

National Museum of the Pacific War

Center for Pacific War Studies

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Coleman Harrington

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This is Eddie Graham. I'm interviewing Mr. Coleman Harrington at the Bush Gallery, September 26, 2002.

Eddie Graham: When and where were you born?

Coleman Harrington: Brooklyn, New York, December 1, 1926.

Eddie Graham: What were the names of your parents?

Coleman Harrington: Coleman and Liz Harrington.

Eddie Graham: Your children?

Coleman Harrington: I have a daughter, Kathy, she's 34.

Eddie Graham: Where did you go to school?

Coleman Harrington: I went to school at St. Francis in Brooklyn and _____ in Brooklyn and then I went to high school for specialty kids.

Eddie Graham: Where were you and what were you doing December 7, 1941?

Coleman Harrington: I was in the living room and I was listening to the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Giants playing football and they announced that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. I didn't know what Pearl Harbor was but I had just learned about it five or six weeks before. I never expected to be in the service at that time.

Eddie Graham: How did you end up in the Navy?

Coleman Harrington: I entered when I was eighteen.

Eddie Graham: What reasons made you pick the Navy?

Coleman Harrington: I wanted to go in the Seabees, construction. I had a friend who was in there and he was telling me about the things they did. I just wanted to do it. I went to boot camp. They told me there were no openings, they weren't taking anybody. I was in boot camp five weeks and then went to some trade schools.

Eddie Graham: You went to boot camp and where was your first assignment?

Coleman Harrington: They made us go to Rhode Island.

Eddie Graham: What did you do there?

Coleman Harrington: They trained us for just about anything. I went to communications school for a couple of weeks. We couldn't train for the seabees so we trained as stevadores.

Eddie Graham: What was your first assignment?

Coleman Harrington: I went to join my unit in California. They trained us on ships out there.

Eddie Graham: They trained you in operations on the ships? Was that your main training?

Coleman Harrington: They trained us on warfare. They also trained us on knives and things like that.

Eddie Graham: What else did you do while you were there? What was your next assignment after that?

Coleman Harrington: Okinawa.

Eddie Graham: What did you do in Okinawa?

Coleman Harrington: We went from one ship to another. Offloading them. _____???. They'd bring barges alongside and we'd tie them up and release them again. It was interesting.

Eddie Graham: How long did you stay at that assignment in Okinawa?

Coleman Harrington: Until after the war ended because we were taking cargo off and sending ships to Japan.

Eddie Graham: You stayed until after the peace treaty was signed? 1944?

Coleman Harrington: They sent us up to a medical supply boat there. I stayed there six months, until I was sent home. _____?????

Eddie Graham: After that where did you go?

Coleman Harrington: They sent us to a replacement camp in Okinawa.

Eddie Graham: Was that your last assignment, in Okinawa?

Coleman Harrington: Yes. I stayed there until January. I went to Hong Kong. _____????

Eddie Graham: Tell us about your trip home.

Coleman Harrington: Trip home was very nice.

(tape is indiscernible from this point forward)

Prof. Susan Ferrell Wilson

March 11, 2009