

**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR**

**Center for Pacific War Studies**

**Fredericksburg, Texas**

**An Interview with**

**Albert J. Dimminger**  
**South San Francisco, California**  
**July 5, 2006**  
**Aviation Metalsmith**  
**On USS *Hornet* When Sunk**  
**USS *Bougainville*, CVE-100**  
**Three Battle Stars**

My name is Richard Misenhimer and today is July 5, 2006. I am interviewing Mr. Albert J. Dimminger by telephone. His address is 709 Parkway, South San Francisco, California, 94080. His phone number is area code 650-588-8928 (unlisted number). This interview is in support of the National Museum of Pacific War, Center for Pacific War Studies, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer

Al, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II. The first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the Nimitz Museum. When I do these in person I give it to the person to read and sign but since this is by telephone let me read this and make sure it is okay with you. "Agreement read." Is that okay with you?

Mr. Dimminger

That sounds alright. I don't expect any remuneration. I'm doing this out of the goodness of my heart. I think it's a good deed. I'm familiar with the Historical Nimitz Museum because I belong to the Escort Carrier's Association. I think we have some kind of memorial in there too.

Mr. Misenhimer

I think you have a plaque there.

Mr. Dimminger

Right.

Mr. Misenhimer

We don't charge anything either and we don't pay anything. It is strictly a volunteer organization. Now the next thing I need to do is get an alternative contact. We find as

time goes by sometimes our veterans move or go to a nursing home or something and we can't find them. Is there a daughter or a son or someone that you might give me their address?

Mr. Dimminger

My daughter is a school principal and I think she has about two or three years more before she retires. She lives in Redwood City, California. Her name is Laurel Dimminger Trask. She lives at 7784 Bret Harte Drive, Redwood City, California 94067.

Mr. Misenhimer

The main thing is a phone number.

Mr. Dimminger

The cell phone number is 650-703-2371.

Mr. Misenhimer

We need to get that because like I say right now I've got three people that I've interviewed that I'm not able to locate because I didn't get an alternative number and they've moved or whatever.

Mr. Dimminger

She knows my number. I'm unlisted because at the time I had a business and it kept ringing all the time so I changed my number to an unlisted number.

Mr. Misenhimer

Let me ask you first, what is your birth date?

Mr. Dimminger

June 18, 1920. I'm 86 years old.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you born?

Mr. Dimminger

Koblenz, Germany. My father was an American soldier and he married a German nurse and I was born over there.

Mr. Misenhimer

You're an American citizen though, right?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes because my father was an American.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was he in the service or was he still over there after he got out of the service?

Mr. Dimminger

He was in the service. He had extended his enlistment and he was in the service over there at Koblenz and in different parts of Germany. He was working for the Army Intelligence Department because he spoke fluent German. He was born in Austria but he came here as a young boy. He spoke good German and he could write German and read it too.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you come back to the States?

Mr. Dimminger

I was only three months old.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Dimminger

I went to South San Francisco Junior and Senior High School and graduated.

Mr. Misenhimer

What year did you graduate?

Mr. Dimminger

1939.

Mr. Misenhimer

I know you have a brother Leonard; did you have other brothers and sisters?

Mr. Dimminger

No, just one brother.

Mr. Misenhimer

Is he older or younger?

Mr. Dimminger

He's younger than I am.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you finished high school in 1939 what did you do after that?

Mr. Dimminger

The first job I got I went to San Diego and worked in an aircraft plant Hammond Aircraft and Consolidated. We were doing work for Consolidated building parts for B-24's.

Mr. Misenhimer

War work then?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes, I got a deferment and I didn't have to go into the service but I enlisted.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you go in?

Mr. Dimminger

March 8, 1942. I enlisted in the Navy in San Francisco. I moved to San Francisco from San Diego. I worked down there for about a year to a year and a half.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you choose the Navy?

Mr. Dimminger

I think I got a better deal with the Navy than anywhere because when I went in I got a rating as a Third Class Petty Officer automatically because of my experience in aircraft construction and building and so forth and because I went to aeronautical training school too after I got out of high school.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have to go through boot camp?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes I did.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go through that?

Mr. Dimminger

I went to San Diego in Company 3T.

Mr. Misenhimer

But you went through it as a Third Class Petty Officer?

Mr. Dimminger

I got seaman's pay for the first six or eight weeks I was in there. Once I got out I got Third Class pay and a stripe.

Mr. Misenhimer

I just wondered how they treated you in boot camp as a Petty Officer.

Mr. Dimminger

The rest of the Navy didn't like the Reserves too much. They called us 'feather-merchants'.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you were in the Reserves?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

What all did you do in boot camp?

Mr. Dimminger

We had calisthenics and training on guns; you know the shooting of the rifle and machine gun and some medical like life saving and first aid; swimming and marching and tying knots and washing your clothes and being able to take care of yourself so that you were healthy and took a bath everyday and brushed your teeth and ironed all your clothes and kept yourself clean. Cleaned up the barracks and stood guard duty about one day out of three or four, I've forgotten which. You stood guard duty for four hours.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were on guard duty were you just guarding the barracks there or what?

Mr. Dimminger

The street in front of the barracks; we went back and forth with an empty rifle with a bayonet and ammunition. But the ammunition was really blanks.

Mr. Misenhimer

What kind of rifle did you have at that point?

Mr. Dimminger

The one they used in World War I.

Mr. Misenhimer

The Springfield?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes the Springfield that was it.

Mr. Misenhimer

The Springfield '03 with a bolt action I believe.

Mr. Dimminger

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had quite a bit of rifle training in the Navy then?

Mr. Dimminger

Not much rifle training. I think we had about two days of rifle shooting and one day of machine gun. Then one day of small arms; the .45 and the .38 and lectures about German weapons and Japanese weapons and so forth.

Mr. Misenhimer

How were your drill instructors? Were they pretty tough on you all?



Mr. Dimminger

The guy I had was a World War I Chief. He was in his 50's or 60's. He was kind of a tough old hombre and he was pretty strict but he was a nice guy. I looked him up after I came back from the war but he had passed away.

Mr. Misenhimer

Anything else that you recall from your boot camp?

Mr. Dimminger

I got sick with my Company 3T. I got sick. I got to carry beef from the refrigerator; from the flat cars into the refrigerator with a quarter of beef. They weighed probably close to 200 pounds. I only weighed about 180. You didn't have far to walk but in and out of the refrigerator for two or three days; even as a Third Class I had to work. I got like pneumonia; they called it cat fever at that time. It was a type of pneumonia. I was about two weeks in the hospital. When I got back all my guys had left that I was with. So I had to stay about a week in boot camp again and then I finally got orders to go overseas.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then when you finished boot camp they gave you your Third Class Petty Officer stripe?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes and then I think they gave me leave; maybe two weeks to go home or something. I forgot the time. Then I came back and I was there about two days and my name came up and I got overseas duty. I was going to the Pacific but I didn't know where or why or what ship or anything. When I read my papers I found out I was attached to BS-8 which would be Scouting Squadron 8. Eight was *Hornet*. I went on a ship called *Betelgeuse*. It was named after a star. When I got to Honolulu I went into a boot camp there for one day

and then they shipped me over to Ford Island, which is in the center of the Bay of Pearl Harbor. We slept in a hangar. There were still holes in the roof because that was in June. Then we got liberty right away but the ship *Hornet* wasn't there. They said she was on maneuvers and we believed that but she was at the Battle of Midway. That was by June 5<sup>th</sup> or June 6<sup>th</sup>. In about three days she arrived and they transferred me aboard ship.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got to Pearl Harbor was there still quite a bit of the damage that you could see?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. There was still oil on the water and once in a while one of the cadavers would come out of the water; rise to the top; what was left of them. The beaches were strewn with pieces of foam and plastic and wood and stuff. You could pick up souvenirs if you wanted to. The oil on the water was probably about two or three inches thick. The whole Pearl Harbor was full of oil. They were skimming it up and at that time already they had the big booms and the big wheels righting some of the ships up. They had attached to them, put a weight on them and pumped the water out of them and patched the holes. Like the ones that survived, the *California* and the *Pennsylvania*. They worked on them. We went on maneuvers over there. We went with the *Hornet* and the battleships that were left were firing over us at targets. I forget which ones they were, there were about three or four of them that weren't at Pearl Harbor at the time of the attack. At Pearl Harbor we had to carry a gas mask with us. When you went on liberty you had to be in by 10:00 or 11:00, back to the base where you stayed over night. You had a permit to stay overnight but you couldn't go on the streets because they had martial law. In June they still had martial law there. A friend of mine had a home out on Waikiki that I went to school with.

We stayed at his house and played cards and drank beer. Then the next morning I made sure I got back before 8:00 for muster at 8:00.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you were about 22 at that point?

Mr. Dimminger

21 or 22, I don't know which I was. Probably about 22.

Mr. Misenhimer

After June 18 you would have been 22.

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. That was about it at Pearl Harbor. Then I went aboard the *Hornet* and we went off to the South Pacific. I think we went to some islands out there, I can't think of the name of them. We delivered some planes. We were with the *Wasp*, the *Hornet* and the *Enterprise* at one time. Then the *Enterprise* left. She got shot up I guess. We finally went back to Pearl and stayed for about two or three days then we went back to the South Pacific. We went in the area of Guadalcanal. They were making the landings. I'm not sure of the date.

Mr. Misenhimer

August 7, 1942 was the landing in Guadalcanal.

Mr. Dimminger

In August we were there. In August and September and then we went to the Battle of Savo Island and the Battle for Guadalcanal. That's two of the battle stars. The third star I got for the Battle of Santa Cruz where we got sunk. Do you want to hear about what transpired during the battle?

Mr. Misenhimer

Let me ask first. What was your job on the *Hornet* at that point?

Mr. Dimminger

At the time I was the Aviation Metalsmith Third Class. I was working on the hangar deck with the planes; moving the planes around for positioning and for repairs. They had a lot of Reserves there. They had a shortage of seaman. So when we weren't moving planes around we were chipping the paint off the deck and off the walls because the paint was made out of chalk and oil. Once there was a fire in one compartment and they had fire integrity, which was general quarters, the paint would get hot. Not on our ship but on other ships so we chipped the paint off because if one compartment got hot the paint would catch fire on the other side and set that compartment on fire too. And we chipped the decks. One day we were out there chipping the decks and talking and everything. They didn't press us to do our work hard. We had to get all the paint off, right to the bare metal. Then we heard the *Wasp* blowing the horn. She was out there also. We saw her get hit with a Japanese torpedo I believe. She got sunk; we saw her sink. We got the hell out of there. Our escort destroyers that we took off with; we left them behind us. We even beat the destroyers because we had four screws on the *Hornet*.

Mr. Misenhimer

The *Hornet* was CV what?

Mr. Dimminger

The *Hornet* was CV-8. I think it was about the fifth or sixth ship named the *Hornet*, I'm not sure which amount it was. In the American Naval history, I think there was one in the War of 1812. The squadron I was with was BS-8 which was an aircraft squadron, a

bombing squadron; scouting and we did bombing mostly.

Mr. Misenhimer

Which airplane did you have?

Mr. Dimminger

SBD; the *Dauntless*. I have this to read.

Mr. Misenhimer

Go through that and that will be fine.

Mr. Dimminger

I enlisted in San Francisco on March 8, 1942. I volunteered. I had a deferment but I gave it up to go into the service. My buddies were all in the service. I got to boot camp training in San Diego in March, April and May at the Naval Training Station. Duties consisted of cleaning up, marching, drills and naval history and whatever. Between March and May I got sick and went into the hospital for two weeks. When I came back my company had dissolved because they were all assigned. On May 5 I got my orders and went to Ford Island in Hawaii. We went on the *Betelgeuse*. We arrived in Hawaii but the *Hornet* wasn't there. The *Hornet* was out on maneuvers they told us. So I went into this big hangar and you could see the holes from the attack on Pearl Harbor, from the bombs, the shells and the strafing; where the concrete had been repaired and one thing and another. And like I say the water was covered with oil. I never saw it but they said once in a while a part of a body would come up from one of the guys that got drowned. At that time the *Hornet* was in the Battle of Midway, my squadron. But being as I was onshore I never got a campaign star for the Battle of Midway. The whole squadron got a citation so I do have a citation somewhere, but it's not on my record. That was in 1942 at Midway. Then

we were under attack on October 26, 1942. We sent our planes to attack the Japanese and they in turn sent their planes to attack us. The *Hornet* had never seen actual combat in all that time. This was the first time she was in combat. She was the newest carrier that we had out there. We participated in the Battle of the Solomon Islands and Savo Island and in that area. We were patrolling that area using our planes and shooting down barges which was one thing the Japanese had there. Finally we got sunk on October 26<sup>th</sup>. My station at that time was on the flight deck. I had been on the hangar deck before. I was getting hives all over me from the heat so I requested to go on the flight deck. I went on the flight deck and it was murder up there. Planes were crashing. Pilots would go overboard and some of them didn't come up. They stayed in the water. I had already probably seen pictures of the tail hook they use to catch and it would snap the plane; it kept on going. I think I saw about four or five planes lost. One of the Marine planes came in and the pilot was injured. He didn't disarm his gun and it's on the control stick. As he landed he hit part of the structure and he killed about six or eight of his own men, Marines, because his guns were still on charge. He naturally grabbed the stick and pressed the button and he fired. I think they had the funeral at sea. I can remember seeing part of it. We went through the combat. We started in the morning and went to general quarters and they gave us coffee. We didn't go down to the mess hall. They brought us coffee and donuts. Then we got an attack. All air departments didn't have a specific job to do. They sent me down to a 20mm right forward of the island structure. It was I think the second mount or third mount. It was a single 20mm. I passed ammunition. I saw the Japanese plane shot down. Then we stayed on the ship and we were attacked again. We had two Japanese planes, the pilots were shot up. This was days before the kamikaze.

They both dove into the ship. One into the forward elevator and one into the rear island structure. I'm pretty sure it was the rear island structure. The hangar deck was completely full of flames and a lot of my friends got killed down there. I think we lost 221 men or 219 or something like that from combat alone. We had several drownings too. That's not bad for 3,000 men on the ship. We had three squadrons on there plus six companies. In the afternoon they gave us coffee and donuts again for lunch. That was all the food they had. They had turned off all the gas and the ovens for cooking and everything. They had made the donuts ahead of time. Then about, I'm not sure what time of day it was, but they said, "All air departments and all squadron men, abandon ship to the port side." A destroyer was going to pick us up. When I went to the port side I had to go up a hill because the ship was sinking. It had taken the two Japanese planes and I think three or four torpedoes and I think five bomb hits. The hangar deck was all messed up and the flight deck too. They let me go down in my compartment. We were right below the hangar deck and I picked up an extra pair of shorts. We were going to abandon ship. I had some money in a coffee can that I had soldered closed so I wouldn't use it. It's still in the ship at the bottom of the Coral Sea. I went back on deck. We stood in line and got aboard the destroyer. I think it was the *Russell*, but I can't think of the name of it now. I have it written down somewhere. It's in the back of my records there at the bank. I think it was the *Russell* or the *Hughes* or one of those destroyers. We went down cargo nets; we didn't get wet at all. They strung cargo nets over the port side. We climbed down the cargo nets onto the deck of the destroyer. She started her whistles going woop, woop, woop and away she went. They said for everybody to get under cover because they were expecting Japanese strafing. A Japanese plane did strafe and the Chief Petty Officer of

my division, his name was Braithwaite got shot in the buttocks. He died right there. I looked up his wife in San Diego. She wanted to know what was going on but I couldn't tell her too much. He had just gotten married a few weeks before the ship went out of San Diego. I got on the destroyer and we spent a day on there. I slept under the gun mount and it was so cold with the wind at night time and the rain that I went down to the engine room and slept on the grating. The guys would walk over you. The gratings were full of guys sleeping. We just had a blanket. That's all we had to sleep on. Some guys didn't even have that. We didn't have pea coats. We just had the clothes, the dungarees, the shirt, the blue pants and the blue hat. I don't know if anybody has told you about the blue hats? They dyed them blue so they wouldn't show up at night time. Then I think I stayed two days on the destroyer. She went towards New Caledonia. They transferred me from the destroyer to the USS *San Diego* which was an antiaircraft cruiser because they had more facilities on there for us. I went by breeches buoy. It was like a life ring and had a place to put your feet in like diapers. The ropes were going to a pulley up above and to a line that went from the destroyer to the antiaircraft cruiser. Then we got on there and we got better food. The guys donated some clothes to us. We slept in compartments and we slept in empty bunks. I don't know where the empty bunks came from but we slept in the bunks. There were about 200 of us on there or something like that. That's why they got us off the destroyer; we had too many people on there and they couldn't feed us all. I think in another two days we got into New Caledonia. When we got there the first thing there was a Red Cross there and the Salvation Army. The Red Cross gave us a hat and a set of underwear and socks and another shirt and I don't know what else. They gave us a few other things, toothbrush and so forth. Then we went to the Salvation Army and they



gave us donuts and coffee. We had one meal but I don't know what we had for dinner. Then we went to a camp called Doumbea which was outside. I don't know how to spell it. New Caledonia was French so Doumbea or something like that. We stayed there for almost a full month and then we got transport to come home to the States. Then we got a ship called the USS *Rochambeau*. Rochambeau was a General in the Revolution. The General was from France and he trained our troops. On the ship we had a prison on there. They picked up prisoners at Fiji and Samoa and a couple other islands. We went back and came into San Diego and they transferred the prisoners off. These were not Japanese prisoners, but our own soldiers and sailors that had got in trouble; either killed somebody or got caught stealing or something like that. We got into San Francisco and I didn't have a uniform. At that time the PO was at the Alameda Naval Air Station. Attached to CASU Five or Six; it was a carrier aircraft service unit (CASU). I don't know if it was five or six but it was one of them. I told my mother and dad and they asked what I was doing. I said, "Well I'm over here. We had to come home." I couldn't tell them anything because they had sworn us to secrecy. They interrogated us and told us about secrecy and then also how we felt about the battle. "Were we willing to go back again?" And also, "What would I do in the case I had a Japanese prisoner and an officer ordered me to shoot him pointblank in the head." I said, "I don't think I could do it; at a distance maybe but not close up." I borrowed a uniform from some guy in a First Class. I borrowed his uniform and I met my father and mother at the ferry building. At that time the Navy had what they called the Fleet Landing on the waterfront in San Francisco. I met them in front of the ferry building. They took me home. I think they gave me 71 or 72 hours leave. I spent the time with my mother and dad. My mother knew right away that something was wrong.

She said, "You've got the wrong rating on your uniform." Because I had sent her one of the stripes from my uniform. I spent a few days at home and saw my friends and looked my old girlfriends and one thing and another. I had 3 days leave. I spent a good time there. I went to dinner and went out and romanced a few girls and danced and had a few drinks and got loaded. The after effects were, like the guys that interrogated me, asked me if I had any dreams or anything. Well I didn't before but I did have some after. They were kind of traumatic; seeing what happened and seeing your friends lying around with their face shot up and blood on the deck. Then I had to go back to San Diego. I went back there to the receiving ship there. I was there about five days until I got transferred to a ship called the USS *Copahee*. It was CVE-12. It was an escort carrier. We spent our time ferrying planes back and forth to the Admiralty Islands and to the Solomon Islands and different places because they were using the planes up. They were getting shot up and everything. Most of them were fighters. We had a few SBD's but no torpedo planes that I can recall. What we did on the one ship; we had the planes in the overhead with the wings off. We would take maybe 20 planes on the ship and maybe another 18 or 20 in the overhead. We let them down on a pulley and we would put them back together; put the wings back on and check the hydraulic system. We would take them on deck and start the engine and check them out. Then they had the pilots come aboard from shore by boat. They would get aboard the planes and fly them off. They were using them for replacements for the planes that were shot up. That's what we did; we ferried. I made about maybe three or four trips across the Pacific. I went through the initiation of crossing the equator.

Mr. Misenhimer

Tell me about that.

Mr. Dimminger

They gave me the business; they really work you over. They take a target sleeve and you walk through it. It is full of slop and stuff. Then on the outside they had what they called shillelaghs; canvas batons full of cotton that they soaked in salt water and they beat the hell out of you. They cut your hair off; put grease all over your body. Then they had a swimming pool made out of a canvas and they threw you in there and they wouldn't let you get out. They practically drowned you. We had one guy that refused to go through the initiation. He climbed up on the mast of the ship. They finally discharged him and got him off the ship. They gave him a Section 8. A Section 8 was going to the loony bin for being nonconforming; he wasn't fit to be in the Navy. We made maybe four or five trips to the different islands and places.

Mr. Misenhimer

Let me ask; now the first time you went across they initiated you. When you went across after that did you initiate different people?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes, after that I did the initiating.

Mr. Misenhimer

You did the same thing to them that they did to you, huh?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. Every time we went across there we had new people on the ship, so they initiated them, even officers. One of them I think was the Executive Officer and he had to go

through it too. The officers initiated their own. They would cut their hair and give them an initiation, but not as stern as ours. Then we came back to the States. At that time an All Navy bulletin came out that they needed men for new construction. So I signed up for new construction and got into San Diego. They took me by train to Oregon to a place called Astoria. The station was called Tongue Point. You signed up for any ship you wanted. There were about 60 or 70 so I said, "Well I'll pick 100, an easy number." I picked CVE-100. That was the USS *Bougainville*. It was built by Kaiser Company. I'm trying to think of the inauguration, June 18, 1943 I believe. That's what I've got down here. I became a plank owner. In other words you were there on the ship with the original crew and you become a plank owner. We were there about three weeks. Then they said, "Get ready, your ship is coming in." They transferred us to Tacoma and we had the christening of the ship and so forth. I had met a girl at Tacoma and got her to come up there to Tongue Point, Oregon. She came there and stayed at the YMCA. They had to be in there by 10:00. I had just met her and went out with her two or three times and that was it. Then after that we got on the ship and went to Honolulu on one trip and brought supplies and planes for a squadron. Then we made one trip to the Admiralty Islands not realizing at the time that my brother's squadron was there, the Black Cat Squadron. I didn't know he was there. We saw the planes on the beach but I didn't know he was there and I stayed on the ship. I didn't even go ashore there. We stayed there about three days and we came back to the States. On the way back we had gunnery practice. They were shooting at everything in the sky; if a bird was flying. Well they shot down a couple of albatross I guess; those big birds that follow the ship. A couple of guys were talking that it was bad luck to shoot down an albatross, that it was a seaman's friend. I said, "What

the hell, I'll get off this ship." So I put in my request for shore duty. When I got to Honolulu, I think we got to Honolulu and they announced my name over the speaker to come to the Air Office. I went to the Air Office and they said, "We've got your papers, you are transferred to shore duty here in Honolulu." That was in late 1943. I can't tell you what the exact date of it was. It might have been early 1944. I got there and I got into a place called Fleet Air Wing One or Two in Kaneohe Naval Air Station. It was on the other side of the island from Honolulu. You go across the mountains. Then by that time I had First Class because I had passed my Second Class when I was still on the *Copahee*. So I was a First Class Petty Officer and they put me in charge of the supply depot for parts for the planes. They were putting new gun mounts on it and new types of radios. I had them in a big area maybe the size of a warehouse. I had another guy helping me in there, but I was in charge. Then anytime they wanted anything they had a permit from the ship in writing and I had to verify who it was and so forth and then give them the part. The planes they were flying were the PBM-Martin's. Martin Mariners. The twin engine gull shaped wing seaplanes. We would sit at the movies at night time. They had outdoor movies. Once in a while we would see them take off and Boom they would blow up in the air. They had problems with that thing. I stayed there for probably three or four months and they requested First Class Petty Officer Metalsmiths, which I was an aviation metalsmith, to come over to the John Rogers Airport which was on the Honolulu side of the island. At John Rogers we had our own little hangar. The squadron I was with, VRJ-1, flew the Admirals, the Flag officers; Admirals and Generals. They were like the regular day passenger planes. They were big planes and they had sleeping compartments. It was more elaborate. I saw the Admirals get on and off. I never bothered to introduce

myself; I thought it was impertinent to talk to them. I just did my duty and saluted them. They had their own entourage with them, their aides and all that. In the Army you probably called them Dog Robbers or something like that. (laugh) They had a couple officers with them and a cook on there and a pilot and co-pilot. They carried no armament. They flew into different places and back. That was that. Then the European Theater surrendered. I was there about three or four months and the Europeans surrendered and they said the war was over, but the Japanese hadn't surrendered. The B-29's would be taking off from John Rogers going to Guam and to the different islands that we had taken. We knew the war was getting near the end because they had Japanese prisoners and they were working on the sidewalks and streets and the gardens and so forth. They took them in buses with all the windows painted black and then took them back to their night quarters. They said, "Don't talk to them. Never talk to them." You would get in trouble if you talked to them. We drove by and we would say, "Hey" and give them the finger you know. (laugh) We had jeeps in our group. I ran that little nose bay that had the big planes in it for the few months that I was there. Then finally the war was over with Japan and of course we all got drunk. I came home on the, I can't think of the name of the ship now. It was a transport. They flew some of the people home but I happened to get one of these transports. It wasn't a transport, it was an LST. (tape side ended)

Mr. Misenhimer

Okay, so you came back home on an LST.

Mr. Dimminger

It took ten days to go from Honolulu to San Francisco because only one engine was

working. I was surprised but written on the engine was "Property of General Motors". It didn't belong to the Navy, they rented it. So every time one of those was sunk General Motors was stuck because the Navy was renting them. Anyway the food wasn't bad on there. We slept on the tank deck and the water would come through the front doors because the thing opened up. We slept on cots. You had to keep your clothes and shoes underneath your pillow otherwise they would get wet because there was no place to hang them. Then we got into San Francisco and went to Treasure Island. I finally had enough points so I got discharged around Thanksgiving and came home in 1945. Then I got with an old girlfriend that I went to school with. We finally got married in 1946. We were married a year and a half or so and then we had a daughter in 1948. I was in the Reserves and in 1950 the Korean deal broke out and I got called on that. I went to Korea. They flew me to Korea on the last of the Clipper Ships; remember the big ones? They flew from San Francisco out of Alameda to Honolulu to Guam and from Guam to the Philippines and then to Japan. The ship that I went on that time was the USS *Salisbury Sound*. It was what they called a station ship and they had the PBM's and the other big planes on there, the PBY's. We went to Okinawa. First I went to Japan and the ship wasn't there so I went to Okinawa. I had to go to Okinawa and I picked up the ship there. I was stationed there about three months because they stayed six months or something like that and then we went back to the States for refurbishing. They had the *Norton Sound* replace it. In the Korean War I didn't see any combat but I did a little flying because I was a First Class and I got special pay for First Class and got pay for my daughter and my wife and they got housing. I made pretty good money as a First Class. The *Salisbury Sound* was AV-13. She was a converted ship with two big cranes on it that could lift the

planes out of the water. They were immense cranes. Mostly I did repairing on small repair jobs like a wing tip was scratched or something; we would replace the part and put new rivets in it. We had charge of the rigging on the plane, the control that controlled the elevators and the ailerons and the wing flaps and etc. and any new additions like putting in ammunition boxes or something they wanted on the plane. We did that kind of work on there for them. Mostly it was duty just sitting there waiting for them to come back and forth and go out and bring them aboard ship so they could stay there. When I got discharged in 1945 I went to Camp Shoemaker or was it Treasure Island? I can't remember which one. Altogether I had eight years of service. I was a discharged Aviation Metalsmith First Class but I had taken the examination for Chief. In my record it has that I have the papers for Chief. If they called me back today I would be a Chief. But they're not going to call me, I'm 86 years old. (laugh) I had eight years of service in the war including my Reserve time; 44 months in World War II and 33 months in Korea and my Reserve time. I received three Combat Stars. That was from Savo Island, Guadalcanal and Santa Cruz. I was eligible for Midway and they got the Presidential Unit Citation but it never got on my record because she was out fighting and I think it stipulates that you have to be in the actual combat zone to get the record, so I wasn't eligible for the medal but I did get the citation from the Navy thanking me for my work during the War and the Korean War. My Campaign Stars are the Asiatic, the Pacific and the Japanese Occupation, Discharge in World War II, Korea, Good Conduct and Reserve Medal and that's about all I have to say except that I thought this interview was going to be more detailed. I don't know if I gave you enough information or not.



Mr. Misenhimer

I've got some questions to ask you; we haven't finished up yet.

Mr. Dimminger

Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Misenhimer

On December 7, 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, do you recall where you were when you heard about that?

Mr. Dimminger

I was working in an aircraft plant in San Francisco. They called me in because my father had given some soldiers money. He was working at Angel Island. They sold part of their uniforms because they had to buy their second uniform. They sold their pants and whatever. So when I went to work I would wear Army fatigue pants or an Army shirt as my work clothes. The owner of the plant was there at that time. I can't think of his name. I was working as a metalsmith in there and got a job because of my service time and what I did before. I was a metalsmith in San Diego when I worked for Ryan Aircraft down in San Diego before the war, that's how I got my deferment. I came to San Francisco and I worked for Hammond Aircraft. They made parts for different outfits for different planes; for the A-20 and for the B-17's and so forth. They stamped them out and we had the equipment there. I was doing riveting and so forth and then the war came along and I enlisted. But anyway, I was home and I had just got up for breakfast and my mother said, "Sit down and eat breakfast. The news is coming on." It was radio then, no TV's. They announced that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor and the announcer said that they had destroyed all the American ships that were there. They made a really big issue of it.

A couple of houses over from us one of the kids younger than me went straight in to enlist. The following Monday he went in to enlist. Now going back to Hammond; because I had the uniforms he thought I was in the Army so he called me to guard the plant that night. They couldn't get anybody. The police were all on duty and the National Guard was out. They had four of us civilians, they gave us a rifle and a bandolier of ammunition. This guy Hammond collected guns. He had four matched Mauser guns from Germany. He said, "Don't shoot them unless you have to. It's a son of a bitch to clean them." (laugh) I marched around the plant and about every two hours a guy would come around in a jeep they were using as a command car and give us coffee. It was cold as heck. I spent the day there and I went home about 8:00 in the morning and I had to be back to work at 8:00. I slept in and when I came to work at 1:00 Hammond's secretary said, "We are paying you double-time for the guard duty and we are paying you for a full day today." That was pretty good, making that kind of money. It wasn't until March and I had seen all the guys going into the service and being drafted and everything. I was deferred but I said, "Well I'm going to go into the service too. What the hell." So I went in to San Francisco and tried to get into the Coast Guard. Well hell, everybody wanted to get into the Coast Guard so they weren't taking anymore guys right then. So I went to the Naval Station at Alameda and told them my experience and what I could do and everything. They said that they would give me a rating as a Third Class Petty Officer when I got out of boot camp. So I accepted and on March 8<sup>th</sup> I took my oath at the Pacific Standard in San Francisco at the Naval deal and he said, "You're actually in the service now. If you get into any trouble give them this." They had a card that they gave us and he said, "You show them this and you're really in the Navy, you're not a civilian now. Keep

your nose clean. Go home and then come back in three days and bring enough clothes for three days; underwear and soap and shaving gear and pants and all. We got on a train at Emeryville, which is across the Bay from San Francisco. We took a ferry over there. There were about sixty of us and we got on a train and we stayed there in the yard for about four hours. Some of the guys sneaked away and got some whiskey and brought it on the train. It had regular cars; no sleepers. So here we got on the train and we were on our way to San Diego. That's a one day trip on the daylight. At that time we had the daylight. We stayed on the siding down at Fresno for about 14 hours. Finally they got us an engine. All these troop trains had been going through with ammunition and troop trains. Everything was hectic. We got to San Diego and they met us with a bus at the train station and took us to boot camp. The first night they didn't tell us anything. The next morning they said they were going to wake us up at 6:00 in the morning with reveille and go to chow. They said you must take a shower and shave every day. You will wear dungarees. No pea coat. It was cold and when we went to chow we had to march. Finally they showed us how to march and the drills and steps to take and everything and how to use the rifle and the manual of arms. They took the class and showed us how to take a .45 apart and put it back together with a blindfold on. Also the rifle; the rifle I goofed up on. It was a pain in the neck. I never did pass the rifle. I did the .45 alright. There were the usual things you go through in camp and like I say I got sick and went to the hospital and that was about it. Then I got out of boot camp and went to the ship and went to Honolulu.

Mr. Misenhimer

When the *Hornet* was sunk was that the only time you were actually under attack on the ship?

Mr. Dimminger

It was the first time I was under attack. It was the first time the ship was under attack. She was just only one year old. I think she was shy a few days of being one year old. I forget when she was commissioned. It was in May or June of 1941. She was a brand new ship and everything was brand new on her.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yes she had been to the Tokyo Raid with Doolittle.

Mr. Dimminger

Yes she had been on that. I wasn't on her then. When she came back from Midway I got on her but I was in the squadron. My squadron went out and Commander Withelm was our commanding officer of the squadron. He was a Lieutenant.

Mr. Misenhimer

But the *Hornet* had not been attacked at Midway, is that right?

Mr. Dimminger

Right. She was out of the scope of the Japanese observation planes.

Mr. Misenhimer

When she was sunk was the first time she was actually under attack? So really only one time was she under attack because she got sunk then.

Mr. Dimminger

She got sunk the first time she was under attack.

Mr. Misenhimer

But her planes had been under a number of attacks?

Mr. Dimminger

Her planes had been involved in Guadalcanal and Savo Island and the slot other islands around there, Bougainville.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yes quite a few; Tokyo and Midway.

Mr. Dimminger

I think she was in the Coral Sea too but I'm not quite sure. At the Battle of Midway she never got a scratch. At the Battle of the Coral Sea she didn't get a scratch either. It was planes against planes; there were no ships involved.

Mr. Misenhimer

At the Coral Sea we lost some carriers in that battle.

Mr. Dimminger

We lost the *Lexington* I believe.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did we lose the *Yorktown*?

Mr. Dimminger

We lost it at Midway. She was banged up from the Coral Sea and they got her to Honolulu and got her ready and she went to Midway and she was about 99% ready for combat. The Japanese knew right away who it was and they had to sink her, so they sank her. The *Hornet* was farther out at Midway. I think the other ship was the *Enterprise*. It was the *Enterprise*, the *Yorktown* and the *Hornet*. I think we sank five of their carriers.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever see any USO shows anywhere?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. I saw one of the comedians, it wasn't Bob Hope. I saw one of the shows at Honolulu and then I saw not Harry James but another orchestra. He came in there and he had a troupe of dancers. In the foreign islands I never saw any but we did have entertainment come aboard at Okinawa in the Korean War. At Okinawa they sent troupes of actors and dancers aboard. It was kind of interesting. It wasn't bad duty on the station ship. They put us in Buckner Bay and we stayed there for six months and took care of servicing all of the seaplanes. The food was good on the last ship I was on. We had a First Class Mess. There were 16 First Class officers on there. We had our own mess. We didn't eat with the regular crew. We had our own table. We went through the line and got our chow but then we had mustard on the table and ketchup and relish and pickles. We paid \$2 a month each for that privilege. We paid the mess cooks. When we came in from duty we had food on the table and you served your duty. One day in three you served four hours duty. You could either have shore patrol or officer of the deck which would be your duty officer in the Army. He had control of the ship and it was the only time that a First Class Petty Officer would rate a salute. If a person wanted to come aboard he would say, "Permission to come aboard." And you would say, "Come aboard" and he would salute the ship and he would salute you and then come aboard and go to his quarters. Every man that came aboard had to salute the man that was on duty, either the Petty Officer or the Officer on Duty; what they called the Junior Officer of the Deck.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes I brought home a Japanese sword. I finally sold it. Some Japanese people from Japan came to an antique show that my wife and I had. I had this little sword and it was a family sword and wrapped in silk. These guys came over and looked at it. These two Japanese were conversing and he said to me, "Do you mind if I take it apart?" I didn't even know it came apart. He took it apart and looked at the name inside. He said, "Would you like to sell it?" I said, "Yes I guess so. What kind of price would you give me?" He said, "What would you ask?" I said, "\$400." He said, "Sold." I got \$400 for it. I bought that and in Japan I bought some little dressers that the geishas had. They were about the size of a child's piano or about the size of a VCR and they had drawers. I went to a Japanese shop where they were making them in the Korean War. This was in Iwakuni, Japan. I went to this shop and a guy was making them. He and his sons were making them and I watched them for awhile because I like woodwork. He kept working on it and I said, "How much do you want?" He told me and it was equivalent to about \$10. I said, "For one?" He said, "Yes." I said, "How about for two?" He said, "Same old." So instead of buying one I ended up buying ten of them. I had to take a taxi to take them aboard ship. I ended up selling all of them but two to the guys. I sold them for \$15 each, so I made \$5 on each one. The guys didn't know where I got them so I went for the second time. Altogether I got ten. They were all painted that lacquer red, that kind of burnt red color that Japanese put on furniture.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now that was during the Korean War?

Mr. Dimminger

That was during the Korean War. During the other war I never got ashore except in New Caledonia and that was about it. I got in to shore in Australia and the Marshall Islands but that was about the only time I got in to shore.

Mr. Misenhimer

When were you in Australia?

Mr. Dimminger

In Australia we were in a little place called Brisbane. Then we went to a place called Townsville also. There was nothing in Townsville but sugar cane factories.

Mr. Misenhimer

You were on what ship when you went there?

Mr. Dimminger

That was during the war so that had to be the *Copahee*.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long were you in Brisbane?

Mr. Dimminger

About three days.

Mr. Misenhimer

How were the people there?

Mr. Dimminger

They treated us fine. They stopped every time we were unloading planes; they would leave it in the air and stop for tea. (laugh) It's a tradition you know; the morning and the afternoon. They would stop for tea.



Mr. Misenhimer

How about Townsville?

Mr. Dimminger

Townsville; there wasn't that much there. We just went up and stayed there for about a day. I think we refueled two destroyers there and they took off. We had enough fuel for them too because they burned the same kind of oil that we did. One time we had a submarine with us too when we went ashore. One time we were working with the divers. My job on the ship had nothing to do so I volunteered to work with the divers. One day they called me up to the officer's quarters and said, "Pack up some gear; you are going to go a little island called Amma O'Shima. The people weren't Japanese; they called themselves O'shimians. What had happened was one of our seaplanes had gone up there and crashed. Aboard the seaplane there was a Navy officer that had an attaché case attached to his wrist with orders in it. They didn't want them to get into the hands of the North Koreans. So we went up there and we had two divers and four tenders and one officer and one corpsman in case there was an emergency. My job was as tender. They had signals; the radios weren't working. So we did it by the tugs. One tug was go down and two tugs was bring me up and an emergency was constant tugging, "take me up, take me up." We only had three signals. When they got close underwater so they wouldn't get the bends they had to stay under on a platform for about an hour until their body got rid of all of the air embolisms. Then they would come aboard and right away they would put them in the tank for half an hour to an hour depending how long they were down. They brought up the bodies. There were eleven men on the plane and they brought up the bodies of nine. The other ones they never did find. They got the guy's attaché case. Two

of the bodies floated onto the shore and we had to pick them up and put them into bags. I got sick to my stomach. They had been in the water for about six to eight days and they were rotten from being in the water. I got sick and even vomited; the smell was that bad.

Mr. Misenhimer

That was during the Korean War right?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. That was the only the time that I had to actually work with bodies because I was a tender handler. The O'shimians wouldn't touch them. They wouldn't go near the bodies so we had to do it ourselves. They would report them.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were in Australia that was in World War II, right?

Mr. Dimminger

No that was in the Korean War. We were already occupying Japan but we had seaplane tenders in Sasebo, Iwokuni and Matsu. We were halfway between Taiwan and the shore; the Pescadore Islands. I can't remember the name of the other one. The island we were on was called Nazeko. I think it means the name of the bay. We were not too far from some small islands and they were only about four or five miles from Taiwan.

Mr. Misenhimer

Have you been back to Australia after the war?

Mr. Dimminger

No. My little granddaughter has been there to Australia and New Zealand and the Barrier Reef. She just graduated two weeks ago from the University of California.

Mr. Misenhimer

Townsville was the headquarters for the Coast Watchers.

Mr. Dimminger

I didn't know that. I know there wasn't much there. As a matter of fact I don't think I ever went ashore there. I went ashore in Brisbane because we were there for about three or four days.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross during World War II?

Mr. Dimminger

The only experience I have I don't want to put on tape. They gave you stockings and shoes and whatever. They probably spent \$30 or \$40 on each one of us in American money. But about three months later I get a letter from them and they wanted the money. That was the Red Cross. Every body that was a survivor said, "You go straight to hell. I'm not going to send you anything." I am partial to the Salvation Army because they never asked for any money but the Red Cross just wanted the money. I don't think anybody ever sent any to them.

Mr. Misenhimer

I've heard that a lot of times. People have told me that they really prefer the Salvation Army.

Mr. Dimminger

They were good to you. The Red Cross was not.

Mr. Misenhimer

During World War II did you ever hear Tokyo Rose?

Mr. Dimminger

I didn't hear her, but I heard of her. I didn't hear her on the radio but they told me about her. She would tell us where we were. But we caught them with their pants down when Doolittle bombed Tokyo though. They had a couple of trawlers out there and evidently the carrier escorts sank them but they got the message through that there was an American ship out there.

Mr. Misenhimer

Right, so they had to launch them early.

Mr. Dimminger

The Japanese didn't believe it. They flew over low and dropped their bombs. I understand a couple of the planes, the crews landed in Japan and the Japanese executed them.

Mr. Misenhimer

Right. Now April 12, 1945 President Roosevelt died; do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes I heard about that. I think I was in Honolulu at that time.

Mr. Misenhimer

What kind of reaction did people have to it?

Mr. Dimminger

Well you know he was the President and everything. I didn't have any personal feelings for him but I thought it was a great loss because he was the President. Right away Truman stepped in there and he carried on pretty good I thought. I didn't vote for him though because he kept me in the service for the Korean War when they called out the Reserves. Which they didn't need us really. In my ship they had five First Class Petty

Officers, two Third Class and two Seaman in the sheet metal shop. But we did all the work and when it came time for inspection we all worked and helped because we outnumbered the little guys.

Mr. Misenhimer

On August 6<sup>th</sup> when they dropped the atomic bomb did you hear about that?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes. We knew about it but we didn't know what planes carried it in. We heard it in the newspaper and on the radio.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then when Japan surrendered on August 15<sup>th</sup> did you have a celebration then?

Mr. Dimminger

A little beer and we got about half stiff but that was about it. The reaction was that sooner or later they were going to give up and they were going to lose anyway because we had sunk all their aircraft carriers and their main cities were being bombed like Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I did see Hiroshima after the bombing when I was in the Korean War in 1952 or 1953, somewhere in there. It was all demolished but a couple of buildings were still standing. The concrete reinforced steel buildings were still standing, but the windows and walls were all knocked down. There was one bridge crossing and you could see the shadow on the bridge where a guy had been when the bomb flashed and it incinerated him but it left a shadow on the concrete. They had a Memorial and we all went in there. They said a prayer and you could leave some money for the survivors.

Mr. Misenhimer

Anything else that you recall from your time in World War II?

Mr. Dimminger

No. I had a lot of good times and a lot of sad times. When I was married it was tough. Being away from a new wife, we had been married only two years when our daughter was born. So when I would get duty and would go to San Diego, they would come down to San Diego and they would pay her freight, the plane fare and the hotel. We didn't use the hotel room so I had to give the money back for that. We stayed with friends that lived in San Diego; a retired Lieutenant Commander from the Navy. He was a friend of my family. He had a beautiful home in San Diego out near the park. We stayed downstairs. He had a bedroom with a bath and a sitting room and then we ate together. I chipped in for the food. I said, "You're feeding me, I want to help with the food." He said, "No, no, no. I was a Lieutenant Commander I get a good pension." Alice was his wife and she worked in a liquor store which they owned. They owned a liquor store and a car dealership. They were pretty wealthy.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got out in 1945 did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Dimminger

No. I took about two weeks when I got my final discharge and I went to see my old girlfriend in San Diego. She hadn't got married again. After I went with her she got divorced during the war and I went to see her and she hated the Navy after that because he was a sailor too. She was very cold. Then I went to see another one that lived in Imperial Valley in a city called Holtville. I went to see her too, that was another girlfriend. She was nice. She hadn't got married. She had divorced before and she had a son that was about 12 years old or something like that. I took her out to dinner and took

her mother out to dinner. We had a nice time. Then I came back and I worked at Bethlehem Steel in South San Francisco here. We had a plant here. I was there for about six months or so and then I got a chance to get in the plumbing game. My brother was a plumber and he had been in there longer. Before the war he was an apprentice plumber so he got a good job in plumbing. He worked for a company and he got me to work and I joined the union and I became a plumber. I was a plumber for 40 something years; 39 or 40 years or something like that. I got retirement from that. Then I worked for the City of San Francisco as a plumber on the waterfront. I became Shop Foreman down there. That was probably for about two years. I spent 21 years as a plumber for the City of San Francisco.

Mr. Misenhimer

You got married when?

Mr. Dimminger

November 17, 1946. I still remember a few things. (laugh) A few things slip me but I remember a few of them.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you use your GI Bill for anything?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes, I think I bought this house on the GI Bill. I got a loan from them. No I used a State loan. The State of California had one too. So I got a loan from them and built this house.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you didn't go to school or anything with the GI Bill?

Mr. Dimminger

I did go to school. I went to a junior college and I was taking art. My wife was interested in art so I took an art course and learned to paint with oil paint. I still paint now. I sell a few every now and then and I give them away as gifts and the church wants them for a contribution. When they want us to donate something I donate a painting. Or when the City is having a bazaar or something I donate a couple of paintings. I usually do sail ships and farm scenes and mountains and buildings. I don't do portraits or anything like that.

Mr. Misenhimer

Have you had any reunions?

Mr. Dimminger

Yes, this will be my tenth reunion. I'm going to Denver, Colorado in September.

Mr. Misenhimer

For what outfit?

Mr. Dimminger

The Escort Carriers Association. We have a plaque down there at the Nimitz Museum. We intend to have another one in San Diego on a ship at San Diego. There is a ship at San Diego too, a carrier. I know they've got the *Hornet* over there. I've got membership on that one too. I belong to that association. That's the CV-12. That's the second *Hornet*.

Mr. Misenhimer

Anything else that you recall?

Mr. Dimminger

Like I said we had a First Class Mess on the *Salisbury Sound*. Every Sunday morning



aboard ship they would have cornbread and baked beans. That was one of my favorite meals.

Mr. Misenhimer

And that was for breakfast right?

Mr. Dimminger

That was for breakfast. We would take 2,000 cases of beer aboard. I helped load them. By the time the ship took off they were missing 23 cases of beer. The sailors got a hold of them and they couldn't find them on the ship. They went through the lockers and everything and they couldn't find the beer. Do you know what the guys did? Not in our division but they told me they cut holes with a torch in the voids. There is nothing in them but air, so they cut holes in them and then put the beer in it, welded it back and painted over it and after three months at sea they would have a beer party. (laugh) The things they did in the service were really something. We had this one guy by the name of Behr and somewhere outside of Boston, I can't think of the name of the town, but he had lived there as a kid. Scully Square was a fine district in Boston and he came aboard ship one time and I was on JOD on the *Salisbury Sound* and there was a Warrant Officer on with me and he knew Behr well and he said, "What do you have under your arm Behr?" He said, "I bought two pair of shoes." He showed the boxes to him. He said, "Behr, I'm going to tell you something now. I'm not going to take the boxes away from you but I want you to go to the rail and throw both of those boxes over the side." "Oh gee." "Do it Behr or you are in trouble." So he went over there and the Warrant Officer turned his back to him and he took off his shoes and threw them overboard and walked on with two bottles of whiskey. (laugh) He threw his shoes away and kept the whiskey. We had

another guy too by the name of Kosavar. He got killed on the *Hornet*. He was an excellent painter. He used to paint pictures of naked girls on the sea bags. The guys would look at them and say boy, that's something. They told him that he couldn't do it anymore. But he got killed when we got sunk. He was a First Class Boatswain's Mate I think. He got killed. I said, "Where's Kosavar?" They said, "He's over there underneath that canvas over there." I went over there and lifted the canvas and there was nothing left of his face. When you see things like that you kind of think twice whether war is necessary. I think in future generations if people are smart enough to know that human life is sacred and it's something that was given to us by our God and why do we have to destroy each other over petty things like Iraq now. It's so unnecessary over there. They've been fighting among themselves ever since Mohammed. They have had different sects fighting amount themselves like the Shiites and the Sunnis. They kill themselves as much as anybody else.

*(end of interview)*

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August 18, 2006

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