the rain helped us or not, but we found out we had landed there in the "rainy" season.

Mr. Cox: It rained a lot there?

Mr. Barbour: Eight straight weeks, night and day, pouring down.

Mr. Cox: What type of housing facilities did you have?

Mr. Barbour: The ground got so soft we couldn't set up the tents. If you did try to set them up, they would only stand an hour or so, then fall down.

Mr. Cox: What size tents were these? Were they for five or six men?

Mr. Barbour: Four men to a tent.

Mr. Cox: So they were more or less a square tent?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. We rigged up other things. We couldn't get anything set up for a mess hall. The Japs weren't doing anything then. They did go down the coast. The rain didn't stop them from going down there and getting the coast guards.

Mr. Cox: So you had your five inch guns that you brought with you?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, we finally got those set up. We didn't have to use them because our purpose for landing on that island was to be quiet. We had six engineers with us that went into the jungle and built an air strip. It was the same size as the top of an aircraft carrier. They left one hole large enough for a bomber to go out.

Mr. Cox: Were these Seabees?

Mr. Barbour: Six of them were.

Mr. Cox: Had bulldozer, etc., to do this with?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. They fixed the runway just like that on an aircraft carrier, with cables, etc. Then they brought in the bombers off of the aircraft carrier. They left one hole for them to get out of. It was down out of sight. Then they started bombing Guadalcanal from there. The Japs knew there were aircraft carrier planes, but they didn't know they were landing down there in the jungle. Their planes would fly over us looking for our planes. They would also look out in the sea for aircraft carriers.

Mr. Cox: Were these Navy or Marine pilots?

Mr. Barbour: Marines. They would take off at three or four o'clock in the morning and return around sunrise. Then the Jap planes would be flying around looking for them. We stayed there six months. They sent in some reliefs because a lot of us had Malaria by that time. They sent us to New Zealand for two weeks rest and recuperation.

Mr. Cox: What type of food did you eat while you were in the New Hebrides?

Mr. Barbour: After the first month or six weeks we ran out of food. After two weeks we ran out of gas so we could not run the refrigeration. That meant we could not keep any fresh meat. We only had canned meat, such as vienna sausage and cornbeef hash.

Mr. Cox: Did you have powdered eggs?

Mr. Barbour: No, we didn't have any eggs. They had a couple of five gallon cans of eggs, but they required refrigeration, so we couldn't use them. We had to throw them away. We didn't have eggs or meat.

Mr. Cox: Did you have more than one meal a day, or how often did you eat during the day?

Mr. Barbour: They had breakfast, noon lunch, supper. The Marine cooks were good. They could prepare the vienna sausages and cornbeef hash

three or four different ways.

Mr. Cox: Do you eat those items today?

Mr. Barbour: No, not really.

Mr. Cox: You don't care for any. When you left the New Hebrides, then you went to New Zealand to recuperate?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. After we were released from the hospital they gave us some more training. They gave us 60 days training and then we went back and hit another island. We weren't up there very long and came back. The rumors were that a lot of us were going to get to go back to the States because we had been overseas for several months. We heard they were going to transfer some out of there. They sent me to the 1st Marine Division. It was at Melbourne, Australia. They sent seven of us over there because the 1st Marine Division was very short on NCOs.

Mr. Cox: They had taken Guadalcanal and were in Australia?

Mr. Barbour: Well, they had taken Guadalcanal, but there were still a few troops up there for the stragglers. One battalion was at Melbourne and that is where we joined. That is when I got into the 1st Marine Division. Then I came back to the States. I got home in December of 1943, just before Christmas. My time was up in June. I requested to go to Norfolk Navy Yard. I had a brother that lived down there. I went down there, but then I was going to have to reenlist, or just let them hold me. The war was going on both sides at that time. I signed the papers for two more years and they sent me to Camp Lejeune. I wasn't there long until the war was over in 1945. Since the war was over they did away with the 4th Defense.

Mr. Cox: So when you were back in the States, were you in more or less training the new Marines that were added to the units?

Mr. Barbour: I went to the Norfolk Navy Yard until I reenlisted. Then I went down to Camp Lejeune. Then I went to China with the

Occupational Troops and stayed over there the remaining time that I was in the Marines.

Mr. Cox: OK, so when you went into China, was that in 1945?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: Where did you land in China?

Mr. Barbour: There were already a few Marines there. We went to Hangchow down on the Yellow Sea and they sent in some of the Seabees to build us a camp. I was down there a month or so and the MPs came down there and got me because the Battalion wanted me back in the Headquarters. I didn't do very much up there. There wasn't any fighting. The Doctor wanted me to gain some weight back and that is the reason I was on very light duty.

Mr. Cox: How long were you in China?

Mr. Barbour: A little over a year. My time was up in June of 1946. I got back to the States in May of 1946. I went to Quantico, Virginia, to get discharged.

Mr. Cox: You came by ship?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: About how long did it take you to make that trip by ship from China to the States?

Mr. Barbour: Well, I went over there on a ship and it was a bout thirty days.

Mr. Cox: Did you come through the Panama Canal or did you come around through the Suez, or how did you go?

Mr. Barbour: We came to California and crossed the country on a troop train.

Mr. Cox: How many days was the trip on the train?

Mr. Barbour: Three.

Mr. Cox: Was the train crowded?

Mr. Barbour: No, it wasn't too crowded.

Mr. Cox: How was the food onboard the train? Did you have rations, or dining room?

Mr. Barbour: They had a kitchen car. The Captain asked me to take it over and order things ahead of time so that the food could be at stops waiting to be loaded on the train. The stove in the kitchen car burned either wood or coal. It was a 1918 stove.

Mr. Cox: So this was pretty much an Army Mess Hall in this car?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. It wasn't too bad coming across the country. It was hard to cook on that stove though with the train rocking.

Mr. Cox: So this was about May or June of 1947?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, May.

Mr. Cox: So you probably had air conditioning on that train?

Mr. Barbour: No.

Mr. Cox: So you just opened up the windows?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. They stayed open.

Mr. Cox: Did you have any smoke from the engine that flowed through those cars?

Mr. Barbour: Sometimes.

Mr. Cox: Did the train stop along the way at any points periodically?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, it stopped pretty often.

Mr. Cox: Did the ladies come out and serve you doughnuts and things like that?

Mr. Barbour: They did that in Australia when we went from Sydney down to Melbourne by train. They would stop occasionally and the Australian ladies would have all types of food in baskets.

Mr. Cox: So you went back into Quantico?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: How long were you there?

Mr. Barbour: It was two or three weeks.

Mr. Cox: Were you discharged at that point?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, I was discharged at Quantico.

Mr. Cox: Then you arrived at home? This was in North Carolina?

About how far was that from Quantico?

Mr. Barbour: About a hundred miles.

Mr. Cox: Did you travel by bus?

Mr. Barbour: No, train.

Mr. Cox: I assume that your family was there to greet you, or was this a surprise for them?

Mr. Barbour: No, I didn't know exactly when I was going to get my discharge. They called me to the office and said, "Here you are." When I went in to get my discharge the Captain talked to me about coming back. My brother wanted me to stay home. He wanted me to help him run the business, so I didn't go back.

Mr. Cox: So you helped your brother in the bakery business?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. I was working with him. My wife and I corresponded while I was in the service. We got married March 1, 1947.

Mr. Cox: Did you know your wife before you went in the service?

Mr. Barbour: No, not before I went in the service. I met her the time I came home. My sister and her sister were high school friends. She knew my sister and my sister knew her. When I got out and got a job that is when we started going regular and got married.

Mr. Cox: So you got married about a year after you got out of the service?

Mr. Barbour: Yes and we are living in Ocean View.

Mr. Cox: Were you still working in the bakery at that time?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. After we married she wanted to come back to North Carolina, so my brother sold that bakery. We stayed in North Carolina a few years, went back to Virginia Beach for a while, then we came back. We came back to North Carolina and stayed there until I bought out a business in South Carolina.

Mr. Cox: What was the business in South Carolina?

Mr. Barbour: Retail bakery.

Mr. Cox: So you stayed in that field?

Mr. Barbour: That is about all I knew.

Mr. Cox: You enjoyed that work?

Mr. Barbour: Yes. I enjoyed that type of work.

Mr. Cox: What type of products did you make there at the bakery?

Mr. Barbour: I made a full line of bakery products, party items, birthday cakes, cookies, pies, breads, rolls, etc.

Mr. Cox: Which one do you think you did best at?

Mr. Barbour: I made a lot of wedding cakes.

Mr. Cox: Did you happen to sample them and you knew the quality of them or did you get tired of them?

Mr. Barbour: No, I never got tired of any baked goods. I used to eat deserts as regular as anybody else.

Mr. Cox: How many children do you have?

Mr. Barbour: I had three. My oldest boy is still living. A few years ago my youngest boy was doing carpenter work. He came home and told his Mother he was kind of sick. That night before he ate supper he said that he was feeling OK. I had to go somewhere and my wife was working. I came home first and the youngest boy was laying on the dining room floor dead. They never found the cause of death.

Mr. Cox: How old was he when he died?

Mr. Barbour: Thirty-seven.

Mr. Cox: Do you have two daughters?

Mr. Barbour: One daughter. She was the oldest child. She was killed in a car wreck. There was a storm that day. She went somewhere with her boyfriend and they hit a bridge. She was thrown out of the car and her head hit the bridge.

Mr. Cox: That is a pretty traumatic experience, to lose your children.

Mr. Barbour: Yes, it is. Now I have one child left at home. Seems like he is

going to stay at home.

Mr. Cox: How old is he now?

Mr. Barbour: He is 42 years old.

Mr. Cox: So he gives you a little help?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, he does. He has been doing electrical work for several years.

Mr. Cox: When did you retire from the bakery business?

Mr. Barbour: I first retired in 1979 because I had a slight stroke. I sold all of my equipment. Then I recovered and I went back to work part-time for some other people. I never did have a desire to get back into business for myself.

Mr. Cox: So you were about how old when you got out of the bakery business?

Mr. Barbour: Oh, I was getting Social Security.

Mr. Cox: So now that you are retired, do you have some hobbies that you do, fishing, or anything like that?

Mr. Barbour: I play golf quite a bit.

Mr. Cox: So you still maintain your exercise, etc.

Mr. Barbour: I love the game. I enjoyed it and won quite a few pieces of silver in tournaments.

Mr. Cox: If you were to think about it now, in all of your World War II experiences, which one would you think would be the most traumatic? What time was the most stressful for you? Was it Pearl Harbor, or another event that may have occurred in there that you didn't tell us about?

Mr. Barbour: I know that everybody did what they thought was best, but on some of those islands we had gas burner stoves, but they didn't figure in sending out enough fuel. We ran short of fuel, out of food, and there was no way of dropping any to us. I don't know that any of that could have been prevented. I figured that the bigger boys knew what they were doing.

Mr. Cox: Was that about the time that your morale was the lowest?

Mr. Barbour: Yes, it might have been.

Mr. Cox: The rainy weather and the lack of supplies?

Mr. Barbour: Yes.

Mr. Cox: But you knew there were some people that were worse off than you were?

Mr. Barbour: Oh yes. That is the way that I looked at it.

Mr. Cox: In your life, what was the happiest point that you can recall?

Mr. Barbour: I never thought about that? There were a couple of times that I was happy to get out of the situation that I was in. I was very happy when my first child was born and doing pretty good financially. You might say that “everything was going my way.”

Mr. Cox: Is there anything that we have not covered that you would like to mention?

Mr. Barbour: No, I can’t think of anything.

Mr. Cox: On behalf of the National Museum of the Pacific War and the Texas Parks and Wildlife, I would like to thank you for taking the time today and thank your wife for taking the time to visit Fredericksburg during this event. I would like to also add on my own personal feeling, I want to thank you and all of the other veterans that did everything you did during World War II. It gives us some of the lifestyle that we have today. I salute you for that.

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