

The National Museum of the Pacific War

Center for Pacific War Studies
Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With
Glenn Dugger
U.S. Navy
Training Command
S-23 Submarine
March 2, 2003

Mr. Misenhimer

My name is Richard Misenhimer and today is March 2, 2003. I am interviewing Mr. Glenn Dugger at his home at 1915 Encino Alice, TX 78332. His phone number is (361) 664-5807. This interview is in support of the National Museum of Pacific Wars, Center for Pacific War Studies, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer

Mr. Dugger, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview. Let me start by asking you, where were you born?

Mr. Dugger

I was born in Mazie, Oklahoma, 1924, September 6th.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have brothers or sister?

Mr. Dugger

Yes, I had 3 sisters.

Mr. Misenhimer

What were your parents' names?

Mr. Dugger

William and Charlotte Dugger.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was your father's occupation?

Mr. Dugger

He was a ranch hand, a mail carrier, an oil field worker last.

Mr. Misenhimer

And where did you go to school, high school?

Mr. Dugger

High School, I went to high school in Benevides, Texas.

Mr. Misenhimer

And what year did you finish there?

Mr. Dugger

I finished in 1943.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did your parents move to Texas from Oklahoma?

Mr. Dugger

Moved to Texas in 1936, moved to Corpus. We lived in Corpus until '40 and my daddy transferred to Benevides...

Mr. Misenhimer

Then, when did you go into the Service?

Mr. Dugger

I believe it was about May 15, 1943.

Mr. Misenhimer

Had you finished high school then?

Mr. Dugger

Yes, I had finished.

Mr. Misenhimer

Which branch did you go into?

Mr. Dugger

The Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you choose that branch?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, I think at first, aviation and then after I got in, I thought more about submarine service.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go into the Service, in Corpus?

Mr. Dugger

I was inducted in Sam Houston. Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long were you at Fort Sam?

Mr. Dugger

At Fort Sam, we were inducted, I think overnight.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go from there?

Mr. Dugger

From there, San Diego, California Naval Training Station.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get to come home?

Mr. Dugger

Yes, I came home after I had went up there for medical and everything and that's where I volunteered for the Navy. We left San Antonio somewhere around the 15th, and two days and nights later, we were in San Diego.

Mr. Misenhimer

And how did you travel out there?

Mr. Dugger

The Sunset Limited.

Mr. Misenhimer

Had a train, huh?

Mr. Dugger

A real fast ride.

Mr. Misenhimer

What kind of accommodations did you have?

Mr. Dugger

Chair car.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was that trip to California?

Mr. Dugger

It was different. Never rode a train and some of the guys with me had never hardly been out of Duval County and everybody was kind of excited about it.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got there, where did you go to in California?

Mr. Dugger

Went to San Diego to Naval Training Station.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you do when you got there?

Mr. Dugger

Well, first thing we did, they took us into boot camp there and I'm thinking the name of that was Farragut. I was trying to think of it the other day, but anyway, it's been too long. That's where boot camp was and about every 2 days there would be another group come in, a company. I guess it was about once a week they'd form another company. I've forgotten but I used to know all that. We went through all kinds of things there, showing us the ropes. And physical, all kinds of, we'd take forced marches and do all kinds of calisthenics and taught you how to fire a rifle and do things like that, swim and took all your shots and I think that time was a month. It could have been six weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you live in there?

Mr. Dugger

It was barracks. We were lucky enough to have barracks.

Mr. Misenhimer

How about food. How was the food there?

Mr. Dugger

It was fine. It was just, you know, you've got to get used to military food. It's good for you but it's a lot different from being at home. From there, I went to machinist school at

the same training station and learned all about the machines and about how to do things with lathes and drills, very interesting.

Mr. Misenhimer

Had you done any of that before you went into the Service?

Mr. Dugger

No, I was interested in it but never had done any of it. Finished there and at the end of the term, 16 weeks, we come out apprentice machinists and came home for leave, first leave I had, and went back to the Naval Destroyer Base over across the Bay there in San Diego County, San Diego and started training there, submarine training.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had volunteered for submarines then?

Mr. Dugger

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now when did you come home? About what time of year was that?

Mr. Dugger

It was in the winter. I don't remember when.

Mr. Misenhimer

Around Christmas, before or after?

Mr. Dugger

I can't remember that.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you decide to sign up for submarine training?

Mr. Dugger

Cause I liked it, liked the idea. It was different. Not everybody got to go. You had to volunteer. There wasn't anybody that could do anything along that line, otherwise they'd tell you what to do and submarine service seemed more like you're working, doing things you wanted to do instead marching and standing inspection and all that routine they kept doing aboard a surface ship. And also on base. Base is no place to be if you're in the submarine in the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer

What all did your training consist of at the submarine there?

Mr. Dugger

They taught you how to...first thing is they taught you is how to use the Momsen lung escape. It was the only escape thing we had and they still use it. Still, everybody has to know how to use it, now I don't know what they're, they may have other means now but they're not a whole lot different than they ever were at that time. See, they had the diving bell and that was your escape method at that time. Not all submarines were equipped for it but the Squalis, when it went down off the east coast in shallow water, what I mean as shallow is a little over 200 feet, they got everybody out that wasn't in a flooded compartment. Anyway, they weren't planning on that problem. While I was there, the boat I was training on, they told me to come aboard the ship's company and I was on that boat 16 months.

Mr. Misenhimer

What ship was that?

Mr. Dugger

USS S23.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did it have a name?

Mr. Dugger

That was it, that was the name. See, they built a bunch of S boats, R boats, O boats. They didn't have a name like, later on they started naming them fish names. We were working off the west coast and training submarine hands and we were working with planes and ships like destroyers and escort vessels and everything. They were teaching everybody how to, at that time, the Germans were sink about at least one or two boats a day, ships and everything in the Atlantic and they were trying to train the Air Force and everybody else how to work on submarines and sink them. We'd go through that every day.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you were on the west coast during all this.

Mr. Dugger

At that time, 16 months. And then I transferred off and went to the Submarine Division 104 at Pearl. And out there you're overhauling boats and coming in for relief period and we'd take the boat over and keep it two weeks. We'd overhaul engines. My game was overhaul engines and any other repair that needed to be done in the engine room. And we overhauled 3 boats, the Sea Dog, the Sea Poacher, and the USS Marr.

Mr. Misenhimer

About when did you go to Hawaii?

Mr. Dugger

I was there 4 months. I think, well they dropped the bomb in late September.

Mr. Misenhimer

August 6th of '45 when they dropped the first atomic bomb.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, and then they signed the Peace Treaty, was it September 6th?

Mr. Misenhimer

September 2nd.

Mr. Dugger

Right along in there. And then about a day or two later, the Japs surrendered. I was in the Naval Reserve and I'd been in almost 3 years lacked about a month I guess. No, I didn't. I hadn't been in but 2 and a half years at that time and then they told us everybody that was in the Reserve had to join the regular Navy if they wanted to stay in. We're going all regular Navy, he said submarine service was. Well I told him I wasn't interested in going regular Navy. I just wanted to go home. He asked me where in the hell is that and I told them Duval County and they didn't know where it was. Anyway, came back to the States leave for reassignment and went back to Galveston and we left from there and went to north Virginia and went aboard the USS Vermillion. It was an attack cargo ship. We went all up and down the east coast and down to the islands and end up back in Norfolk up there in a few months and then I was discharged and came back to Wallace, Camp Wallace.

Mr. Misenhimer

In Houston, right, Camp Wallace?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, right there out of Galveston. Alvin, Camp Wallace right down the road, there.

Mr. Misenhimer

When were you discharged, then?

Mr. Dugger

It was around March...

Mr. Misenhimer

Of '46?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, March '46. Sometime in late March I think.

Mr. Misenhimer

Let me go back to the time when you were on this submarine up and down the coast training people. What was your position on that sub?

Mr. Dugger

Sit and watch the engine room.

Mr. Misenhimer

And what did it feel like the first time you went submerged in a submarine?

Mr. Dugger

Well, we went out in a storm. It was on Easter Sunday. They had a big Easter storm out there on the west coast. After everybody had been sick from the rough water in the Channel, about half of them, we got out there and we rode out for a little while submerged. Pretty decent. About like riding a Pullman in a train, that kind of running along and we didn't feel much motion. You'd feel pretty good motion down at ninety

feet. You'd get some deep ground swells but just regular rough sea, you didn't feel it.

We'd cruise along about 6, 7 knots on batteries but nowadays, these Nuclear submarines, I've never been able to get anybody to tell me what they're doing submerged but they're, I think around 30 or more.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah, I think that's right. Something like that.

Mr. Dugger

Surface speed I think is around 55.

Mr. Misenhimer

I'm not sure. It's pretty fast, though.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, they get a move on. They have tremendous horsepower.

Mr. Misenhimer

And when you were under seas, did it feel crowded there? Any claustrophobia or anything?

Mr. Dugger

No, I never had those problems. No, we, you know, in the real tight places, everybody was telling me I was lucky. Some guys, most of the guys had no problem. But none of them every got any serious problems with it. The old boat was built in 1929, no 1919.

Mr. Misenhimer

Oh, it was, 1919, huh?

Mr. Dugger

It had some, I guess, some of the original diesel engines used in the early days, years. They're not like these ones are today that you drive the fuel in hydraulics. Those engines were real primitive and so was the rest of it. You didn't have any showers. You took baths in a five gallon bucket. The performance was good. Of course, everybody knew what they were doing. You'd go down to 200 feet and water would pour in pretty bad and now and then they'd start depth charges too close and things would get kind of bad. Actually those people, we never cussed them too much because up there, they were as many as we were, the ones up on top, and so you couldn't really be relaxed at any time. We'd stay at battle stations sometimes all day at a time. Like when you're surfacing and submerging and these guys are diving on you and doing all kinds of things, it would get pretty, you stayed pretty wound up. But we had, when we stayed at four on, eight off, they only had lunch for 2 crews. They third crew had to work, they had to be running the ship, around the boat. The reason, I guess, I transferred off, we had one skipper, he runs aground a couple times and a few things like that, not really concerned about anything.

Mr. Misenhimer

He runs aground under seas or when you're on the surface?

Mr. Dugger

On the surface. Running down the channel.

Mr. Misenhimer

How many members in the crew?

Mr. Dugger

Fifty-six. Later boats, what they call a fleet boat, the ones that won the war. They were, they had about, I think, eighty-four men, just a regular crew. They were larger, that's the reason to have more.

Mr. Misenhimer

About what size was your submarine?

Mr. Dugger

419 feet, 4 and a half inches long. And they give you six months to qualify if you didn't learn how to do any job on boat.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had to learn to do all the different jobs.

Mr. Dugger

All the different ones. You didn't learn that in six months, they transferred you out. It was a big outfit. It was a good outfit, too. You got some guys in there running that are not too shabby but you find that everywhere you go.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were on this ship going back and forth there, were you assigned to a particular unit, squadron, anything like that?

Mr. Dugger

No, you just had 3 crews and all the crews had the same job, all month cause you would have to stand watch. But when you're submerged, the guys in the engine room their position would be on the planes, total depth and angle. And bow planes on that thing control your depth, your diving when you're running straight ahead, you level off. After

you program it on both, and the stern planes, the depth would be controlled by the bow. The stern planes control the angle. In other words, the angle was too steep, they'd compensate for it. It took 800 tons of water to plug it down and they had that, we had a small tank in there. We had an auxiliary tanks, you know, and our trim tank. You'd plug everything up to your auxiliary. When it was open, the trim valve, and down you go. When you got leveled off, they'd control the boat power. They guys can walk back and forth in there when you're submerged and change your angle so they'd pump water from our trim tank forward, if you're light aft, you'd pump water back there. That would bring it back down. And when you first lay out actually being in and take on supply and everything, they go out and they would alter the trim. You're down and they'd trim the boat up, make sure it quarters in the right place and make the boat come up then they would take a, it was any compensation, they'd pump the trim to the port trim tank, there after trim. And after it was leveled out and it was exactly like you wanted, they got down to cruise depth. You'd just shut it down and see which way we'd go – up or down. And you can get it to were it's near to buoyancy. Either way, up or down if you were balanced out right. Then you're underway.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was your speed underwater?

Mr. Dugger

About 6 knots.

Mr. Misenhimer

And how about on the surface?

Mr. Dugger

I believe 14 knots, 12, 14 knots with two of those engines.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now when you went out, how long were you out before you came back?

Mr. Dugger

We'd stay out a week, maybe two weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

Week or two?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. But the big boats we was operating in the Pacific, they'd stay out about 3 months.

You can only stay down without having some type of air or a filtering system about 20, 24 hours. And then if you had, you were supposed to stay down, they'd rig up, I forgot what material they were using, where they'd pump the air through a sheet. They had sheets where you could put this powder, soda, something soda. It filtered the air through that sheet so it would clean it up. I think most any of them were ever down was probably two days and nights.

Mr. Misenhimer

What were the longest time you were submerged?

Mr. Dugger

About 16 hours. We'd run, in daytime, you were submerged, you didn't go out. You didn't go anywhere on the submarine on the surface at that time. After they could see that they can run several days on the surface, cause they were faster. They are good boats and they're faster and make better time on the surface if they saw anything they could get

away from it. They had so far to go to get to where they was gonna be stationed on a place when they were assigning certain stations and that's where they had to stay and patrol that area and they wouldn't overlap into another station because, you know, it might just be mistaken for the enemy and such, they wanted that insurance. The Japanese Navy, our subs sunk more ships than all the other forces combined.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, on your submarine, you never were after enemy ships. Is that right?

Mr. Dugger

No, uh, uh. We were doing good to stay alive.

Mr. Misenhimer

You would stick to doing the training and this sort of thing.

Mr. Dugger

Even when I was aboard that thing, I didn't know. You were just a punk kid, you don't know a hell of a lot about what's going on. And in those days, you know, you didn't get the news you get today on TV and all that business. It was pretty hard to keep up with everything. You found somebody that liked you, you thought hell, I'd better stay here. That's what I thought about the submarine. If they liked me, hell I was glad to find somebody that liked me.

Mr. Misenhimer

Any particular friends you had on the submarine or in boot camp or whatever?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, yeah, I had my friends. I guess, the most memorable ones were the guys on the 23. I had 2 or 3 of them that were real close and one was the fireman and I was assistant

fireman on his watch and his name was Joe Turney. He was from Philadelphia. He might have had, he was about 22, 23 years old and then, a boy from South Bend, Indiana, Parson, his last name. Anyway, we come in for overhaul and the crew ahead of us is getting ready to go out and we went and got our, so we walked out through the parking lot and crossed the street to the base and I saw this Model A Ford. And I had my old car at home and I got to looking at it and it had the head off so I asked the old boy in charge of the parking lot who it belonged to. He said, well, give me the guy's name and he was on the boat just there going out. So of course, I talked to him and yeah, he wanted to sell the Ford. I said what do you want for it. He said seventy-five dollars. So it ended up fifty-seven dollars and twenty gallons of gasoline stamps. There was a guy out there, he goes, would go to Tijuana and he'd get fuel and come back and drain it out in cans then we'd go back and get ten more gallons cause it only held ten gallons, bring back ten more gallons. The next weekend, we got a long weekend, we'd go to Los Angeles. Anyway, this poor Joe Turney, he didn't know how to drive and so he learned how to drive on that old Model A Ford. That Ford had to be pretty tough to put up with Joe cause he was rough on it. We fixed it up and we got ready to leave and sold it for \$200. Anyway, that was one of those things that happened. We did all kinds of things. We'd go to Los Angeles and go back to the mountains there up northeast of San Diego, north and east, yeah. We got out one day and it was snowing, there in San Diego on Sunday and we had a long weekend. So it was snowing up in the mountains so we jumped in that old Ford and took off and went up there. I hadn't seen snow in a long time. Down here you don't see much of it. But after San Diego, I went to Vallejo and transferred off. I was at the receiving station there about a week and went down to Alameda Air Base aboard the USS

Long Island, it was a small carrier and, usually those small carriers was all planes, had a load of planes on it and was heading for the Pacific so it dropped us off at Pearl. Coming back after the war, the Saratoga, they added bunks for 4,000 men in the hangar deck. And had those bunks welded to the floor. It was four high and I think 3 wide and it could hold 4,000 men at one time. See, they didn't get much to eat, you did get a ride home. By the time you'd get up to chow and get in the chow line, you went in for breakfast; you'd get there for lunch. So it was pretty long deal. It was after you overhauled the boats, you go out on test dives and they would test, they were testing 400 feet and we'd take them down to 6 and they'd get some guys _____ down _____ and they'd take them six and deeper. We'd take them out in there on 6, wasn't supposed before but we'd take them out and test them. After working on one of them things, you got next first trip then if anything went wrong.

Mr. Misenhimer

Little bit of blame, huh?

Mr. Dugger

You knew about it. Anyway, this was a different ball game.

Mr. Misenhimer

These were fleet boats then, right?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, the fleet boats we were overhauling.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now what all did an overhaul consist of?

Mr. Dugger

Usually, you'd get a, pull your pistons and rods out an engine and send them to the shop. In fact, in those fleet boats, they had 4, everything's 4 opposed engines and then those engines had a crank shaft on top and one on bottom. The pistons come together and they'd fire. You had no heads and no valves. You just covered up the ports inside the block. They were 1600 horsepower, at 1,000 R.P.M. We had four of those. The port engineer had 2, and auxiliary deck had 7 auxiliary. The aft engine room was smaller and the size weren't big enough to hold more. It had 2 in it and they were diesel electric instead of having a flywheel on the end of the shaft, you had a armature, the motor generator. The generator to generate power. They run the screws off electric motors and those old engines were fine engines. You don't see any of them. I don't know what happened to them in civilian, I've seen a few of them.

Mr. Misenhimer

So the way they work, the diesel engine actually ran a generator and that ran the screws even on the surface.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, even on the surface. The diesel engine wasn't directly tied to the screws.

Mr. Misenhimer

They were not.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

There was no drive shaft going to the screw.

Mr. Dugger

No drive shaft. You didn't have any drive shafts. The only one you had was coming out of the stern, coming out electric motors. But on the old S boat, when they used on the surface, you had an armature, big generator. The engine would go either way, your electric motor one way and the generator the other. They'd change it and when you'd submerge, kick the engine, clutches out, kill the engines, you had the first thing you did for that engine, you'd pull the vacuum out of that motor. Run her down in that engine room. And anyway, they would kick the engines out and they'd go on electric motors but these others, if you've backed up a certain amount of power into the batteries, and you had two battery compartments, and each one of them had 60 cells. Each cell weighed 2800 pounds and it was 2 volts.

Mr. Misenhimer

2 volts?

Mr. Dugger

2 volts. And pretty good size chore keeping water in them and they made sure they had to be vented because when you'd charge them, they gave off hydrogen gas. And when you'd discharge them, they'd do the same thing. You had to be careful. A little over 2% hydrogen in the air, just throwing 2% and you open a switch, a match could cause an explosion. And another thing, too, you've got to be careful that all your inductions were opened and closed when you go down. They had a paneling called a Christmas tree. When you were getting ready to dive, everything had to be green. If you had a red one, you didn't go down.

Mr. Misenhimer

Because something was open?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. You had sea water mixing with the acid in those batteries, they give off chlorine gas.

Mr. Misenhimer

The batteries were regular lead acid batteries, right?

Mr. Dugger

Yes, same batteries we run in our cars.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah, right. They're just bigger.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, quite a bit. About head high and about 3 foot square. A pretty good square.

They'd set them in those battery compartments that had wells, battery wells. And they were lead lined. You'd set those batteries in there and wedge them with hardwood to hold them in place so they wouldn't be rattling around. Everything had to be tied down. There wasn't no, get in rough sea or whatever might happen to them, it wasn't shifting.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, in the overhaul, would they change the batteries, too or not?

Mr. Dugger

No, we never had any changing batteries on the overhaul. What they'd do, they'd re-service them and they'd go through there and make sure it was alright. They'd put, every time you went out and come back in, they'd water them. And then you'd tie up to the

dock every now and then and put an equalizer charge. You'd sit there and run 24 hours tied to the dock, get a charge in the batteries. Every cell was equal. That was very important for the life of the battery.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were there in Hawaii, what did you live in there?

Mr. Dugger

In barracks. We stayed in the barracks and 3 crews would be working and, well, we was working 8 hours, then, 8 hours straight.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you had 16 hours off, is that right?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, you'd get 16 off. I got lucky. I, usually, I'd get to work days. I don't know why, but...

Mr. Misenhimer

Now when you went over on the Long Island, what did you sleep in there, did they have extra bunks through the hangar decks and everything?

Mr. Dugger

I don't remember about it. We had a place to sleep, though. There wasn't that many of us, see. They could handle probably 10 to 70 additional crew a place to sleep and I know we didn't sleep in the hangar there.

Mr. Misenhimer

What kind of planes did they have to carry? Do you remember?

Mr. Dugger

I don't recall that. Most of them were fighter and bomber and the old torpedo plane.

Mr. Misenhimer

There was somewhere in the first part of '45 when you went to Hawaii, then?

Mr. Dugger

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, when you got time off in Hawaii...

Mr. Dugger

Oh, we'd go to town. There wasn't anything to do. Had a little strip of sand they call Waikiki wasn't too fancy. Mary Lou (his wife) wants to go to the islands and I told her, no, we don't need to go. You won't like it. She said why not? I said, hell, when I was there, barbed wire was on the beach. It ain't no fun. (laughing) Anyway, the time I left there, the barbed wire was already gone, the saltwater got it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, when you were there, was there still any damage from the bombing?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, yeah, battleship row was still damaged ships down, Arizona, and another. Could see the mast sticking up on...I believe it was the Arizona. You come into harbor from the channel and you go by Des. Pac. and on up into the main harbor. The submarine base is over on the opposite side from Ford Island.

Mr. Misenhimer

Okay, on the mainland side.

Mr. Dugger

It was on the mainland side. They had a lot of stuff coming in there to be shipped out. So I came in after a big storm. Some of the deck, the deck on the carrier was rolled back, heavy seas was out there driving it up. Take a lot of water to move that deck back like that. They'd come in there with all kinds of damage. One destroyer had the stern shot off. One ship came in, one kamikaze had gone down the funnel, the smokestack. It was the Franklin, it was all shot up and it came in, but if it came in Pearl, I didn't see it. If it came in, I would have seen and I think it bypassed Pearl and went right straight to the Panama Canal.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now the submarines you worked on there, had they had any battle damage on them?

Mr. Dugger

No, but they usually don't get damaged much. Either you do or you don't.

Mr. Misenhimer

If you do, you don't come back, huh?

Mr. Dugger

Uh, uh. They'd just get wear, hard service. There was the new boats would run 22 knots. They'd get up and move on pretty good. The Jap destroyer was about 54, but the submarine, he wasn't dead in the water like the old ones were. They got on, they had a chance to get away, you know. You'd run a while then you'd submerge and then try to get away.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get a chance to visit with any of the crews that came back on those boats?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, yeah. I asked some guys from _____ that was on that _____ that went down, some of them on the Tang and different boats. They'd come in and for two weeks, they were there, we'd go on that boat and they sent them out there to Royal Hawaiian. It was a place like about a Dallas Hotel.

Mr. Misenhimer

I believe the Royal Hawaiian was reserved strictly for submariners. Is that correct?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, just submariners. They had some flyers there, too. I don't know. I was out there. I didn't see any, there was just submarine bunch got all aboard. I don't know.

Mr. Misenhimer

So the Royal Hawaiian got pink paint. Was it pink then?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. Pink, they had all, all the Navy people run the gate.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get to meet any civilians there in Hawaii?

Mr. Dugger

No, I didn't know any of them. Just downtown those merchants. One of those, I guess you'd say Jap or Chinese American owned a bar, I guess that's Chinese. He owned a bar downtown and we'd go up to that bar and drink beer and boy, he'd make that beer out of cane or something. It was sure strong and about 2 glasses of that and that was all you needed. You get in them boats, shrimp, them little tiny shrimp. I guess Popeye calls them popcorn. Got shrimp, so we had to go back to the bar and get your own drinks. Go

back to where we were. I told him, I said, you have, "I'll tell you how you sell a hell of a lot more beer." "Oh, I'd like to know." "I'd like to know." "You fill the glasses up." He'd run them about half foam on them. That chink was mad, I want you to know. He didn't like that.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was some funny experiences you had other than that?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, I don't know. I can't think of any real funny.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever have any USO shows anywhere?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, at the base there in San Diego where I went to machinist school. It wasn't all that, the voices entertaining and I think Langford was one of them and another gal. Didn't ever see Bob Hope. I hadn't thought of it in a long time. I don't remember their names. You might have seen them on TV shows from what I remember seeing and sometimes the movies. It was, you know, we had our usual laughs but not anything outstanding.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, on this submarine, how many dives did you make altogether? Do you have any idea?

Mr. Dugger

On that 23?

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah.

Mr. Dugger

Training dives?

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah.

Mr. Dugger

About 600.

Mr. Misenhimer

And how about on the repaired boats?

Mr. Dugger

We'd go out, on the first run, we'd take them out. I never did understand why they wanted to take them out in that deep water, Hawaii's some deep water. They had some shallow water around that I'd rather test the boats in. I don't guess they'd like to, you couldn't take them 400 and 600 feet. They'd take them out there in that deep water.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever have any trouble with any when you took them out?

Mr. Dugger

No, no we were fortunate.

Mr. Misenhimer

They wouldn't leak at 600 feet, huh?

Mr. Dugger

Oh, no, not like these boats would. They'd leak at 2. Sometimes, they'd drop a depth charge too close to even at 90 feet cause that was your cruising depth at that boat.

Periscope depth was 60 feet. It would be, and you dropped the depth charges, your charts

and gauges would go crazy and sometimes break the glass in them, break the face on them. You'd just make sure in there. you had, when we'd submerge under, we'd watch for electrical fires and that thing and every now and then you had a short. One time, tied up alongside the USS Beaver, a submarine tender that was in San Diego Bay. It was about 470, 570 tied up alongside the tender and they were, I don't know why, but they were using shellac on our deck, in the port torpedo, _____ room, and fore and after battery. They had a bit mat they'd roll up in those battery compartments. So they'd get down to the batteries and we were in there and they were doing some work on batteries, they'd pour tar in around those hardwood pegs you hold in place, hold them tight. They had a relief crew there that was doing that outfit, out from the Beaver. They spilled a 5 gallon bucket of tar down the port hatch. The port hatch into the battery compartment. That's where they were shellacking the deck. They had the deck shellacked in there. The bucket hit one of the rungs on the ladder and tipped that bucket, hot tar touched shellac and had burned all the inside of that torpedo room. Your tar's gonna spread. We used everything we had. We didn't dare use salt water in it too close to the batteries. Got lucky. Nobody got hurt, well one of the crew got burned some but not bad. That's about it. That was the worst luck we had.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you get fresh water on your S23?

Mr. Dugger

You had a distill for salt water. Half of the time, it would work and we worked every time we got a chance. We'd take on fresh water at the docks and after that, you had to use the still. The most time was when we was in dry dock tied up alongside ship with

work to be done on the engine. We didn't take a whole lot of maintenance but everything in there is big and heavy. I had gotten down to these pistons, which I think they were 20-inch diameter. They drove 600 horsepower, get 400 turns.

Mr. Misenhimer

On the fleet boats, they run 1000 rpms, huh?

Mr. Dugger

1000 rpms at 1600 horse.

Mr. Misenhimer

There's four of them.

Mr. Dugger

Um, hm.

Mr. Misenhimer

Four hundred horse each.

Mr. Dugger

Four Fairbanks – Morse opposed. They were nice engines. These engines didn't have a block that wasn't cast, like we see in everything else, they were fabricated, welded. They got the idea, they copied that engine from the Germans. You remember Hindenberg at Lake Hurst.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah.

Mr. Dugger

Okay, when Hindenburg crashed and burned, there was a little engine in there, a little opposed piston Fairbanks. Well, before they went back with the wreckage, they grabbed

that engine and took a look at it. That's where they got the, that's where the Navy took that because they were small, narrow, big horsepower, small amount of space.

Mr. Misenhimer

So there's no valves and heads, so...

Mr. Dugger

Well, see the pistons come together, they don't need heads. When they come together and fuel runs in on both sides, you inject it on both sides of the sleeve pop that fuel in there. One shaft leads, the other shaft 13 degrees, that way they don't bog down. That way it just keeps turning. If you had them both coming together at the same time, you know, it would lock down.

Mr. Misenhimer

That's right.

Mr. Dugger

Anyway, that's where they got the idea, though. Fairbanks started building those engines. Fairbanks wasn't a very, it was an old company and they didn't pursue things like General Motors did. General Motors, they had got GMDs and stuff. And then, later on, there is a larger engine company out in Detroit named Wyndham and they took their engine that was used in the submarines for a long time. Then when GM came up with their own. We see these GMDs on these offshore rigs. Caterpillar now is catching up. They're real strong and got a good engine.

Mr. Misenhimer

Does that anybody still make an opposed cylinder?

Mr. Dugger

They make some but they're no _____ good. They just _____ and got heads on them.

Mr. Misenhimer

Oh, okay cause opposite directions, yeah.

Mr. Dugger

I'm not up to date on all that stuff. Get out of the mainline, you get that tunnel vision and you go do Duval County every day.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, you were in Hawaii when the war got over. Is that right?

Mr. Dugger

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you hear about the first atomic bomb?

Mr. Dugger

Well, we get the word, you know, when something like that, when you're out there, on the ship, you just keep posted about what's going on. So they dropped the first bomb and we knew it would end it. We didn't know how really bad it was but they told us it was pretty bad. And they dropped the second one, they made up their mind. Hadn't been for, hadn't dropped that bomb, probably fought another two years. No telling what it would cost, the lives cause they'd fight every inch all the way from one end to the other.

Mr. Misenhimer

When Japan surrendered, did yall have any celebration?

Mr. Dugger

All they had was beer and you had to go to the canteen to get it. And oh, yeah, I did. Another guy and I had bought some whiskey a quart, whatever, from some merchant seamen that was hauling supplies. They'd be ships in there all the time. These merchants here were bootlegging stuff. Twenty-five dollars, something like that. Whatever it took, we had the money couldn't spend it on anything. And so we went down to the docks and started drinking our whiskey. It didn't take very long until we started diving off the piers down there in Pearl Harbor, got some barnacle cuts getting back up. And of course, on some of those destroyers like that they're probably old man wasn't aboard, firing some guns, anti-aircraft. Somewhere along the way, it's hard, I think about the time, a little after the war ended, about that time. I was looking at my records, seems I had never made a escape from that escape tower so six of us went in and four of us made it. Two of us, they didn't want any of it. That's what I kind of figured. They put you in that tank and bring the pressure up slow to 45 pounds. That would be the same as sea water at 200 feet, they'd pressure that tank up. And one guy just started pressuring up and he decided he didn't like it. And one got a sinus headache. So they pulled him out. The other five of us made it. So we go over to this escape tower and the tower's got compartment on the side, a little compartment at the base. We go in this compartment. It's big enough for about a dozen of us at a time. So they start flooding in water and pressuring up. Water got about here and you put the lungon first. The water would get up under your chin and submerged that lung and then they'd air it up. One guy started flooding that water in. He didn't like that. He got pain, too. On the hatch, you get the water pressure up here in this air space, you get that pressure there same as that column that floods in the tank, and you

open the hatch, reach out there and get the rope. They had buoys about every ten feet. Every time you'd get to one, you'd count to ten. Dark there, you go on up. You get up there where you can see daylight, you didn't count to ten. You were anxious to get to that outer air, you know. Getting too close, you're ready to get out of there, you know. Anyway, the guy run into me behind me I was down under him and I run into the guy ahead of me so we come up about the same time. I've seen pictures of Pearl since then. I saw pictures of Pearl when they were bombing it. They said that they hit that submarine base there before. I didn't see where the Japs had bombed. But see, they were working on the island, they wasn't by the submarine base. They were working on the Battleship~~s~~ at Pearl and the airstrip. Of course, they got hit on bases to the north. And to me, it was north. It was probably south. Anyway, they really got us good. The buildings got pock marks when they strafed them.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was your pay when you first went in?

Mr. Dugger

\$52. You make First Class Seaman, 54. I come out of machinist school, I made Third Class Petty Officer. Then it was 75. And then somewhere, if you work submarine, you get 80% bonus pay.

Mr. Misenhimer

80% for being on a submarine?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, in the submarine service. I got 80% for a long time.

Mr. Misenhimer

So when you were in Hawaii, you got your 80%.

Mr. Dugger

Oh, yeah, 80% in the States, too, if you are aboard boat. It was good duty. It was a good outfit. If a fellow decided to stay, if I you didn't have something else to come home to. You know, like something you wanted to do. But it was a good pay for a young man those days. It wouldn't be too bad for a bunch of these punks running up and down the street today. I think these young men need at least one year, probably two. I don't give a da-- what his name is. He needs it. They'd be a hell of a lot better off if they had it.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Dugger

Third Class.

Mr. Misenhimer

Third Class Petty?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, when we went on board that submarine there was about 5 guys ahead to go up.

When we went aboard a service ship, I didn't have much time left. They were not giving rank.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you came back on the Saratoga to where, to San Francisco?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, we came back on the Saratoga.

Mr. Misenhimer

Saratoga.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. We came back to San Francisco on that. We left, I went from Treasure Island around to....no, I went to Alameda and Treasure Island, that was a receiving station. Went from there to Alameda. When we came back, came to Alameda again and unloaded. We passed the third fleet. Third fleet was going in to receive the pomp and they had a couple of old battleships and wouldn't do but 17, 18 knots. They left Pearl Bay ahead of us and we got into San Francisco a day ahead of them. Anyway, it took 5 days. We had a fog bank out about I guess 15, 20 miles off the coast, we lay for a day or two waiting for harbor pilot come down and take us in. We were going under the Golden Gate Bridge and you see a shadow up there we're standing on the fly deck. You see that shadow up there, you hear the car roaring. Band over on the beach playing all kinds of stuff. Of course, I never did see any of them. From right there to Alameda and caught up there went back to Treasure Island and stayed there two days with another interrogation and I left for San Francisco and came home.

Mr. Misenhimer

You got leave to come home, then.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, we were asked to join the regular Navy. I had two more years looking at me right there, at least. And I think there was three, I believe there was lower deck to three years. I had all I wanted. I just wanted to get out anyway.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you come back on a train from California?

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. It was Santa Fe or something from San Diego to San Francisco and I just went on up there. Boy, that thing was really rough.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then you went to the east coast to _____.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah, went to Galveston Islands.

Mr. Misenhimer

Galveston, okay.

Mr. Dugger

Pelican Islands. And I stayed there about a month and they reassigned me to USS Vermillion and it was out at Chesapeake Bay. There was about 100 ships in there. When we were boarding, they were supposed to be^{at} anchor out there and the weather freezing, almost freezing rain all afternoon and never found it. Come to find out, of course they didn't have any communicaton on them da-- things, those boats. We came back into dock, they had moved out there and pulled into the docks. I was glad to see that thing cause it was warm. That one thing about the Navy – if you're not swimming, you got a place to stay and got something to eat. If you're not out there in that water with a life jacket on. You can go to bed at night and have something to eat, get up in the morning and you've got something to eat.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now this ship you went into on Chesapeake Bay, it was a cargo ship?

Mr. Dugger

Attack Cargo.

Mr. Misenhimer

AKA?

Mr. Colson

AKA 170, USS Vermillion and there it was an invasion attack cargo and they could hold tanks and military vehicles of all description. They had eight LCMs, Landing Craft Mechanized, that could haul a tank. You had your VP, Vehicle Personnel, that would haul something about like a jeep, small stuff.

Mr. Misenhimer

Higgins Boat they call them.

Mr. Dugger

They're made out of plywood. I guess one of the funny things – we was tied up to, up there in Quonset Point, Rhode Island, we took on a load of pontoons. They were going to make a dock out of them and make a runway out to deep water and then put these pontoons together and they'd be a dock to unload supplies on those islands. They were air tight but they had the latches hooked on them where we could hook them together. Anyway, we took on those loads in Quonset Point. While we were there, a big storm came, winter storm, they call it northeastern or something. Well, it got rougher than hell. They had those boats in the water because they were taking on, had to unload boats before you put supplies in the holds, you'd put the boat back up on there and the

Captain's gig, the Captain's on leave – 45, for Christmas. And, he wasn't on Christmas. It wasn't Christmas then. Yeah, it would have been Christmas. It was Christmas and we was in the, he was in Boston on Christmas Eve, I mean on New Year's Eve. Far as I know, he was down there on Christmas Eve. Anyway, got a little cold over there put them da— boats in getting in and out of that weather. We was up that there at Naragansat River and water was fresh and had sea water, salt water kind of mixed and it would freeze to a mush. And anyway, we got the boats in there and of course, it got real cold and froze solid. And so you had to drain everything if water was in your...so you took sea water to cool fresh water. If fresh water engine and sea water would cool the fresh water. Well, you had tubes on each side of the valves of where the water would come in, called them sand drafts. You'd go over a whole bunch of sand, you couldn't get salt water in so you swapped them out and sucked water out of the other one that didn't have sand in it. You dumped that one out, while the other one was pumping. In this case, you're sucking on mushy ice. You'd get to run for about a mile. And anyway, getting ready to leave, boats, we had to drain everything. Well, we had an increase in the engines, but they drained the sand traps, the other valve, sea valve they called it. Then you had your valve that you transfer back and forth. So everything worked alright until the next morning. And so, had a guy down there, he sat and watched there before I was gonna change them. One came in, daylight Captain's gig putting that old _____, the lines tied on to the dock. What had happened, the one that drains the sand traps had forgot to close the sea valve. I knew somebody did but I don't remember who it was, so I was drinking beer with one of the hands named Fontenot. We got beered up down there in Jacksonville and we took a load of pontoons to Jacksonville and we got to talking. I found out he's the

one that did it. But anyway, that sent a little old crane over there to pick that boat up back there and bring it back to the ship and put it aboard. The da-- thing had to have a hole in the hull. Well, it didn't, somebody found out about that valve. Well, Fontenot had to be there when they raised it so he made a point to be there and he closed that valve. I found out later. So we got to talking about it at night and so there was the Captain's gig down at the _____ road. Went up and knocked a hole in the hull. It looked like, you know, _____ at the hull. Come to find out, before it was over somebody else decided the same thing and there was two holes in it. Anyway, we didn't have any Court Martial problems. The Captain come back, he was a little upset. I didn't have to listen to it. I wasn't that close to him.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long were you on that AKA, then?

Mr. Dugger

From, I was discharged in March. I went aboard in, I was going up there on Thanksgiving of '45. I dropped some post cards off down there around Indianapolis, somewhere along there. The lady sitting there stopped, letting the train go by, I tossed her a post card for her to mail. Anyway, I got there just after Thanksgiving and then I was discharged in March. I got discharged somewhere during the latter part of March 1946. I just ended up staying for 3 years.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you were there about 3 months, then.

Mr. Dugger

Like about a month and a half staying three years.

Mr. Misenhimer

Have you had any reunions at all since you got out?

Mr. Dugger

Yes, I had, they have S-23 had a reunion in Reno, I think 10 or 15 years ago. And I contacted some for it. Had two or three in Los Angeles. One _____ was appointed there in California and we were gonna meet at Reno. I was working for the State, plugging wells down here in here in Zapata County and I couldn't go. And so I didn't get to make it. But the submarine service has, they have a reunion every year some place. Texas has one every year in Texas and they have a National Reunion of Vets who were there. And it's a _____ thing and they had it in Fredericksburg, Texas, reunion. I'm trying to think where they...every now and then, I get, I subscribe to a brochure, there but I don't know. They've had 2 in Corpus and I think they had one or two in Fredericksburg. I'm thinking they had a National in Fredericksburg at one time. National would be big.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you've been to some of those, then?

Mr. Dugger

I've been to the State reunion. I haven't been to the Nationals.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah, but States, you've been to some of those.

Mr. Dugger

I've been to the International in Galveston. They've got a Sea World Park up there an old boat in there, pretty raggedy machine.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get any kind of medals or anything, ribbons?

Mr. Dugger

Let me think. You've gotta be a hero for that. I don't think I qualify.

Mr. Misenhimer

Probably got the Asiatic Pacific Ribbon or something.

Mr. Dugger

Oh, something like that.

Mr. Misenhimer

National Defense and those things, right?

Mr. Dugger

Whatever they think you deserve I guess.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get home with any kind of souvenirs?

Mr. Dugger

No, the only souvenir I had, I guess, was a Honolulu newspaper the day the war ended and I brought it home in my sea bag. I brought some foul weather gear home from the east coast but that, I guess that's the only thing I brought in and I had it in my mother's house and it was in the closet there for years and years and finally, she came up one day after we had been married for years and told me she had a uniform and a few things.

Come to find out, she had thrown that paper away and thrown it in the trash. But anyway, no big deal. We got a bus from the transportation department, went around the island and got all _____ of us.

Oh, something like that.

Mr. Misenhimer

NATIONAL DEFENSE and those things, right?

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UNIFORM and a few things. Come to find out, she had thrown that paper away and thrown it in the trash. But anyway, no big deal. We got a bus from the transportation department, went around the island and got all _____ of us.

Mr. Misenhimer

That was around ~~Owaku~~ OAHU

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. We, in our spare time, we built up a jeep and one of the ship of our engine changer, the Captain had a jeep and he had left the engine sitting on the dock. He changed the engine and just left it sitting there so we picked it up and got a

BOXES OUT there. It housed our biggest boxes, an old hardwood box that was

Mr. Misenhimer

That was around Oahu.

Mr. Dugger

Yeah. We, in our spare time, we built up a jeep and one of the ship of our engine changes, the Captain had a jeep and he had left the engine sitting on the dock. He changed the engine and just left it sitting there so we picked it up and got a boxes out there. It housed our biggest boxes, an old hardwood box that was sixteen foot long, got that big square. And man, they were stacked as high as they could stack them. We had a hideaway in that da-- thing. He took me out to the junkyard and got us a bunch of parts and come back, putting them together, putting that jeep together. The S.P. was stopping folks there at Pearl. They just picked out a bunch of Navy hands and gave them khaki uniforms and made them kind of the police with authority. I don't know if anybody who really wanted to get out of line with them. They found the jeep, they'd just get rid of it, take it to junk. There wasn't anything really funny, you know, happened as far as the Navy's concerned. Wouldn't take a million for it. I wouldn't give a million for another day of it, or a dollar for another day. I said I think every young man needs it even though Momma doesn't think so.

(end of interview)

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