

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview with

**James G. Alls
Independence, KY
August 14, 2010
USS Flier SS 250**

My name is Richard Misenhimer and today is August 14, 2010. I am interviewing Mr. James G. Alls at the Holiday Inn at Muskegon, MI. His summer address is P.O. Box 243, Independence, KY 41051. His phone number is 859-356-2605. His winter address is 1125 King LN, Bowling Green, FL 33834. His phone is 863-375-4444. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer

Jim, I want to thank you for taking time today to do this interview today and

I want to thank you for service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Alls

Thank you sir, it's a pleasure.

Mr. Misenhimer

The first thing I like to do is to get an alternate contact. We find out that sometime several years down the road, we try to get 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?

Mr. Alls

Yes, it is Sharon Matthews, 28477 Old Office Rd, Rhoadesville, VA 22542. Her phone number is 540-854-4198.

Mr. Misenhimer

When is your birthdate?

Mr. Alls

March 9th, 1927.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you born?

Mr. Alls

Princeton, West Virginia.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Alls

Yes, I had 2 brothers and one is deceased, younger brothers.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have a sister?

Mr. Alls

No, just two brothers.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were either of them involved in WWII?

Mr. Alls

No.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, you grew up during the depression, how did the depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Alls

Not very, we were fortunate, we lived in a small coal mining town in Southern West Virginia and our father never lost more than 2 days of work per week. He was always able to get in at least 3 days and my mother was a very careful person with finances and,

uh, also during this time my father, first of all one of his, well one of his biggest ambition was to get his family out and away from the coal mining area because he did not want his sons to have to earn their living by going into the mines. And he had during World War I worked in the Naval base at Norfolk, VA in the yards. So, he applied for a job at the Washington Navy Yard and was accepted and he moved us in 1939 or 1940, I believe it was early part of 1940 as I remember to Washington D.C. and at that time he was employed as a machinist for the Washington Navy Yard.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go to High School?

Mr. Alls

I went into Washington D.C., Eastern High School.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you graduate from there?

Mr. Alls

No, I did not; in fact I dropped out of school and ran away from home when I was 15 years old. I was just barely waiting to go into high school.

Mr. Misenhimer

You said that you ran away from home?

Mr. Alls

Yes, to join the Navy and then I had to ask my father, beg my father if you will, not to reveal my true age and the promise that I made was that I would finish my, complete my education at the completion of my enlistment.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you do that?

Mr. Alls

Yes, I did and then I even, I was going to even go on higher but because of finances, if you will, and children coming on, well even to get my high school diploma I had to go to night school for 4 years. At that time the children were coming on faster than money was and it was one of the most difficult things that I had ever attempted was to get my education through night school while I worked during the daytime and on weekends to make ends meet.

Mr. Misenhimer

Could you use your G.I Bill for that high school?

Mr. Alls

I did, the G.I. Bill helped me tremendously.

Mr. Misenhimer

May I ask why you wanted to leave home and go into the Navy?

Mr. Alls

I was impressed, so impressed at that time. Washington D.C., of course, is the capital and so many, well all of the arms of the military were all around me. The Marines, the Army of course, the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer

The Army Air Corps?

Mr. Alls

Yes, at that time it was the Army Air Corps. And I was so impressed with the uniform

that I just had to be part of it.

Mr. Misenhimer

On December 7th, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor; do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Alls

Absolutely, I can even see the day that it happened.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you when you heard that?

Mr. Alls

I was at an address of 433 5th St., the southeast Washington D.C., that is where we lived.

And I can remember the shock and terribly horrified as we received the news over the radio. My father was just speechless, he couldn't talk.

Mr. Misenhimer

You would have been 14 at that time.

Mr. Alls

Yes, that would have been, yeah 14 because in March I turned 15.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you heard about Pearl Harbor, how did you think it would affect you?

Mr. Alls

At the time I didn't know, I was just horrified that it had happened and immediately I was thinking about these military men that I was seeing around me and how it would affect them. There were going to be facing an enemy overseas. Even as young as I was, I just felt that I had to get in there and help too.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you go into the service?

Mr. Alls

I was sworn in exactly six months to the day and close to the hour that Pearl Harbor was attacked. So I was sworn in on June the 7th, 1942 at 2:20 in the afternoon.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you went into the Navy?

Mr. Alls

That's correct.

Mr. Misenhimer

How did you choose the Navy?

Mr. Alls

I don't know to tell you the truth. Perhaps it was just that I liked the uniform.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you were 15? How did you accomplish that?

Mr. Alls

That's correct. I'm sorry, how did I...?

Mr. Misenhimer

Get into the Navy?

Mr. Alls

First of all, unbeknownst to my family, I took my birth certificate that they had hanging on the wall when they weren't looking, and in those days the Western Union telegraph offices had a free standing typewriter that the public could use and I took that typewriter

and put my birth certificate in and did a real sloppy job of changing the date. And then the first time I took it to recruiting office, they took a look at it and told me to go and I think it was the second or third that I went that the Chief turned around to the Yeoman that was there and said "Sign him up, get him out of our hair and take him." That is when I was accepted into the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you put yourself as being 18, is that right?

Mr. Alls

I'm not sure if I put myself as 17 or 18 but I told them I was over the legal age.

Mr. Misenhimer

At 17 you had to have a parent's signature.

Mr. Alls

That's correct.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you had to be at least 18. And you went in on June 7th?

Mr. Alls

Yes, for 6 years.

Mr. Misenhimer

That wasn't called the kiddy cruise was it?

Mr. Alls

Absolutely not, the kiddy cruise was when you went in at 17 and served until you were 21.

Mr. Misenhimer

Right and you signed up for 6 years?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where did you go for your boot camp?

Mr. Alls

Norfolk, VA. I was in one of the last boot camp classes that they had at Norfolk.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you went in at Washington D. C.? You enlisted in Washington D.C.?

Mr. Alls

I enlisted in Washington D.C. and that evening they put us onboard a ferryboat, I think it was, and took us down the Potomac River to Norfolk. We traveled all night to get down to Norfolk the following day.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was it in that ferryboat going down there?

Mr. Alls

I don't remember exactly but I can't tell you why, because I came from a happy home, but I was not homesick. But I lay awake at night on these bunks that we had there and I could here these other men around me crying and so upset that they were leaving home and so forth. That was going down there on the ferryboat on the way to boot camp.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got to boot camp, what did you do there? Tell me about your boot camp

training.

Mr. Alls

Alright, this was in June in Norfolk, VA and it very, very hot and this is where we were issued our uniforms and we did the drilling, and then we did training on lifeboats and things of that nature. And on graduation day I distinctly remember how we had to stand at attention for inspection for such a lengthy time. And several of the men passed out from the heat and it seemed like they it didn't bother them a bit, they just carried them off and kept going, you know.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long was your boot camp?

Mr. Alls

As I remember 8 weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you live in there?

Mr. Alls

In the barracks.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was the food there?

Mr. Alls

Not the best in the world. This is the first time I was ever introduced to eating pork and beans for breakfast.

Mr. Misenhimer

I hear that is a Navy tradition. How were your drill instructors, were they pretty rough on

you?

Mr. Alls

Not real bad but they were strict, but there weren't real bad. The chief that we had, I can remember him marching us during the hot weather and everything and his nerves up here in his face would start trembling like that.

Mr. Misenhimer

On his cheeks there, huh?

Mr. Alls

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have knot tying?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

And swimming?

Mr. Alls

We had swimming and as a matter of fact they taught us the whole trick of taking the trousers off, tying the legs off, then catching air through the waist of it and then using it as a life vest.

Mr. Misenhimer

A flotation device?

Mr. Alls

Yeah, I never had to much faith in that.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you have a lot of inspections during boot camp?

Mr. Alls

I can't remember, but I am sure that we did. I think we had one every Friday, a dress inspection. And I remember that this is where I learned how to shine shoes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Anything in particular you recall from boot camp?

Mr. Alls

Not really, except the day that they took us to the office and we sat down and filled out a form and on that form was five choices of duty and at that time I was so enamored with the Naval Air Force and I wanted to have an aviation rate. One of my first choices was aviation radioman, aviation machinist, aviation, uh, I've forgotten the others but I got to four choices out of the five and I wanted aviation and I couldn't think of anything else and I happened to look down and there was something about submarine and I wrote submarine duty. Could you believe that they woke me in a couple of days, sleeping one night, it was about 4 o'clock in the morning, the watch came over and woke me up and said "Sailor, get out of here. Get dressed. They want you to report to the dispensary immediately!" And why the rush? But I got dressed as fast as I could and I went to the dispensary and here is this old doctor with sleep in his eyes and the first thing he says is "Sailor, hold up your left foot and hop around on the right one until I tell you to stop." This went on, I guess maybe for 15-20 minutes and anyway he switched over to the other foot and then he made some other examinations and the next thing I knew the Chief told me to come in and told me go pack my sea bag that was on my way to New London, CT

for submarine school.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now, you were 15 but did you look older? Were you large for your size and look older?

Mr. Alls

No, I was approximately, as I remember, I think I was a little under 6 feet then but I do remember I only weighed 132 pounds.

Mr. Misenhimer

For a 15 year old that is a good size.

Mr. Alls

Yeah, good size.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did anyone ever question your age when you were there?

Mr. Alls

Never.

Mr. Misenhimer

How about the other people that were there with you?

Mr. Alls

It was only one time I even revealed my age to anyone; a friend of mine which I would really like to tell you about him later on.

Mr. Misenhimer

That is fine, but in boot camp nobody was questioning it and no one else said "Hey, you're too young for this?"

Mr. Alls

No.

Mr. Misenhimer

So then you went to sub school, where did you go for that?

Mr. Alls

To New London, CT and this is one of the first times that I ever met real honest to goodness danger. And the reason for this being, in order to qualify for submarine school one must do practice simulated dives from a sunken submarine using a momsen lung. Now, the first qualifications was at the 18 foot level, as you completed this dive with the momsen lung actually they dip you to about 18 feet and you use the lung when you come up. But they also tell you that if you were to make an escape, a simulated escape, from the 50 foot they will give you this nice bronze certificate signed by Captain so and so and should you complete the 100 foot dive and we will give you a gold certificate signed by Admiral so and so.

I went for the gold and did the 50 foot, piece of cake. Now, you must remember I tried to draw into my diving tower with bathing trunks. It was a huge structure that looked just like a big tank of water and it was filled with 100 feet of water. Now, it was divided into four sections. It had, what they called, pressure chambers at the 25 foot, at the 50 foot, at the 75 foot and now the 100 is a compartment that was directly underneath this 100 feet of water. The night prior to making the 100 foot dive we were restricted to quarters and a lot of young men didn't take the restrictions and went ashore that night and did everything that young men should not do and returning to quarters about 3 AM and at 7

AM they had to be up, dressed and marching down to the diving tower. Now my head felt like a ton of bricks, I couldn't think straight, I was dizzy, I was everything. I went into the chamber, they built up the pressure and as the pressure went up, the heat increased and as the heat increased my head justWhen it came time to, I had the momsen lung on, it came time for me to go down underneath and out into the water, fix myself all along the line up to 25 feet, stop, counted to 10 and then on up.

As soon as I stepped out into the water, my lung began to leak and I motioned to the diving instructor that was swimming around in there and he just came over and took and jammed that mouthpiece in and motioned to me to go on. I tore my mouthpiece from my mouth like that and I began swimming, swimming frantically to the top. The man at the 75 foot missed me, the guy at the 50 foot missed me and praise the Lord at the 25 the guy almost literally tackled me, drug me into the pressure chamber, slammed the hatch and started pumping the water that was in there out and called them on the telephone for an assistant. Meantime I am stretched out and then slowly I began to pass into unconsciousness and I come back and forth to consciousness and when the pharmacist mate went to help the doctor, they started building up the pressure in there as quickly as they could get it to equalize what the pressure at the bottom of that chamber was. And they worked on me, and they worked on me and forcing the lung bringing me up slowly and not long after that I developed a mild case of the bends. The red corpuscles came to the surface of the skin and exploded. Fortunately after about 8 hours, they transferred me to the dispensary.

Mr. Misenhimer

You spent 8 hours in that pressure chamber?

Mr. Alls

Yes. And the doctor looked at me and he was upset, he said "You will not, ever, be a submariner! You don't have it." Oh, he was angry. And I had duty in what they call a First Lieutenant department, at first I worked in an office and then I was in a messenger service and I said "I see these submarines coming in and crying." One night going to a movie there in the base and I got to talking to an officer and telling him how I had been disqualified and Lord forgive me I lied to him and I told him that my grandfather had been a submarine sailor on the old G-boats way back there and I just....He said, this young officer I was talking to, he said "Well, let me see what I can do." And lo and behold I was notified later on that if I still wanted submarine school I would have to do the 100 foot dive over again. It wasn't voluntarily, it had to be done. I did it, and this time I did it absolutely the way the book instructed.. And I placed in the submarine school and then I went to 4 weeks of diesel school. I took a place in a diesel school, then I was assigned to the *Flier*.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was your mouthpiece really leaking or not?

Mr. Alls

Yes sir, it was really leaking but it was only because I had not seated it right. The mouth piece has a rubber flange that fits outside the mouth. Inside of this is the piece that fits between the lips and then a piece between the teeth that the teeth clamp down on and you breathe through this.

Mr. Misenhimer

So it was your fault that it didn't seal?

Mr. Alls

Yes, because I had this hangover and I wasn't putting it on there right.

Mr. Misenhimer

When this officer put it in your mouth he put it in right?

Mr. Alls

No, he just jammed it in.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had no choice?

Mr. Alls

No.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long was that diesel school?

Mr. Alls

4 weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer

About when were you assigned to the *flier*? Roughly. Had you been in 6 months, 8 months, a year?

Mr. Alls

Let me think a moment, I went in in June and it took me 8 weeks of schooling, it would have been June, half of July, and then it was probably 6 months that I wasn't in school, and then I was in sub school for, I think it was 8 weeks and then 4 weeks of diesel school,

so it was getting about the winter of 42; it was January or February of 1943.

Mr. Misenhimer

Tell me about sub school, what all did you do in sub school?

Mr. Alls

Oh, we would taught the compartments capacities, how to perform different tasks senses, replacing the diesel fuel as the ship used the fuel and the tank became empty. They had to make up for that weight and they would do it by letting sea water into the empty diesel tank. And such operating and how to use the high pressure air manifold to blow water from the tanks, so to speak. And it was all about submarines, their construction. And not only if you were a machinist and you worked in the engine room, you also had to learn how to work in the torpedo room, and how to work on torpedoes and load torpedoes. So you would learn the whole sub.

Mr. Misenhimer

I understand that every person was suppose to know every job on a submarine, is that basically right?

Mr. Alls

Theoretically, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you went to sub school before you went to diesel school?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you were not a motor mac?

Mr. Alls

No, I was a fireman.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then you finished diesel school, then what?

Mr. Alls

Same thing, I didn't make fireman until I was on the *Flier*.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now a fireman does what?

Mr. Alls

He is like an apprentice seaman.

Mr. Misenhimer

I mean he is not a firefighter?

Mr. Alls

Oh no.

Mr. Misenhimer

Ok, I wanted to make sure what a fireman in the Navy, what he was?

Mr. Alls

At that time, seaman which is the same as a private first class, or even a private. He wore a white stripe if he was a seaman and then if he was a fireman he wore a red stripe around his shoulder.

Mr. Misenhimer

After you finished diesel school what happened?

Mr. Alls

You know, I was going with a lady at that time, dating, and she worked on the base and she was actually in an office that made the assignments and because of our close relationship she told me that she had made arrangements for me to be stationed on a school submarine that trained people from the sub school and it would be a duty so that later on we could be married. And I went bonkers and told her “please, if you are going to do something like that I want new construction.. I want to be on one.” And she arranged good friends and so forth. But anyway my name came up on the *Flier* before she even put into commission. And she was over in Groton, Electric Boat.

Mr. Misenhimer

When did you join the *Flier* then?

Mr. Alls

Oh gee, I don't have the date.

Mr. Misenhimer

Roughly. When was the *Flier* commissioned, do you know that?

Mr. Alls

I got it written down but I can't remember.

Mr. Misenhimer

Ok, so then what happened? You are now assigned to the *Flier* and then what happened?

Mr. Alls

Ok, I was assigned to the *Flier* and slowly as she began to take shape and come together and getting ready to proceed out to the Pacific, I can remember then having an open ship for the crews family and I can remember how my mother and father came up and they

were so worried about me being assigned to a submarine and I told them "Please, don't worry. We are only going to do patrol duty up and down the coast." And of course I was lying like a dog but I was trying to keep them from worrying. And I remember how my mother was just overwhelmed by the interior of this submarine and big diesel engines that my father was just looked and looked; the torpedo room.....

Mr. Misenhimer

So they got to go through the sub then?

Mr. Alls

Yes. And we were in the control room and I explained to them everything that went on in there and I can remember that they were overwhelmed, seemed to enjoy it so much and then of course the goodbyes and the next day we pulled out of port and headed south.

Mr. Misenhimer

That is when you told them not to reveal your age, right?

Mr. Alls

Yes, oh no I had told them when I was back at boot camp. Actually just shortly after I went in and gee, I about broke my poor fathers heart because here it is, I was sworn in on Sunday and they kept waiting for me to come home. I didn't show up and when I wrote them a letter and explained what had happened and everything and this is where I asked them "Please don't do anything until I get home from boot camp." And that is when I begged him and I can very clearly remember him telling my mother "Don't worry, he will not be able to stand the regimentation that the Navy will expect out of him and he will come begging us to get him out as quickly as possible." But they misestimated that.

Mr. Misenhimer

So now you are heading south?

Mr. Alls

I've forgotten what we were talking about?

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got on the *Flier* did you have a shakedown cruise or that sort of thing?

Mr. Alls

Actually the true shakedown cruise was the one that you make from New London out to Pearl Harbor. And of course we were still in and out, we fired practice torpedoes and we did dives real quick and different situations before we actually sailed. I think it was a month that we

Mr. Misenhimer

After it was launched?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was it like the first time you went down in the submarine under water?

Mr. Alls

I wasn't too impressed but it went, you know, being in it, and I honestly believe, and I know now of course that I feel more secure in a close area than I do in wide open spaces. So I luckily took to it very easily.

Mr. Misenhimer

The opposite of claustrophobia?

Mr. Alls

I never had claustrophobia.

Mr. Misenhimer

No sea sickness?

Mr. Alls

No.

Mr. Misenhimer

After you went down through the Gulf of Mexico?

Mr. Alls

We didn't get into the Gulf of Mexico, remember we are coming down the East Coast.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah, you went through the Caribbean.

Mr. Alls

We came all the way down through to Panama and we docked at Colon, Panama and then we went through the canal and came out the other side at Balboa on the Pacific side and then continued on to Pearl.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was it like going through the Panama Canal?

Mr. Alls

Oh, Beautiful! Of course I was on duty part of the time going through down in the engine room. Actually I wasn't in the engine room, I was the lowest, one of the two of us at the lowest rate on the ship and we had to do what they called the mess cook duty. And this is like KP duty. When I was off duty I was able to come up on deck for brief periods

of time and do some sightseeing.

Mr. Misenhimer

How long did it take to go through the canal?

Mr. Alls

It was, let's see, I think we did it in one day.

Mr. Misenhimer

I heard 8-10 hours or something like that.

Mr. Alls

Yeah, I think so.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you in Colon did you get a liberty?

Mr. Alls

Yes, we stayed in there a day or two and I went ashore.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was liberty like there?

Mr. Alls

There was a section of Colon that's really for sinners, a 3 block area and the older sailors use to take us young guys down there and they thought that was; well actually it scared me so bad that I didn't want to go ashore after that.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you got through the Canal to Balboa, did you get a shore leave there or not?

Mr. Alls

Yes, and I remember that Balboa is famous for the high tide. I believe that they had a 30

foot tide.

Mr. Misenhimer

As I understand it Panama Canal actually runs North and South, not east and west like we all think.

Mr. Alls

I don't remember to tell you that. That's the first time I ever heard that.

Mr. Misenhimer

Ok, how was the trip to Pearl?

Mr. Alls

Very good, in fact nothing happened until we got to Pearl and just before we made port we were approaching the entrance buoy at exactly the same time as, I think it was a auxiliary troop ship, I'm not sure but, anyway, but a good example of rank consciousness, rank if you will, we experienced right here because this other ship challenged us and told us to heave to or stop. That he was going to go through. He was a Commander and this infuriated our skipper until he answered him through our signal light as follows "Roger, Dodger, you old cadger, I'm a Commander too and I intend to go through." Consequently we went in ahead of him.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you went to Pearl were you by yourself or were there other ships with you?

Mr. Alls

As I remember we were by ourselves.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you go mostly submerged or on the surface?

Mr. Alls

Mostly it was on the surface.

Mr. Misenhimer

Daytime, nighttime or whatever?

Mr. Alls

24-7, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the top speed of the *Flier* when she was surfaced?

Mr. Alls

21 knots.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you go at that speed going over there?

Mr. Alls

No, usually, probably as I remember we did 15 or 16 knots.

Mr. Misenhimer

So it took you how long to get there?

Mr. Alls

It seems to me like a week.

Mr. Misenhimer

Once you got in after challenging this other ship then what happened?

Mr. Alls

I think we stayed there for approximately 2 or 3 weeks, again going out and making test dives and still ironing out problems that we had. Minor problems one or two, major

problems but I don't remember what they were but anyway we were there long enough that we saw these huge, groups of ships that would leave each day one right after the other heading out to the war. At that time we were really having some.....

Mr. Misenhimer

This would have been in the spring of 1943?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was there much damage, much wreckage still at Pearl Harbor when you were there?

Mr. Alls

Oh yes. As soon as we came in to the right the masts of the battleships that went down, one or two they had already in dry dock but most of them had not been brought up yet. And if you recall, President Roosevelt had told everyone that so many ships were salvageable but they fixed them but just because he made that promise.

Mr. Misenhimer

You could still see the *Arizona*?

Mr. Alls

The *USS Arizona*, yes, and the *USS Oklahoma* and the *USS West Virginia* were still there.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you get liberty there? How was liberty in Honolulu?

Mr. Alls

Oh, well, it was good to a certain extent. You could only go and stay until; you see they gave us liberty at ten o'clock in the morning and you had to be back by 5 in the

afternoon. And this was because of the war zone and so forth. They did not allow military men in the city after 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

Mr. Misenhimer

Anything else happen to you in Hawaii?

Mr. Alls

No, nothing significant. We were all anxious to keep going west.

Mr. Misenhimer

Ok, then what happened?

Mr. Alls

Then we sailed for Midway. We arrived shortly close to Midway on December 31, 1943 and we were also warned about a typhoon in the area. And the Naval Command, for some reason, at Midway Island we requested permission to stay out during the storm because we could ride it out on the surface or even submerge much easier than we could in port. And, as I say, the high command, whoever he was, turned down our request and ordered us to make port and that following day on January 1st, 1944, as I recall I think it was approximately noon that we arrived to the entrance of the channel, they sent a seagoing tug with a pilot onboard.

When he got out to the *Flier*, I'm talking about the pilot, the seas were so rough that we couldn't transfer him onboard, it was just too treacherous. So, it was agreed that we would follow him into the, now the channel at Midway is treacherous as it can be. It is full of coral that runs up and down the island like that (hand movement) and a very narrow....Then we got to the very entrance of it and we didn't know it at the time but the

starboard entrance had broken her mooring and was gone and the tug sailed right over the reef and not drawing that much water and we are trying at two-thirds speed and we hit that reef it was awful. You could imagine, it just stopped! Tools in the engine room were everywhere, men were knocked to the deck, and we couldn't understand what in the world, down in the engine room, what was happening.

Mr. Misenhimer

You hit the reef and then what happened?

Mr. Alls

First of all we sent out an SOS and then we tried our best, full speed back and we could just hear those screws hitting the coral and we could just see it was so devastating. And all ahead forward and it was the same thing and then they even said "All hands stand to portside" and we would all get and "Now shift to starboard side" hoping that the shift in our weight. And then we decided, all of the sudden, if one of these tanks had ruptured and we rolled off of this rock we are going to right to the bottom. The *Macaw*, a submarine rescue ship, came out to help us and she got to maneuvering in close so that she could get a line across thinking that they would use a bos'n chair to abandoned ship. And the sea caught the *Macaw* and so up on the reef high and dry as we were. And she was a wooden hull ship.

Ok, while she was up there the seas would calm down and now first of all let's go back to when we hit. We had the anchor detail station, this means there is a group of men up forward on the bow to operate the capstan to help drop the anchor and so forth.

Mr. Misenhimer

You were outside the ship?

Mr. Alls

We were on the deck, outside the hull, up on the superstructure. Ok, these big swells were breaking down on the bow and the next thing that we know of is that the anchor detail is gone, there are men in the water, 4 of them made it over to land, one of them was lost went to sea. And then these swells are breaking down on the wooden deck of the ship. It smashed some of these planks. Now this one man, Daggy, was of course down against the conning tower right where all those broken boards and the men in the conning tower had got him and pulled him up, and then lowered him down, he was bleeding profusely, they got him into the crew quarters. He was badly hurt, he was bleeding.

Mr. Misenhimer

Around his mouth you are pointing to?

Mr. Alls

Yes, it was actually on the left-hand side of his mouth and on the upper gum were these big slivers of wood sticking in there, like that, and at least one or two of his teeth knocked out. Did you know that we did not have a doctor onboard? We had a pharmacist mate and good one at that and he had him stretched out on a bunk right close to where he kept his medical supplies and he took all the Novocain that he had, so he could dull the pain and he said over the loudspeaker "anybody that was carrying whiskey to bring it back and that we are going to use that to back up the anesthetic."

Now picture this, the ship is rolling over to port, then to starboard but when she would come up and get about mid-ship she would hesitate and while she was hesitating this is when the pharmacist mate would take his scalpel and then he would have to wait. Now

he didn't have big lights like they have in operating rooms and so they had these emergency light, lanterns, and he had all of those brought back to where he was working and had men laying on bunks here and there and they were shine these lights down on him. So, I think, I am not sure about the time but it seems it took two hours of coming up like that and making those incisions and cleaning the wounds real good and then sewing it up and so forth. Then the lip was cut down. When they finished and Daggy came out of, and of course he was all swollen up like that, and no doctor but when we did get to a doctor that medical commander took a look at Daggy and was examining his incision and he turned to the men and said "I could not have done a better job myself!"

But to get back to the reef, just these horrifying moments right after she hit and Cawl was pushed out to see, a man, his last name was Cawl.

Mr. Misenhimer

How do you spell that?

Mr. Alls

I think C-A-W-L. And, now remember instead of the heart of the storm passing, it lingered for a couple of days and after about the second day, I think it was, they come and say "quick, take a look the *Macaw* is going down." That rescue ship that came out for us. Eight or nine men and the skipper perished right there where we could have tossed a baseball. And you can imagine the emotion seeing this.

And then finally the storm passed over and the aircraft that they had flown to another island to escape the ravishes of this typhoon, they were flying and coming back. And as

they came in over, I believe Easter Island, a pilot looked down and he saw this school of porpoises with what looked like a human body and the pilot notified the medics on Midway and they came down to that point with a basket and while they retrieved the remains of Cawl, these porpoises were swimming around like in a circle and it almost seemed that when they knew that he was secure, they turned and went back to sea. Now that sounds incredible, I know, but it happened that way. Now I say that it happened that way. That's the way the pharmacist told us and the way we understood it.

Shortly after, of course, if that had happened today they would have flown Cawl's remains back to one of the ports here and his family would have had him immediately, almost. But in those days all we could do, we prepare his; I say we, the base there at Midway prepared his remains in a canvas bag and sewed them up with a 4 inch shell for weight and then perforated this canvas bag so that it would sink and then we put him on the afterdeck of a PT Boat and took him out to sea. And as we got out there, I will never forget how they stand with the body on one side with a slide like and that chaplain's words were "and now I commit thee to the deep." And that is when Cawl was committed to the deep.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you on the PT Boat when this happened?

Mr. Alls

Yes, I was part of the burial detail. And then when we got back and got our crew together we had a stem dredge that had arrived from Honolulu or Pearl Harbor and she pulled us off of the reef and of course we only had a skeleton crew on there so that if it did go

down. We didn't know what would happen once we got her back out in the water but luckily she did float. And we were towed, if you will, back to Pearl.

At Pearl Harbor they put us into dry dock and did emergency repairs. The port screw, as I remember, well both of them the propellers were devastated, destroyed. But they pulled the shaft on the portside and plugged it up, put a new screw on the starboard side which was the least damaged and then we went back under our own power to Mare Island in the states. We arrived at Mare Island approximately shortly after noon, it seems to me 1:30-2:30 in the afternoon and immediately the civilian workforce there on Mare Island began with their big torches cutting of the keel and they took the whole keel off and replaced it. And all of this, believe it or not, only took about a month or maybe 6 weeks. And of course we were given leave until the ship was repaired and then we came back and again headed back out west again.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were towed back to Pearl was the entire crew on the sub?

Mr. Alls

Yes, the entire crew.

Mr. Misenhimer

And then the same thing going to Mare Island?

Mr. Alls

Right. So now we are ready to go back to sea again. We went back to Pearl for a short training time and then instead of going by Midway, I don't know what the reason was but we went by a little place called Johnson Island for refueling and then we were getting

close to the first time in combat and that was the invasions of the Marianas. The weather was as if the answer to a submariners dream. For instance it was raining and the visibility there at the Mariana's, it was almost, you could only see a few feet in front of you and of course with our radar that made it perfect. We made our attack and I have forgotten it exactly but I believe that it was 2 ships that we sunk there. And it was so bad that we laid on the service coming in. They had these huge mountains and we were kind of in on the shadows of these mountains watching these Japanese destroyers depth charging while we were laying over here watching them, see. And they thought that they were really.....

After that we proceeded on west and this time we were getting out and close into the Philippines and we were up at around Leyte where MacArthur made his return and we got word that up in a body of water called Lingayen Gulf. That there was a target up there that possibly was a freighter carrying troops, both cargo and troops, and when we made it around we got in to observe. She was sitting low in the water, steam coming out of the stack which meant that she was going to get underway pretty soon and that she is loaded. But what we didn't know that on the horizon that she had 2 Terri-suki destroyers, Terri-suki class destroyers which were huge. And depth charges everywhere.

We had imagined that she could even probably had depth charges in the Captain's state room because when we dove and settled on the bottom, shut down all running machinery these guys came barreling down over us and honestly it sounded like huge locomotive, train locomotives going over the top of us. But they were searching for us and sending out this sonar and we were just praying that the sonar would; and then suddenly we could even hear that "ping, ping, ping" and we knew then that she had found two of them. Ok,

one would lay to hence and then one would come down like a form of an 'X', we have a pattern of depth charges as it came and then we were taking a 118 depth charges and at that time was a record for an American submarine under attack.

Where the crew was it was so hot that we stripped to our under shorts and got towels and laid them around our shoulders wiping the sweat. And the perspiration was so intense that it lay in puddles on the deck. And this is where I, as this young kid, had been looking at these older sailors that were drinking and fighting and I just wanted to be just like them and here I was scared to death with these depth charges coming down like that. And I sought out these two men who I thought were the roughest, toughest, meanest men and I wanted to be just like them but you know what? They were obviously just as frightened as I was. The colors in their cheeks were pale white and their knuckles in their hands; they were wringing their hands and not even trying to hide their fear. And this one man whom I had criticized, mind you, for reading his Bible when he could have been going with us and drinking and having fun and chose not to and just used to laugh and shake his head when we would invite him, when I looked at him and he was as calm as he could be. You know he was doing little chores or whatever to just pass the time and then he saw how concerned some of the men on there were, absolutely, probably atheists and he came to me and he said "do you want me to prayer with you?" And I begged him "Yes, please!" and that is when he started his pray which was the 23rd Psalm, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil."

Finally, these guys gave up. I guess they figured nothing could've lived through that, the

barrage that they had given us and we surfaced and we had a few leaks but nothing that; we made repairs. And we were out of torpedoes by then. We told COMSUBPAC Commander, Submarines that we were going back to Fremantle.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had not been to Fremantle before?

Mr. Alls

No, this is the first time. So, on the way.....

Mr. Misenhimer

Didn't you sink that ship?

Mr. Alls

Yes, with 3 torpedoes. She went down in about, as I recall, about 5 minutes, 10 minutes and bow first if I remember right but we definitely sank her.

Mr. Misenhimer

Ok, you hadn't mentioned that, you just mentioned the depth charging.

Mr. Alls

Yes, because it was such an intensive depth charging.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you sank the ship?

Mr. Alls

Yes, right. Yes. Now we are on our way to Fremantle and we getting on down close to Lombok, and Macassar Strait which are gateways into the Indian Ocean. And we spotted a Japanese Sampan and Navy intelligence had told us that ordinarily these Sampans had been intended to be fishing vessels but up on closer examination they had

some high tech radio gear onboard and as soon as she spotted a sub she would report her position and such and the best thing for us to do was to do away with it. We approached it, pulled along side of it, asked if they had and they did have radio gear. Told them we were taking prisoners or they could stay on there whichever they wanted to do, but that we were going to sink it. Of course we had to do this hand signals and so forth. So we did, we took, I believe it was 2 prisoners and proceeded on to Fremantle.

Now after we got down to Lombok, Macassar.....

Mr. Misenhimer

Now you said that you sank the Sampan, right?

Mr. Alls

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

With a deck gun?

Mr. Alls

Right. And with one of the antiaircraft guns on the cigarette deck. So, anyhow we are coming on down through Macassar and Lombok and into the Indian Ocean and down there we felt fairly safe cruising on the surface. In the meantime to pass time away the crew would go up into the forward torpedo room where some of the men that were off and joke a kid with those little Japs the best way you could and teach them English. And we finally taught them enough sign language and you know they could communicate very well and then we explained to them that if they did what we told them to and said what we taught them to, that they would be fine. They would have nothing to worry

about. So, we made port and all the excitement and we had gold braid all over the place and incidentally the skipper got the Navy Cross, Jim Liedell, the exec, got a Gold Star.

Mr. Misenhimer

The star?

Mr. Alls

The Star. Anyhow, we get in and tied up and waiting for the Marines to come on and take the prisoners off, which they did. Great big, typical Marine Gunnery Sergeant, a Corporal. And theses little Japs, at first they were just frightened and we tell them "Just do what we told you too, you know." And they say "US Marine is full of horse dung." (laughing) If you could imagine this big Marine looked at those little guys and he looked at us and he said "You guys ought to be ashamed of yourself." (laughing) I thought you might find that humorous.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yes, we like to get funny incidents. That's good.

Mr. Alls

So we came in and the first thing that we get when we get back in off of a war patrol, well actually it would be two or three things. One of them is 2 big ten gallon cans of fresh milk that was chilled and it seems like our system had been without these, what milk furnishes and we would just stand there and drink it. Now the next thing was mail and your mail was about that thick....

Mr. Misenhimer

6 inches or so.

Mr. Alls

Yeah, and then we would go off different places where you could get by yourself and read and concentrate on these letters from your sweetheart and your wives and so forth. And then the next thing of it is, is the transfer over to the hotel or the best hotel in town. They would host the US Navy submarines for 2 weeks and of course it is quite a time, guys are letting off steam and do all the other things that they shouldn't do and so forth.

Mr. Misenhimer

How many ships did you sink on that first patrol?

Mr. Alls

Gee, you ask me and I have forgotten.....

Mr. Misenhimer

It was several though?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

You said you were out of torpedoes after that last one.

Mr. Alls

Right and I think the capacity is 24 of Mark 14, 15 or 16's.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what happened?

Mr. Alls

Ok, we were on leave for 2 weeks and came back and started to get ready to go back up North again and then a New Zealand troop ship came in. Now they had been out in New

Guinea, Port Moresby, in that area fighting the Japs and they had this rumor that while they were up there that the American Sailors were down in New Zealand courting their wives and their girlfriends while they were fighting the war, so to speak. And of course after a few beers they were all wound up and these fights had began to break out and so forth and the shore patrol and the SPs as well as the MPs that worked together and were to pick up and cancel leave for any American regardless of his branch of service. I was on this SP duty.

I went into this one hotel, and it was early between 4 or 5 o'clock in the evening and we got careless, in another word we were working 2 and 2 and finally we were getting anxious to get out of there, fellow that I was working with. Told me "You take that and...." Gee I forgotten the name of the hotel now but anyhow they had a big bar in there and he said "and I'll get this one next door." Well I went in there and when I walked in right in the back there was a big group of New Zealanders and right in the center of them was this little buck sergeant and he was knocking them off how he was going to whip every New Zealander in there. I worked my way back and I said "Come on sergeant, you and me got to get out of here." And when I took his arm and he turned this huge beer mug smashed me upside of the face.

I had a splintered jawbone, I had a fractured eardrum, concussion but the thing of it was then all heck broke loose. And I didn't know who did it or why but somebody pulled me outside in an alley and dropped me there and then they closed up and I didn't come to until it was after dark and I come staggering out that alleyway and a vehicle was coming

and it was an Australian army truck and he picked me up and took me to the hospital, Australian hospital. Then they transferred me over to a Navy medical facility and while I was there was when I got the phone call from, I forgotten if it was Liedell or one of the other officers wanting to know how I felt and said “hey, look we will pick you up when we come back in again. We have a retainer on you and we are not transferring you, you are still part of the crew and as soon as we get back you’ll come back and join us.” And she sailed the following morning on August 2nd.

Of course my jaw was all wired up and so forth and this was probably after about 3 or 4 weeks; I was with these braces for 6 weeks, if I remember right, because my jaw was wired shut. Ok, so after about, I believe it was 3 weeks or so, I requested when the doctor came around, when he made his rounds that morning, I said “Please, can I go ashore?” I said “I’ve been in here and I need to get out and relax a little bit.” And I said “I’m feeling good” and he said “alright, but let me warn you son if you go over there drinking and get drunk, you haven’t had anything on your stomach except liquid for these past 3 weeks. You will become so sick that you actually drown in your own vomit.” He said “Now whatever you do, you go over if you want to but don’t you get into any physical conflict either. And don’t drink!” and I promised and I went out there and walked the streets and it was just good to be out in the sunshine.

And all of the sudden I met a guy that I had known back in Pearl Harbor who was with the Navy intelligence and he said “What ship are you on?” and I said “I’m on the *Flier*” and I told him how I was transferred to the hospital and when I said that he just looked

and his features just froze. And I didn't say anything, I didn't realize and then he became suddenly non-talkative and he was drinking a beer and I was drinking a cup of coffee and I told him, I said "I'm really looking forward to getting back on the *Flier*" and with that he pushed himself back away from the table and got up and I thought he was going to leave and not say anything and I couldn't understand why he was acting so strange and he looked at me and he said "The *Flier* isn't coming back." And he turned around and left. He wasn't going to, you know he really wasn't going to reveal anything to me.

Mr. Misenhimer

Yeah, he was not supposed to say that.

Mr. Alls

And so it was another week or so after that that the word got out that she was down and I got to meet the survivors when they got back except for the officers and I believe 5 enlisted men, I got to see and talk to them. So that is my story.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now you told us on tape awhile ago, tell me again, you knew Betty Jo's nephew Boyd Lindeman?

Mr. Alls

Yes, torpedo man.

Mr. Misenhimer

You had an interesting story on him with a couple of pistols, what was that again?

Mr. Alls

Oh that was the day that we were up in the forward torpedo room talking and carrying on and he said "I got something I got to show you." And he opened up his locker and he

brought back these 2 big handguns, I think if I remember correctly that they were the single action six shooter Western type of firearm and I said “what in the world are you going to do with those?” and he said “this one is for me and this is one is for that slant eyed SOB that comes after me. “ (laughing)

Mr. Misenhimer

Another funny story. Ok, you were in Fremantle when you heard about the *Flier*?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then what happened after the survivors came back?

Mr. Alls

First of all they gave me duty that absolutely was nothing. They babied me for some reason, uh, the lieutenant that was in charge, a lieutenant by the name of McCormick, and if I didn't get up and I missed my duty they would say “Hey, you know you better stop sleeping in” or something like that and instead of giving me an assignment to go and work and what not, I would say “Hey, I would like to go ashore” and they would say “Go ahead, that's alright.” And obviously so I wanted to go to sea again and the Navy, had come up with this idea that they would like to get motion pictures of an attack when a submarine that is on the surface and they made this attachment to the periscope that you could mount a 16mm camera to and then take pictures. And so they gave me and several others, I think it was 2 or 3 weeks training with cameras and when the submarine *Hammerhead* came in I was transferred to the *Hammerhead*. And went to sea on the *Hammerhead* and then I had a successful run on her. But the skipper did not like this

attachment to the periscope, it was invading his territory and consequently when we got in he just told me “we are transferring you back onto the base because I do not want these things.”

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you use the camera on that patrol?

Mr. Alls

Yes, I did. I took my camera and went ashore and then the *Kraken* came in and then they agreed to take pictures, so I went aboard the *Kraken*. And on the *Kraken*, in fact I was on the *Kraken* and we were operating with a submarine with the name of the *Bullhead* which was the last submarine sunk during WWII. And we approached a convoy one morning and made contact with a convoy and the skipper determined that it was to shallow a water, I think it was only 100 feet and he didn't want to take a depth charge and take a chance at that depth. And he had called the *Bullhead* to come up and join him on this convoy. Well, when he decided to go on ahead of the convoy and to make it up there at a certain area where he would do more good, well the *Bullhead* came up and couldn't make contact with us but here was the convoy and she jumped in and I think she sank one or two ships out of the convoy. But we heard her getting depth charged and it was bad and she was never heard from again.

And then we continued on the *Kraken* on up to the Philippines and they ceased fire and the War was over so to speak. And then we started back, I came back to the States on the *Kraken* and I've forgotten but the third fleet, the fourth fleet or something like that, there was a lot of publicity about the 7th fleet coming back but we weren't part of that

because we were with one of the other groups. You know and what a wonderful sight it was when coming back and seeing the Golden Gate Bridge.

Mr. Misenhimer

You were still on your submarine?

Mr. Alls

Yeah, in fact I finished the cruise even after I got in trouble with the skipper for criticizing the loss of the *Bullhead*. Well I had gone home and I was drinking, fighting, in fact the shore patrol picked me up, I think it was 3 times, all of this stuff was I had a mental thing. If it had been the *Flier* I keep thinking of myself and here this guy runs from this contact because he was in too shallow of water and the other sub, if we had stuck then the two of us would of.....

But anyway, I got back off the leave and I had to go up before the Captain and he let me know that he didn't appreciate the crew conducting themselves in such a fashion as I had. He said "Consequently" he said "We are sending you back to sea again. The *Pilotfish* is leaving this afternoon and I want you to be onboard. She is going to Bikini and maybe by the time she gets back you would have learned a little more."

Then I did, but on my way west, on the way out to Pearl I met a lady that worked at the Hickam Field and by this is the time I am 19 years old and I immediately fell in love with her and we became engaged before I went to Bikini and she said she would go back to New York to meet her family and when I returned we were going to get married in Honolulu and we did. Then we lived in Naval housing at Pearl City in, well just south of

the Naval base and when we looked around and we were in the naval housing and some of these old sailors were really misbehaving and what not, she said "Jim, this is not the environment I want to bring our children up in." She said "I know you love the Navy and you would like to ship over", you see my 6 years were growing close, so I agreed with her that we would go out into the civilian life and see what we couldn't do better.

Mr. Misenhimer

So you got out when your 6 years were up?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

In 1948 then?

Mr. Alls

In fact I was discharged a little early because of accumulated leave, so I got discharged April 1948.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you went to Bikini what did you do there?

Mr. Alls

Helped prepare the ship for the bomb test. We took the *Pilotfish* out there and she was sunk on that. See they had 2 bombs and of course submarines, the first one was done on the surface and she got through with flying colors and it didn't touch it. The second one they submerged her with cables across to hold her down and then they and unfortunately she was sunk on that one.

Mr. Misenhimer

But you came back from there on another ship?

Mr. Alls

On the *Blackfin*.

Mr. Misenhimer

Another submarine?

Mr. Alls

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

After the War you were still in submarines then?

Mr. Alls

Right.

Mr. Misenhimer

You were in submarines up until the time you got out?

Mr. Alls

That is correct.

Mr. Misenhimer

How was the morale on the *Flier*?

Mr. Alls

Good, for instance Gunner Pope would come up to the crews mess where we hung out so to speak when we were cruising and he'd say, talking about the bad luck that they had and he said "Let me tell you fellows something" he said "When I first came into the Navy I was assigned to a battleship" I've forgotten the name but he said "I was just a young

seaman and I didn't realize all the do's and don'ts of the Navy" and he said "They had me swabbing the deck back on the fantail with a swab. And lo and behold this big, ugly, seabird came down and landed and dirtied the deck"

Mr. Misenhimer

An albatross?

Mr. Alls

Albatross, I was trying to think of it. And when he sneaked up behind him with that swab and clobbered him over the head and killed that albatross and not knowing that there was a curse on anyone who performed such a horrible deed and he said "Men, this is exactly the reason we are having this bad luck is because I killed that albatross!" (laughing) So we just laughed and carried on. Used to kid him about the dead bird back on theBut, yes, we had high morale.

Mr. Misenhimer

What was the highest rank you got to during World War II?

Mr. Alls

Motor Mac 3rd class. I got to second class after I was in the reserves.

Mr. Misenhimer

On April 12th of 1945, President Roosevelt died; did you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you at that time? At Fremantle I guess?

Mr. Alls

What was the date again?

Mr. Misenhimer

April 12th of 1945.

Mr. Alls

I was in the Philipenes helping do the operating out of Sobic Bay.

Mr. Misenhimer

What reaction did people have to that?

Mr. Alls

Astounding, they just couldn't believe that Harry Truman would fill the bill which of course we were wrong but we just couldn't believe it. After all Roosevelt had been in and had all that experience and everything to lead us in World War II so we were shocked.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then on May the 8th of 1945, Germany surrendered, do you hear about that?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Any kind of celebration or anything?

Mr. Alls

Lets see, I was at sea when Germany surrendered, that was in June or July?

Mr. Misenhimer

May the 8th of 1945.

Mr. Alls

Ok, we were at sea on the *Hammerhead* then.

Mr. Misenhimer

On August the 6th they dropped the first Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima, did you hear about that?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Where were you then?

Mr. Alls

We were, again we were on the *Kraken* and that was just after that encounter with the convoy with the *Bullhead*.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you heard about the Atomic bomb what did you think of that?

Mr. Alls

We were surprised, especially when so many people said that the Japs had actually called a ceased fire right after that.

Mr. Misenhimer

When they actually did surrendered on August the 15th, did you have a celebration then?

Mr. Alls

No, it wasn't much celebration when Japan surrendered. Whoop and holler a bit.

Mr. Misenhimer

Then they had the big surrender on September 2nd in Tokyo Bay, you weren't there were

you?

Mr. Alls

No.

Mr. Misenhimer

Were you ever under friendly fire?

Mr. Alls

No. And last night I heard that someone claimed that the *Flier* was under friendly fire down around Colon, Panama just before we made port. I think that is a mistake.

Mr. Misenhimer

What did you think of the medic, the pharmacist mates? I think I know the answer but what did you think of the pharmacist mates?

Mr. Alls

I have the greatest respect imaginable. I tell you, being a pharmacist mate like any medical; any member of the medical profession had their good days and their nasty days. For them to work with human beings like this is just amazing.

Mr. Misenhimer

What would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Alls

Without a doubt the Lingayen Gulf, that huge depth charging. I was never so frightened.

Mr. Misenhimer

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

Mr. Alls

Yes, I had souvenirs that I had traded and what not in the Philippines and being careless I

let somebody steal them from me. I had a Japanese rifle, 2 or 3 Japanese flags and I've forgotten just what all I did have but I forgotten, I didn't secure them good enough when I went on leave.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever see any USO shows?

Mr. Alls

Oh yes. Here is something else that I really want to emphasize, during my service I had heard so many men of different branches of the service criticize the USO and I want to tell you right now that I served 6 years in different areas and I have seen the USO and I think that they are one of the most wonderful things that we had for the men's morale during World War II and why they get this criticism I don't know but it's unwarranted.

Mr. Misenhimer

For what?

Mr. Alls

For not entertaining them enough. For instance I told you about the broken jaw, when I went back to the USO there was a lady in there that I had seen her and I called her Mom Smith and when I came in and I showed her all of these things she said "come with me" and she stuck me back over in a corner and after I told her "I am so hungry for some solid food" She took tweezers and lifted those rubber bands off across the jaw and took a spoon, now mind you first she fixed me some scrambled eggs, soft scrambled eggs and then a piece of toast mashed up real fine and she sat there and fed me like a baby.

Mr. Misenhimer

Was that the Red Cross or USO?

Mr. Alls

The USO and I never got over that. That was a; and another time when we were going on a draft to Key West when I was in sub school going down, the train would stop at certain places and I have forgotten if it was the Red Cross or whether it was the USO that would have coffee for us out there.

Mr. Misenhimer

It was the Red Cross that had coffee.

Mr. Alls

Yeah, but I couldn't criticize either one of them.

Mr. Misenhimer

The USO mainly had shows like Bob Hope and those guys.

Mr. Alls

But they had those USO clubs.

Mr. Misenhimer

Like they had for dances and things like that.

Mr. Alls

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer

Now what about this draft to Key West, I hadn't heard about that, what was this?

Mr. Alls

They sent us to Key West for a training period of mostly sonar and we were trained on old World War I submarines of the R class and I think we were in Key West something like 6 weeks and then back up to Newport.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you were overseas, your mail, you said you were in port to get your mail, is that right?

Mr. Alls

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer

Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Alls

Oh yes. In fact we looked forward to hearing when she was on, she was part of our entertainment, if you will, while we were out there.

Mr. Misenhimer

I heard she played pretty good music.

Mr. Alls

She played good music and she would tell the men how their wives were going out with other men and so forth and while we were fighting the war all we had to do is come in and surrender. Actually she was entertaining, we use to laugh.

Mr. Misenhimer

When you crossed the equator did you have any kind of ceremony then?

Mr. Alls

Uh, very little if any at all, I know we crossed over and then we expected to have these belly things or what not but we didn't have it. The skipper, I don't think he was too much in favor of it.

Mr. Misenhimer

What ribbons and medals did you get?

Mr. Alls

Actually none except if you want to count the Asiatic-Pacific. First of all, yes, my medal above all things is my combat pin with three stars. Submarine Combat, that's the pin with a little submarine on it and the qualification as submarine crewman with the silver dolphins.

Mr. Misenhimer

Three stars on it?

Mr. Alls

Yeah. Then I had the Asiatic-Pacific Medal, the Philippine Liberation, uh....

Mr. Misenhimer

The American Defense?

Mr. Alls

Yeah, believe it or not Good Conduct, uh, a couple others but I can't think.

Mr. Misenhimer

And you mentioned typhoons, did you hit any other typhoons beside the one in Midway?

Mr. Alls

No, that was the only one I was ever involved in.

Mr. Misenhimer

Have you had any reunions?

Mr. Alls

No, I belong to Sub vets of World War II and I had attended one or two and one reason

for that being is that my first wife had an extended illness and I did attend one with her. But another reason was, I'm not trying to push myself off as a goody-goody but when I stopped drinking I quit and to go to those things, it just seems like, there is just too much drinking among the men.

Mr. Misenhimer

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

Mr. Alls

I think that covers it. I don't know what else to tell you.

Mr. Misenhimer

Jim I want to thank you again for your time today.

Mr. Alls

It was my pleasure.

Mr. Misenhimer

And for your service to our country.

Mr. Alls

Thank you, I appreciate you asking, thank you.

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