

**The National Museum of the Pacific War  
(Admiral Nimitz Museum)**

**Center for Pacific War Studies  
Fredericksburg, Texas**

**Interview with  
Charles Comminious Boardman  
2918139  
Seaman 2nd class aka  
Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd class  
Attack Squadron FOUR Able  
USN**

**29 December, 1941  
to  
28 October, 1947**

Charles Comminious Boardman  
291 81 39  
Fire Fighting School  
Seaman 2nd class aka  
Aviation Ordnanceman 2nd class  
Attack Squadron FOUR Able  
USN

Medals Earned:  
Good Conduct  
World War II Victory Medal  
American Campaign Ribbon  
Ruptured Duck

Interviewed  
12 March, 2005  
By  
John Tombaugh and Peg Van Meter

Reinterviewd  
6 Jan., 2006  
By  
John Tombaugh and Peg Van Meter

My name is John Tombaugh and this is Peg Van Meter and we are interviewing Charles Boardman.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Would you state your name and address please?

**Mr. Boardman**

Charles C. Boardman, 920 West 9th Street, Rochester, Indiana.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What was your parents names and where were they born?

**Mr. Boardman**

Charles and Lena Markel in Birdseye, Indiana.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

When is your birthday?

**Mr. Boardman**

My birthday is August 8, 1919 in Hikedon, Arkansas.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Where did you go to school?

**Mr. Boardman**

I attended school at Fairbury, Illinois.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What did you do after school?

**Mr. Boardman**

I worked on a farm, and feed mill in Remington, Indiana.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Where were you on December 7, 1941?

**Mr. Boardman**

At the theater in Remington, Indiana.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What date did you go into service?

**Mr. Boardman**

On December 29, 1941 at Indianapolis, Indiana. They did not take us until after Christmas because most of us wouldn't be back.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Where did you take basic training?

**Mr. Boardman**

Great Lakes Naval; I was in Hawaii on 18th of Feb.

Mr. Tombaugh

Do you remember your service number?

Mr. Boardman

Yes I do, it's 2918139.

Mr. Tombaugh

Where did you take your training for ordnance?

Mr. Boardman

I was at the Hawaiian Air Base for 19 months. While steaming to Hawaii there was a tanker in our convoy that was loaded all the way up to the smoke stack with lumber. During the voyage the wood load slipped forcing us to proceed at 4 knots an hour for the remainder of the trip.

Mr. Tombaugh

What ship were you on?

Mr. Boardman

I was on the USS Henderson.

The following is from the files of John B. Tombaugh

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"-----  
Henderson          AP 1  
    ex German transport captured in WW I,  
    later changed to AH 9  
USS Bountiful AH - 9  
    ex AP 1 USS Henderson  
    Displacement  
    :7,493 tons  
    Launched :1916  
    Converted : 3,'44  
    Fate      :scraped in 1947.  
-----"
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I was also aboard the carrier Kearsarge.

The following is from the files of John B. Tombaugh

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"-----  
CV 33 USS Kearsarge  
    Builder      :New York  
    Laid down   : 1, 3, '44  
    Launched    : 5, 5, '45  
    Completed   : 3, 2, '46  
-----"
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Peg Van Meter

Where was it that you stated that the men were taken out of prison would stay for one year and then they would be free?

**Mr. Boardman**

Midway Island. Ayers was put in charge of them and he was the one that stopped them from playing "Pistol Packing Mama". He got so sick of them playing that record that he threw the record on the floor and it broke into pieces, that old boy jumped at him and Ayers had his .45 pistol leveled him. I was right there at Midway when that happened.

I remember one morning a 1st class ordnance mate told me to get 500 empty bags and some men and fill the empty bags with sand. I told him I wasn't going to do it and for him to take off his bars and we would see who was best man. He wouldn't do it and then another sgt. came over the 8 foot high fence which had three barb wires strung on top. He asked me: "Why didn't you hit him."

I said: "I'm talking to you and if I hit you with your bars on wouldn't you ride me."

He didn't say a word.

I said: "I know you would." I never filled any sandbags either.

I also remember seeing men get off a sub that had laid along side a coral reef which had been bombed by the Japanese. They took hunks of coral from the reef into the boat.

When that sub returned to the United States they only had two or three compartments to live in as the rest of them were weakened.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

You made friends during your time in the service and have you kept in contact with them over the years?

**Mr. Boardman**

No I haven't.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What was your rank?

**Mr. Boardman**

I was Seaman 1st class then raised to 2nd class.

I had come back after being over there for thirty-three months and went to Oklahoma first then on to St. Simons Island, Georgia.

My brother had died and they gave me a ten day furlough.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Did you go up in a TBM's?

**Mr. Boardman**

Yes, I had to fly four hours every month to get my flight time in.

The following is taken from the files of John Tombaugh:

"-----  
TBM(F) Avenger 3 man crew Torpedo Bomber M.W.  
Pilot, Radio/ Bombardier/ belly gunner and  
turret gunner

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Power :One Wright Cyclone radial R -  
 2600 - 20 piston engine.  
 HP :1900 hp.  
 Prop :three blade  
 Speed :276 mph max at 16,500'  
 Ceiling :30,100  
 Range :2,335  
 Wing Span :54' 2"  
 Length :40'  
 Height :15' 5"  
 Weight :10,843 Empty, 18,250 Lbs Full  
 Armament :two fixed forward firing .5"  
 m.g.s , one .5" m.g. in the  
 dorsal turret and one .3" (  
 7.62 mm ) in the ventral  
 position.  
 Bomb load :four 500 lb bombs or one  
 torpedo  
 Retractable Landing Gear  
 Tail Dragger  
 Built :approximately 10,000 were  
 built during the war.

"Called the "Turkey" by the pilots and crew. This was the largest carrier operational aircraft built during the war.

"Three months to the day before Pearl Harbor the first Avenger took off (7 Sept.,1941) in a test flight from Grumman.

"On 11 Nov.,1942 the first Avenger was test flown before the factory at the General Motors plant, Eastern Aircraft Division. This plant was born with the Governments closing of all of the Automotive plants and the G.M. plant was reopened 2 days after the Pearl Harbor incident.

"On 2 Sept.,1944 Ensign George Bush was shot down while attacking a radio station on Bonin Island. Three hours later he was picked up by the SS Finback just off the shore line of Chichi Jima. Both of the crewmen that were with him that day were lost. George Bush was later to become President of the U.S.

There is no difference between the TBF and the TBM. The F designates that the plane was built by Grumman whereas the M designates that the plane came from the General Motors plant.

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Mr. Tombaugh

Is there any thing else you would like to tell about.

Mr. Boardman

I remember a Japanese ship was turned over in the bay.

I remember this plane landed and the pilot and the co-pilot were both dead and the navigator had landed the plane and didn't know that he had landed but he was on the ground.

He was in a bad enough condition that the Red Cross had him one whole day and didn't do no good. The Catholic priest got ahold of that young man and gave him whiskey and walked him down to the mail plane for Hawaii. He was suppose to continue to the United States. I know this to be true because it happened right where I was at.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Did you ever go up in a PBV?

**Mr. Boardman**

Yes, one time. The plane that I rode in was a pile of junk.

The following is taken from the files of John B. Tombaugh:

"-----  
PBV Catalina 7-9 man crew Flying Boat H.W.

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Power	:twin engine Pratt and Whitney R-1830-92 Twin Wasps.
HP	:1,200 hp ea.
Speed	:117 cruise,179 max at 7,000'
Ceiling	:14,700'
Range	:2,545 miles
Wing Span	:104'
Length	:63'10 1/2"
Height	:18' 0"
Weight	:20,910 Empty, 35,420 Full
Armament	:Three .3" and two .5" m.g.s plus up to 4,000 lbs bombs or four 650 lb Depth Charges or two torpedoes.

PBV 5A "Cats" - by wars end 944 of these units remain in service.

Number of manufacturers of the PBV :five.

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**Mr. Tombaugh**

Do you remember the different places you were at through out the war?

**Mr. Boardman**

Yes. Started at Great Lake Ill. 12-30-41 to 1-24-42; Kaneohe Bay, T.H. 2-18-42 to 3-17-42; Pearl Harbor, T.H. 3-17-42 to 3-30-42; Kaneohe Bay T.H. 3-30-42 to 4-27-43; Pearl Harbor 4-27-43 to 6-8-43; Kaneohe Bay 6-8-43 to 6-12-43; Midway Islands 6-23-43 to 4-14-44; ComAir ForPacFit 8-18-44 to 9-7-44; Purcell, Okla. 10-13-44 to 1-22-45; St. Simons Island, Ga. 1-25-45 to 7-4-45; Jacksonville,

Fla. 7-5-45 to 11-15-45; St. Simons Island, Ga. 11-15-45; to 1-21-47; Attack Squadron FOUR Able, 2-5-47 to 10-21-47; Charlestown, RI 10-21-47 to 10-27-47.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

When were you married?

**Mr. Boardman**

I married Eileen Carlile on December 16, 1945 in Remington, Indiana.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

Do you have children?

**Mr. Boardman**

We have four daughters; Diane, Janet, Carol and Karen.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What were the changes you saw when you came home from the service?

**Mr. Boardman**

I was just glad to get home.

**Mr. Tombaugh**

What would you tell the young people today?

**Mr. Boardman**

I was proud to do my part and hope they never go through what we went through.

After coming home I went back and worked at the feed store in Remington, Indiana. I then farmed with my dad.

I retired as custodian from Rochester High School, Rochester, Indiana.

-END-

16.5 hours