

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview with

**John J. "Jack" Shanesy.
May 19, 2010**

**US Navy
Shipfitter**

My name is Richard Misenhimer and today is May 19, 2010. I am interviewing John J. "Jack" Shanesy. by telephone. His address is: 1353 Skylark Drive, Troy, Ohio 45373. His phone number is 937-339-4524. 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

Jack, 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. Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the Museum. "Agreement read." Is that okay with you?

Mr. Shanesy

That's fine.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now the next thing I would like to do is get an alternative contact. We have found out that sometimes several years down the road we try to get back in contact with a veteran and he has moved or something. Do you have a son or daughter or someone we could contact if we needed to find you?

Mr. Shanesy

I have a son in Cincinnati.

Mr. Misenhimer

What is his name?

Mr. Shanesy

Stephen Shanesy.

Mr. Misenhimer

Do you have his address and phone number?

Mr. Shanesy

232 Wyoming Avenue, Wyoming, Ohio 45215-4308. He is the editor of a woodworking magazine.

His phone number is 513-761-1613.

Mr. Misenhimer

What is your birth date?

Mr. Shanesy

June 5, 1920.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you born?

Mr. Shanesy

I was born in a town called Piqua, Ohio.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Shanesy

I had one brother, Thomas R. He was in the Battle of the Bulge. I had one sister, Ruth Ann.

Mr. Misenhimer

Your brother was in the Army?

Mr. Shanesy

He was in the Army, forward observer.

Mr. Misenhimer

And he was in the Battle of the Bulge?

Mr. Shanesy

He was part of that, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Is he still living?

Mr. Shanesy

He died about seven years ago.

Mr. Misenhimer

If he were, I would have liked to have interviewed him.

Mr. Shanesy

I'm sure you would. He could have told you something.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now you grew up during the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Shanesy

My father was a commissioned salesman and of course, there wasn't much being sold. So if nothing sold, we did the best thing we could. We had a garden. We had an outhouse. We did the best we could with what we had.

Mr. Misenhimer

You managed to make it through, then?

Mr. Shanesy

We did make it through.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was he able to keep working during the Depression?

Mr. Shanesy

He had his own business as an appliance dealer. Can you imagine that back then?

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Shanesy

Troy High School.

Mr. Misenhimer

In Ohio?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

What year did you finish there?

Mr. Shanesy

I graduated in 1938.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you do when you finished high school?

Mr. Shanesy

I went one year to Miami University. After that I went to work for 35 cents an hour. (laugh)

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you study at Miami University?

Mr. Shanesy

I planned to be an Industrial Arts teacher and a coach.

Mr. Misenhimer

The reason you didn't continue on was what?

Mr. Shanesy

Thirty-five cents an hour looked pretty good instead of being in debt.

Mr. Misenhimer

Finances then basically.

Mr. Shanesy

Yes

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you do for that 35 cents an hour?

Mr. Shanesy

I was helping a local contractor with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you go into the service?

Mr. Shanesy

November 4, 1942.

Mr. Misenhimer

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Shanesy

Sure, I do. I heard it on the radio. I couldn't believe it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you?

Mr. Shanesy

I was at home. I was married by this time.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you think when you heard it?

Mr. Shanesy

I really didn't know much about it. I hadn't paid any attention to international politics or anything. I had no idea that this was going to happen. I thought, "Well one of these days I'll be there, I bet." So I finally did.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you drafted, or did you volunteer?

Mr. Shanesy

That's a funny thing. I was afraid the war was going to be over before I got into it. So I went up and ask them how I could get my draft status changed from 3A to 1A. The guy said, "You have to tell somebody." I said, "You heard me." And two days later I got my postcard.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was that the notice of change or the draft notice?

Mr. Shanesy

It was a notice to report for a physical.

Mr. Misenhimer

It said, "Greetings from your friends and neighbors." Is that what it said?

Mr. Shanesy

(Laugh) That's what it said.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then you actually went in on November 4, 1942.

Mr. Shanesy

I went over to Springfield, which is a town near here and went to the Post Office and enlisted in the Navy because I didn't want to sleep in that mud.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you enlisted after you got that letter?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you choose the Navy?

Mr. Shanesy

I liked water and I liked boats and I didn't want to be marching around in mud.

Mr. Misenhimer

Had you been on the ocean at all before that?

Mr. Shanesy

Twice.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you had a little experience?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you take your boot camp?

Mr. Shanesy

At Great Lakes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Tell me about that. How did you travel up to Great Lakes?

Mr. Shanesy

We left Springfield on the train and went to Cincinnati where I stayed for two days while we went through the physical. And then from there we went to Great Lakes on the train.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was that train trip?

Mr. Shanesy

It was alright. It was my first train trip. I enjoyed it. It was okay. We got to Chicago about 8:00 that night. We took a train on up to Great Lakes. We didn't get there until about midnight. They put us in a dorm, a barracks, and we slept in a hammock. If you tied the hammock too tight it was like sleeping on a tight wire, if you got it too loose, you would break your back.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was that the furthestest that you had been from home?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I had been to Canada, Boston, and places like that. My father liked to travel.

Mr. Misenhimer

Tell me about boot camp, what all did you do in boot camp?

Mr. Shanesy

In boot camp they found out that I had gone through physical ed at Miami University and I did know how to conduct a drill. That put me as a platoon leader of one of the two platoons at boot camp. So I gave the orders for that. I was also the Captain of the Head, so I had to keep that son-of-a-gun really clean or I was in trouble.

Mr. Misenhimer

You lived in barracks there, right?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes we did.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was the food there?

Mr. Shanesy

I didn't know any different. I thought it was good. (Laugh) It was as far as I'm concerned. I had no qualm about the food. I'll tell you about it later.

Mr. Misenhimer

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

Mr. Shanesy

No, he was not. He was a Mr. Adams and he had been a physical education teacher in high school. He was there just doing his job like the rest of us.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now what all were some things that you did during boot camp?

Mr. Shanesy

We did a lot of drilling that's for sure. Then we went to a physical. We got our clothes. We got to go to the show they put on once in a while. That was about it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have swimming?

Mr. Shanesy

No, we did not at that time. We did later on.

Mr. Misenhimer

How about knot tying?

Mr. Shanesy

Knot tying, we did a few of them but since I was a Boy Scout I was proficient at that.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you did a lot of marching, of course?

Mr. Shanesy

Of course.

Mr. Misenhimer

And physical training, PT?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes and it was cold.

Mr. Misenhimer

Up in Chicago at that time of year, it would be. Did you have any kind of weapons training in boot camp?

Mr. Shanesy

No, none whatsoever.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long was your boot camp?

Mr. Shanesy

Five weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then when you finished boot camp, what did you do?

Mr. Shanesy

We went back to OGU, which was called an outgoing unit. Then from there I was surprised to find out that I had been assigned shipfitter's school at Great Lakes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Tell me about that.

Mr. Shanesy

At shipfitter's school we went the second shift, which was 4:00 in the afternoon until 11:00 at night. We got a break for the evening meal. At shipfitter's school I was schooled in electric welding, gas welding, pipe fitting, sheet metal, and blacksmithing. We also had to go to math classes.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long was that school?

Mr. Shanesy

Sixteen weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did anything in particular happen during that class?

Mr. Shanesy

No, not that I know of except that I came out with a Shipfitter's Third rating, which I appreciated.

Mr. Misenhimer

Is that a petty officer?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes sir. Third Class Petty Officer.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what did you do?

Mr. Shanesy

From there I went with some of the guys to San Diego to the Fleet Welding School where it was a school of five weeks of gas welding, five weeks of arc welding, and five weeks of metals like aluminum and monel and that sort of thing. Or, you could choose five weeks of underwater welding. I didn't take the underwater welding.

Mr. Misenhimer

It sounds like it was a pretty good school.

Mr. Shanesy

It was wonderful. I don't know if you've ever heard of a Welding School by Hobart Brothers here in Troy or not. But it is the best in the nation and that one out there was made after it. It is still in operation here in Troy.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what happened?

Mr. Shanesy

From San Diego I went to Norfolk, Virginia to a place called the National Landing Force Equipment Depot. There we repaired small boats, LCVP's. Any of those little boats that took soldiers up on the beach during an invasion.

Mr. Misenhimer

About when did you arrive in Norfolk?

Mr. Shanesy

It was by November or September of 1943.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had been in about a year then?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes, that's about right.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you repaired small boats.

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what happened?

Mr. Shanesy

From there I went to a place up in Maryland called Solomons, Maryland. There I was attached to a flotilla of LCI's where I was in the maintenance division. At that place I repaired refrigerators because I was proficient in that because that was my job before I went into the Navy. I learned that. By the way while I was in there I found a couple of things that the Naval Bureau of Ships changed because of my recommendation.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was that?

Mr. Shanesy

They had run the refrigeration lines through the bulkhead and put insulation around it. If that line happened to sweat, it would get cold with water and then it would get frozen from the cold of the refrigeration. The cold would freeze the water down to a crimp in the tubing so that nothing would go through it. They changed that to putting pipe through there but they made the mistake of putting seamed pipe and they cut the threads too deep. Then we had to go back in with another recommendation and they finally got that one corrected. At that point they asked me if I would like to go to OCS, Officer Candidate School. I said, "No, I have too many buddies here that I don't want to get rid of." So I worked in that flotilla of LCI's for some time. One time I remember we had to go out and go shallow diving because somebody forgot to turn on the stern winch to crank the cable up after we went in for a landing. It got all wound around the propellers and this other fellow and I, they called for volunteers and we went down and cut that loose out of there and got them on their way again.

Mr. Misenhimer

The ones you were repairing, had they been in combat?

Mr. Shanesy

No. They were strictly a training operation. Solomons, Maryland.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long were you there?

Mr. Shanesy

I don't really know, but from there I went to California to a place called Redwood City. We were trained by Marines as a landing force. I couldn't believe it. I was issued a carbine, a backpack, first aid kit, and the whole nine yards. I came to find out that we were going to be the back up for the landing in Japan. So, I really liked that atom bomb.

Mr. Misenhimer

About when did you arrive in California?

Mr. Shanesy

It was probably in early fall of 1944. We stayed there, by the way, while were there we also took training on floating dry docks. From there we went to, we left there in December of 1944 and I arrived in Luzon March 16, 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you travel over there?

Mr. Shanesy

I was on a merchant transport for personnel ran by merchant marines. The name of the ship was the *Exiria*.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was that trip over there?

Mr. Shanesy

It was awful. By that I mean it took from November or December, whatever it was, until March 16 to get there. We spent about four or five weeks at Eniwetok. There you got to go ashore to work in a work detail about every day. So that's what we did to kill the time until we could get there. We arrived in Leyte in early March, 1945, and then to Luzon to a place called Subic Bay in 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer

On that trip over, how crowded was that ship?

Mr. Shanesy

It was not crowded at all. We got two meals a day that weren't bad. The only thing is we were cut back on water rations. You got one bucket of water a day.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you escorted by other ships? Was there a convoy?

Mr. Shanesy

We had several escorts along with a few other transports.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you ever threatened by submarines or anything?

Mr. Shanesy

We had two submarine alerts and one airplane raid for which we had to go to quarters. I took my station up on the flying bridge with my cutting torch.

Mr. Misenhimer

That was your battle station?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

By cutting torch, what was that?

Mr. Shanesy

An acetylene torch that you cut metal with. That's what we did in case somebody got caught someplace. We would cut the bulkhead or whatever was necessary to get them out.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have the large oxygen/acetylene tanks?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I had 25 pounders strapped to my back with my mess kit.

Mr. Misenhimer

The small ones?

Mr. Shanesy

That's right.

Mr. Misenhimer

So that was your battle station?

Mr. Shanesy

That was it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did anything else happen on that trip over?

Mr. Shanesy

Nothing exciting, just a couple of submarine alerts, that's all.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had some destroyers around you?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes, we had two or three.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did they drop depth charges on those subs?

Mr. Shanesy

No charges, just went around like crazy. Nothing ever happened. We didn't know if it was a real thing or not.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then when you got to Luzon, what did you do there?

Mr. Shanesy

At Luzon I went ashore with the rest of the guys. We lived in tents on the beach until the Seabees got barracks built and then we lived in those. Of course there were no windows or anything. It was just a dry place to sleep. I worked in the refrigeration shop where I was a refrigeration mechanic and the designated welder. I was a certified Navy welder. I did whatever I had to do to keep things going. One of the things we did was build a refrigerator for the sick bay so that they could dry out the xrays which they couldn't do in that atmosphere.

Mr. Misenhimer

Too humid.

Mr. Shanesy

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

The fighting was still going on in Luzon at that time, right?

Mr. Shanesy

It was.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was it anywhere close to you?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes and no. We could hear them in the swamps but that was about it.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you were never attacked by the enemy then?

Mr. Shanesy

Never one time.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you bombed by them or anything there?

Mr. Shanesy

No sir.

Mr. Misenhimer

What else happened there on Luzon?

Mr. Shanesy

At Luzon, after we were there about two weeks, I got temporary duty along with about 30 other fellows, to a place called Cavite. There we went to pick up whatever we could, machinery, material,

from pallets in the water that could be used again. We were up there for a month. I slept in a little building on a shelf in a warehouse. We had K-rations for the whole time. That's all we ate. While we were there President Roosevelt died. Of course, we didn't know what was going on until two days later. One of the boys went out to get fresh water and find out why the flags were at half-mast. He came back and told us.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the reaction when you all heard that?

Mr. Shanesy

It was not very nice. "Who is the new President?" "Some guy named Truman." "Who is that?" (Laugh) He turned out to be a pretty decent fellow, yes he did. We worked up there for about 30 days and then I went back to the refrigeration shop and worked there. Then I got detached to go to Manila with a refrigeration unit for air conditioning. We were put on board the USS *McKinley*, which was the flagship of the service force of the 7th Fleet. It was a godsend to these guys. The yeomen down in there had to do all the typing. I never will forget the day I got it running. The Admiral came down to see how I was getting along. I told him that I just had it running for about three hours. He put a hand up over the discharge vent and said, "Colder than a whore's heart." (Laugh) I've never forgot that. I was only 24 and he was an older man. I never heard that from an officer. It was okay, it was great. The guys down there, a whole lot to get that going.

Mr. Misenhimer

Do you happen to remember the admiral's name?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I don't. It didn't make any difference. While I worked in the refrigeration shop, if there were any special welding jobs that needed to be done they would send them to me from different shops on the base. One was, you know what a connecting rod is on a motor. I welded a connector rod together for the refrigeration unit for some soldiers that had a refrigerator up in the hills to check the gas and oil lines going up to Clark Field. That thing worked out wonderful, they came back to tell me. A week later I had a welding job for a sub chaser where some guy had tightened the nuts down one too tight and broke an ear off of it. I got that welded back together and they ran around out there in the bay at flank speed for about three hours. The skipper sent me a fifth of Old Methuselah. That wasn't too bad either. I was really proficient at welding. Later on I became the 1st Class Chief in charge of the refrigeration shop.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what happened?

Mr. Shanesy

The war ended and I did not re-enlist to stay with them. I came home to my wife and my daughter. She was walking and talking.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you come home then?

Mr. Shanesy

I got home on December 20, 1945. I came home on an aircraft carrier. The food was wonderful compared to what we had.

Mr. Misenhimer

You were going to tell me about the food awhile ago, what about the food?

Mr. Shanesy

The food. The K-rations weren't that great but they sustained you. The food at the base progressively got better because we kept getting more ships in the harbor with foodstuffs on them for ourselves as well as going on forward. That's about the way it was.

Mr. Misenhimer

Back when you got trained to be in a Marine landing, but nothing ever happened after that, right?

Mr. Shanesy

We had our carbines, we carried them with us. We had our backpacks and the whole bit. We had them until the day the war ended and then they came around and gathered the carbines up.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you wear Marine uniforms?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I wore my dungarees all the time. That's the way it happened.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were overseas, did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I never had time for that.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was the morale in your outfit?

Mr. Shanesy

I think it was really good because really nobody was in any danger and we got three cans of warm beer a week. (Laugh). It was okay. Some of it was crummy, some of it was good. It was whatever you made it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get home with any souvenirs?

Mr. Shanesy

No. I had a Japanese rifle. The day the war was over, they gathered all the carbines, and they took my Japanese rifle too. I did not like that. So I had no souvenirs.

Mr. Misenhimer

I know later on they gave out Japanese rifles to people who wanted them.

Mr. Shanesy

That's what I've heard. Did you know that the shell that went into a Japanese rifle, a Yankee shell would not fit into a Japanese rifle, but a Japanese rifle shell would fit into a Yankee rifle.

Mr. Misenhimer

No, I didn't know that.

Mr. Shanesy

It was that close.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever see any USO shows anywhere?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes I did. I went to see the one about the Navy. It was a USO show about the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you see that?

Mr. Shanesy

I saw that at the base and it rained like cats and dogs and we just sat there and watched them.

Mr. Misenhimer

At the base in the Philippines?

Mr. Shanesy

At the place called Alongabo.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was that the only USO show that you saw?

Mr. Shanesy

That was the only one I ever saw.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Shanesy

None whatsoever.

Mr. Misenhimer

Not good or bad either way.

Mr. Shanesy

Either way. I cannot say anything about what happened to me. I can only give you what some other guys said and I won't repeat it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get into any typhoons over there?

Mr. Shanesy

No. We had some foul weather but nothing like a typhoon. We had some pretty good sized blows but nothing to take us away.

Mr. Misenhimer

On May 8, 1945, German surrendered. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes we did. I think it was the next day that we got it on the radio.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the reaction to that?

Mr. Shanesy

It was enjoyable really because now we could concentrate on the thing that was in front of us, which we did.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have any close calls anytime of any kind?

Mr. Shanesy

None whatsoever. I was very fortunate.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were overseas, could you get your mail with any regularity?

Mr. Shanesy

It was quite regular. You might go for a week or two without getting it, but then you would get two or three letters. I expected it. Some of them didn't. But it was alright.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have any experience with the medics at all?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes I was in the sick bay once with a sore fanny. I had venereal warts and they had to burn them off and it was not very nice, especially the first time you had a BM after that. Then I had some on the foreskin of my penis and I never will forget this one Corpsman said, "Hold it Dr., can you transplant some of those?" There were all kinds of guys.

Mr. Misenhimer

Any other funny incidents along the way?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I really don't think so. I saw people that I knew from home while I was over there. The only thing that was funny about all this whole thing. You remember I told you about changing the piping on those LCI's so the lines wouldn't frost back and crush? While I was in the sickbay, a couple of the young fellows came over from the refrigeration shop and was telling me about a problem they were having. I told them, "I'll tell you what you do. You go back and look at the section line and you will find that it is crimped together." They came back the next day and said, "How in the heck did you know that?" I said, "I went through that two years ago back in the States. We had to change all that." They couldn't believe I knew what was going on that far away.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had the experience.

Mr. Shanesy

Yes, experience counts.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you think of the officers you had over you?

Mr. Shanesy

The officers as far as I was concerned were pretty nice. We had a couple of Ensigns that were young fellows out of college. We had a Lieutenant for the refrigeration shop who had been a Warrant Officer. He was an old mustang and he knew what was going on. We had no trouble with him. In fact, he allowed one of the fellows in our refrigeration shop to conduct an electrician school for the

shop. So we learned how to do something that we didn't already know. It was really neat. He was the one that appointed me the head of the refrigeration shop after the Chief left. I enjoyed it. It was a pain in the behind, but I enjoyed it.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever have any close calls of any kind?

Mr. Shanesy

None whatsoever, no. As I said, I was fortunate.

Mr. Misenhimer

No accidents or anything like that, that were close calls?

Mr. Shanesy

No sir, none.

Mr. Misenhimer

You didn't cross the equator did you?

Mr. Shanesy

Not while I was with those guys.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get any ribbons or medals?

Mr. Shanesy

Only what was normal. The American Theater, the Asiatic-Pacific, Philippine Liberation, with a Star, the Victory medal and Good Conduct.

Mr. Misenhimer

The Star, was it a battle star?

Mr. Shanesy

It wasn't a star. They awarded it to anybody that was in the Philippine liberation for more than four months, I think it was.

Mr. Misenhimer

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

Mr. Shanesy

No, none whatsoever. I can't understand those guys that did have. Of course, I didn't go through what some of them did. I was home three weeks and then went to work. I was not a member of 52/20.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the highest rank that you got to?

Mr. Shanesy

Shipfitter First. I was a First Class Petty Officer. My next step would have been a Chief. I turned that down to not re-enlist.

Mr. Misenhimer

Have you had any reunions?

Mr. Shanesy

I've put on twenty of them for those guys. We call ourselves the Subic Bay Association. We have met from St. Louis to Albany, New York, and from Green Bay to Pensacola.

Mr. Misenhimer

How many people were in this outfit?

Mr. Shanesy

440, and 44 officers.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get pretty good attendance at your reunions?

Mr. Shanesy

At first we did, now we don't. Now we have the younger guys that were at Subic Bay because that's still an important base for the United States.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got out, did you use your GI Bill for anything?

Mr. Shanesy

I did not. I just went to work.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was your career in civilian life?

Mr. Shanesy

In civilian life I had my own business. I did appliance repair. I also had a plumbing and an electrician's license. I did that kind of work.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you use your welding experience that you had from the Navy?

Mr. Shanesy

I did. I used my welding. I only had an acetylene rig, so that's all I ever used. I also served on the City Council here in Troy, the Planning Commission, the Parks Board and I worked for the City finally, later on.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you're retired now?

Mr. Shanesy

I am retired. I've been retired since 1986. I was 66.^My wife is 25 years younger than me, so that makes me older than my mother-in-law and she's not doing very well. That's about it. We finally had our 50th reunion.

Mr. Misenhimer

From high school?

Mr. Shanesy

From high school. I got a bunch of the fellows together after that reunion and we started meeting for breakfast once a month. I think there was 15 of us to start and it's down to 2 now. The one that is left, he and I graduated high school together. He was a nose gunner on a B-24. He got shot down and he was a POW for nine months. Right now he has a broken hip. He leaned over to pull a weed out of the ground the other day and he fell backwards and broke his hip. I said, "Sam, how in the heck can you jump 10,000 feet, or whatever it was, and not get hurt, and you fall two feet and break your hip?" He said, "Old age I guess." (Laugh)

Mr. Misenhimer

Does Fern Metcalfe go to that breakfast with you?

Mr. Shanesy

Yes and we also have another lady. I think she was a storekeeper and she comes to it also.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yes, Fern told me there was a group that met for breakfast.

Mr. Shanesy

Most of the old World War II guys have all gone away it seems like. My father was World War I and he was in the Air Corps. He was an instrument repairman. I said, "Dad, what kind of instruments?" He said, "There was the gasoline gauge, the altimeter, a compass, and the oil pressure." (Laugh) But that's the way it was.

Mr. Misenhimer

Jack, is there anything else that you can think of from your time in World War II?

Mr. Shanesy

No, I cannot. It's just nice of you to call me and talk to me. I think the battery on my phone is getting dead because I can barely hear you.

Mr. Misenhimer

Well thanks again for your time and for your service to our country.

Transcribed by:

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