

John Glaze Oral History Interview

ROBERT GRINSLADE: Okay. This is Robert Grinslade. Today is October 4, 2012. I'm interviewing Mr. John Glaze. This interview is taking place in San Antonio, Texas at the Brown Hotel. This interview is in support of the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the National Museum of the Pacific War Texas Historical Commission for the Preservation of Historical Information related to this site. Okay, Mr. Glaze. Or I'll call you John. Is that okay?

JOHN GLAZE: Sure. Absolutely.

RG: I want to thank you first off for taking the time of -- to come and give us the interview today. We appreciate your service and want to thank you for what you did for the country. I'm going to start out by just kind of asking if you'd just give us your full name, your -- where you were born, when you were born, and a little bit about your family.

JG: John Warfield Glaze. G-L-A-Z-E. I was born in Springfield, Massachusetts. And I grew up in Westfield, which is a town about 10 miles west of Springfield. My father and mother -- my father was a salesman for a grinding wheel company in Westfield. Sales manager. And

my mother was a home keeper. I had three siblings. There were four of us in the family. Two boys and two girls. The girls were my older sisters. And then me and then I have my brother, who is still alive. Thank goodness. My sisters are gone. What was the next --

RG: What was your date of birth?

JG: Oh, I was born January 2, 1925.

RG: Okay. And where did you go to school?

JG: Went to school at Westfield Grade School. And then high school. And then Williston Academy, which is college preparatory school in East Hampton, Mass.

RG: Now was that a military type school?

JG: No. No.

RG: Just college preparatory type school.

JG: Yeah. They call them prep schools.

RG: Any college?

JG: Yeah. Well, after the war, I did go to Bryant College in Providence, Rhode Island. And I took a business administration major and graduated from there in 1948.

RG: Okay. Now when did you graduate from high school?

JG: 1943.

RG: And how old were you then?

JG: I was 18.

RG: 18 years old. All right. So this is 1943. Where were you on December 7, 1941? The day Pearl Harbor was attacked.

JG: I was home from Williston Academy that day. And, of course, that was -- I asked my father. I said, "Doesn't that mean we go to war?" And he said -- looked at me and tears in his eyes. And he said, "I'm afraid so." I knew he knew I was going to be in it at that time. I was 16. I'm sorry.

RG: That's quite all right.

JG: It was a pretty traumatic --

RG: Oh, I guess it was.

JG: -- day for all of us.

RG: Yeah. What was the general -- were you at home when you heard the news? Or were you out somewhere?

JG: No. I was home for the weekend from Williston Academy.

RG: Okay. So just you and your parents and your family.

JG: Yes.

RG: Okay. And 1943, were you drafted? Or did you go in on your own?

JG: No. After I graduated, I went home to Westfield, and I met a friend of mine. And we talked about where we'd like to be. I wanted to get into the Air Force and be -- fly P51s. Of course, every kid wanted to fly a P51.

RG: (laughs) That's for sure.

JG: We took a physical at Westover Air Force Base, which was located in Chicopee and very close to Westfield and got through that nicely. And so we entered the cadet program. And we went -- went away January 25, 1943. The month after I graduated. And we got on a troop train to Greensboro, North Carolina for basic training. Do you want me to keep going on with this?

RG: Yes. Go ahead.

JG: And so we were there -- I think it was only three or four weeks. We hadn't even gone to the range when they put us back on a troop train and shipped us north. And they kept letting off the -- a car here and a car in Washington and a couple cars in New York. And they kept going north, and they finally got to Springfield, which is ten miles from home. And they let us off, and we ended up in Springfield College. And we were almost embarrassed to be back so close to home because, of course, everybody thought we were going to be gone for a couple of years.

RG: You had to go 1,000 miles to come back home.

JG: Exactly. So there we were. And so when we came home we were kind of embarrassed, but they were all glad to see us. So we spent -- oh, I think it was two or three months there. It was an officers' training. It was the first step in the cadet program to become an officer. And this

boy I was with was kind of a cut up. He kept getting me into trouble. (laughs) But we had a lot of fun. And then we shipped out for --

RG: He kept getting you into trouble, huh?

JG: Yeah. Well, if they would have an inspection and the lieutenant would be in front of me, but he'd be in back making all kinds of faces. So he'd get me laughing. Then, "What are you laughing at." (laughter)

RG: Do you like me boy?

JG: Oh gee. Anyway, we had a lot of fun there. And then we got down to Memphis, Tennessee -- Nashville, Tennessee for classification. And took all these tests for a week.

RG: Okay. They were going to classify you to see what you --

JG: To see what we were going to be. Or wash out. So then the captain called me in. And he said, "Well, I can tell you. You qualified for navigator." I said, "Oh, that's good." I said, "Anything else?" He said, "Yeah. You can be a bombardier if you want." I said, "How about pilot?" And he said, "Well, you classified -- you're okay for a pilot." But he said, "We don't need pilots now. We need bomber crews. And our pilots are all going to just waiting to get into training. Then they're very tough on them. They're washing them out pretty fast. But we need navigators." I

said, "Well, if that's what you need, that's what I'll be."

So and my friend got washed out.

RG: So did you really have a choice?

JG: Not really.

RG: Yeah. I didn't think so. Okay.

JG: (laughs) But I had a little short discussion. (laughter)

RG: You tried.

JG: Yeah. But anyway, that's how -- that's where I ended up.

So then we went on to Montgomery, Alabama for officers' training. And I used to play the trumpet, and I was a musician. And I got into the -- I found they had a band there. And the band was going to Montgomery and play in the night clubs, so that was a pretty good deal. But otherwise and that, it was just that training. And then from there, we went to Fort Myers, Florida for gunnery training.

RG: How long were you in training there in --

JG: It was only couple of months. Not very long. Yeah. Because they were really moving us along because they wanted -- they were building up a bomber parade. So anyway, went down to the gunnery training. And the only significant thing that happened there was that we learned all about 50-caliber machine guns. How to take them apart and all that stuff. And their gunnery training consisted

of standing in the back end of a truck and going around in a -- on a run that would. And they had clay pigeon things on each side, and they'd shoot those up. We had to hit them with a shot gun.

RG: With a shot gun? So you were basically shooting skeet.

JG: It was that exactly. Only on a moving range because we were in the back of a truck. And the damn shot gun -- I -- pretty soon I got a really sore shoulder. It was all black and blue. And finally, I told the sergeant. I said, "Gee, I don't know what I'm doing wrong, but I'm -- I'm really hurting in my shoulder." And he said, "Well, show me how you're holding the gun." So I showed him. Just the way I do my 22 at home. And he said, "Oh, no. No. No. If you're going to shoot a shot gun, you've got to be a right angle to your body. Then your shoulder will take up the," -- so the next day I tried that, and it worked beautifully. So I wished I'd heard that in the first place.

RG: They just didn't quite give you enough training, did they?

JG: (laughs) Well, it was pretty brief. But then the only significant thing that happened to me there was -- a final thing. They took us up in an old B17. And we were flying along. And next to us was an AT6 holding a target. So they had each of us step up to a 50-caliber machine gun and give short bursts right at that target. Well, while I'm

standing there, I -- a sergeant came along and tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to follow him. So I followed him. And he went through the radio room and up onto the catwalk in the bomb bay. And then he pointed down and he said, "Do you see that crank on the wall?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Go down and turn that. We can't get the gear down, so you got to turn it -- crank it down." So I said, "Okay." So I was down there turning the crank. And in order to get a good perch, I got my feet square to the wheel. And I was turning it. Pretty soon another sergeant came along on the catwalk, and he took one look at me. And he stuck out his hand. So I reached for his hand, and he grabbed me, pulled me up onto the catwalk. And he said, "You're standing on the bomb bay door, and they open at 150 pounds of pressure." (laughter) At that point, I think I weighed about 160.

RG: They just didn't give you quite enough information, did they?

JG: So I didn't get a good briefing on that. (laughter) I always thought that was about as close as I ever came to biting it.

RG: Now this is a B17?

JG: Yeah. So anyway, but that was just an incident in that training. Then we went to a holding camp in Valdosta,

Georgia. And they were there about two months. And then we finally went to San Marcos, Texas up here and -- for navigation training. And I think we got there May or June. Something like that. And we trained all summer, and we graduated in September. Got our wings -- our commission and so on. Had a short leave to go home. And then came back to the same base briefly. And then we were sent to -- oh, I know. On the way home, our orders came to go to Dyersburg, Tennessee where we met our crew. Our B17 crew. And then we trained there for a couple of months. And then we went up to Lincoln, Nebraska. And from there, we took a troop train across the country to Boston and boarded the (inaudible), which is a French passenger ship. And then we went across to Scotland and took a train from there down to where -- base in Debach, England.

RG: Now at the place that you got your crew, did you also get your assigned air craft at that time?

JG: No. No. We were flying B17s, and they were just there. It wasn't ours.

RG: So nobody assigned you to an aircraft.

JG: No. Not until we got our bomb group.

RG: Okay. That's over in England.

JG: In England. Yeah.

RG: All right. So you were saying that you had to go through gunnery training.

JG: Pardon me?

RG: You say you had to go through gunnery training?

JG: Yes. Yeah.

RG: But you were chosen to be a navigator. Was that --

JG: Navigators got two 50-caliber machine guns in the nose of his plane. Right up in here.

RG: Okay. So he's right behind -- right under the pilot basically.

JG: No. I'm right by the bombardier. The bombardier and navigator are here. These are my windows here.

RG: Oh I see. Okay. So that would be --

GG: So it doesn't have any guns on it.

RG: So the bombardier is right in the front nose.

JG: He's right here. And he's got a chin turret. He's got two 50-calibers there. And then I've got these cheek -- one on each side. They call them a cheek --

RG: So you'd be sitting about four or five feet behind him.

JG: Yeah. My desk was back in here.

RG: So you flew what? The G model?

JG: Yeah.

RG: Okay. So you had the later model.

JG: Yeah.

RG: So basically, you had double duty. You were navigator and gunner. You had to be.

JG: Well, yes. Yeah. Right.

RG: Okay. So was that the -- did that get kind of confusing sometimes?

JG: No. By the time we got there, the German Air Force was -- we had pretty much command of the skies. We were once were jump by the 190s. But that navigator has got -- had such a small cone of fire they called it. If I get back too far, I'd hit the wing. So they had us stop there. Then if I got too far forward, it'll hit the nose, (laughter) so I had to stop there. So I just had a little -- but this (inaudible) 190 went right through there. And by the time I got the thing unhooked so I could shoot it, (laughs) it -
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RG: It was gone.

JG: -- it was being pursued by a couple of our airplanes.

RG: Okay. So you went over to England on the (inaudible). And you left where?

JG: Boston.

RG: You left Boston. Okay. How long did that take you to get over there?

JG: About a week. It was a rough trip because it was middle of winter. And the north Atlantic is not pleasant in the

middle of winter. They had 7,000 guys -- troops down in the hold. And I think every one of them was sick.

(laughter) And it was a horrible place to be.

RG: You're not the only one that's ever said that. Believe me.

JG: Right. (laughs)

RG: Anybody on a troop ships always talked about that. Now did they throw sawdust on the floor to catch all the drippings, so to speak?

JG: From the crew?

RG: From the crew. Yeah.

JG: From those guys. No. We were in a cabin up on the top.

RG: Oh you were an officer.

JG: We were an officer. Right. So we were not subject to that. Except my bombardier had to go down and take a duty one time. And he asked me to come down, see him. The further I went down (laughs) the worse it was.

RG: The worse it got. Yeah.

JG: I said, "Oh my god. I don't know how these guys are," --

RG: Oh, I know. You're glad you're an officer.

JG: Oh yes. I certainly was.

RG: So when you got to England, where did you -- what was your base?

JG: 483rd Bomb Group was in Debach, England, which is near Ipswich.

RG: And what squadron were you assigned to?

JG: 860th.

RG: Okay. And the town you were in was Ipswich?

JG: It was near Ipswich.

RG: Okay. What was the name of the town that you were in? If you remember.

JG: D-E-B-A-C-H.

RG: D-E-B-A-C-H. Debach.

JG: Right. It's just a hamlet.

RG: Sure. I understand they had bases like every five miles over there.

JG: Yeah. (laughs) There were a lot of bases.

RG: There were tons of bases. All right. Did your plane have a name? Did you name your plane?

JG: One More Time.

RG: One More Time. And so you actually picked it up there in Debach.

JG: Yeah.

RG: Was the plane named at that time? Or did you guys do that on your own?

JG: No. We named it. That first mission, I thought that damn thing was never going to lift off. I mean it was loaded with bombs and loaded with people and loaded with 10 guys and 13 machine guns and ammunition. (laughter) I could

feel it. He kept trying to pull it up and pull it up as we're getting down towards the end of the runway. Finally, she flew, and I said, "Whoa. Jesus, give me one more time. (laughs)

RG: And that stuck.

JG: Yeah. Right. I asked the crew. "How about naming this thing One More Time?" And they all said, "That sounds pretty good."

RG: Okay. Tell me about the base itself that was there. Was it just a regular military air base?

JG: Well, it was built on the run. The farm. It was a big farm. And a lot of good, flat fields. So it was mostly made of -- what they call Nissen huts. We call them Quonset over here. The rounded metal huts. And there were two officers crews in our hut. Four of us and four of another crew. And we had the little stove -- a cylindrical stove. This was January of '45, I guess. When we got there. It was late in the war but early in the year. And that's all we had for heat was that darn thing. It wasn't worth much. And the other crew had about 15 missions when we got there. So we were together for the rest of their 10 missions. And they had a chance to go to Sweden. They were ordered to go to Sweden one day to escort some airplanes back that had been landed up there by our boys.

RG: Boy, isn't that too bad?

JG: And I said, "Gee, you don't want somebody to come along and hold something for you?" (laughs) But anyway, they were nice guys.

RG: So tell me about your -- were they regular cots? The double bunks or were they single?

JG: No. They were one on -- no. I think they were all singles there. I don't remember anybody being above me on that camp.

RG: And probably officers had a little bit better accommodations.

JG: Yeah. Probably.

RG: Were you warm enough in there? I mean those miserable English winters can be bad.

JG: It was cold. Yeah. And I remember I got kidded about it a lot. But I only have a pair of pajamas, so I wouldn't get scratched up by (laughter) these damn Army blankets.
(inaudible)

RG: Yeah. The old wool blankets.

JG: One time in London I managed to find myself a pair of pajamas. (laughs) And I told about this to a friend of mine after I got home. And he was in the Battle of the Bulge. In fact, he got hit. He got pretty badly wounded.

But he said, "Isn't that too bad, John? You couldn't find a pair of pajamas."

RG: One man's trash, another man's treasure.

JG: I only mention that little story once and learned to shut my mouth. (laughs)

RG: You get no sympathy.

JG: No sympathy from anybody on that one. (laughs) Yeah. It was cold. The English winters are not pleasant. Oh, I know what I did which is a -- we were in Ipswich one night. And we were going along. And here's a store. It was a single hot plate, electric hot plate in the window. I went in and asked how much that was. And I bought that thing, and I plugged it in, put it underneath my bunk. (laughter) And I was as warm as toast the rest of the winter.

RG: Is this like an electric coil?

JG: Yeah.

RG: Electric stove. Okay. No worry about catching anything on fire?

JG: Never did. (laughter) But it sure was a nice bed warmer.

RG: I'll bet.

JG: Between that and my pajamas, I was quite comfortable.
(laughs)

RG: How many blankets did he get as an officer? One or two?

JG: No. Two Army blankets.

RG: All right. How was the food over there?

JG: The potatoes were black. I think the French -- excuse me. The English soil is so (laughs) moist that it -- they were lousy potatoes. And powdered eggs and all that stuff. I mean it was livable. But the best thing they had -- we used to come into the officers' club at night after a mission. I meet this other navigator that I trained with. And we'd have a couple of drinks, and they'd put out a big tray full of corned beef sandwiches. (laughs) And it was canned corned beef sandwiches were the best thing I had over there.

RG: Wow. The officers got good treatment.

JG: Well, this is the officers' club. I don't know whether the enlisted men had corned beef sandwiches or not.

RG: They never told you.

JG: I didn't ask them. (laughs)

RG: And how about the -- how about sanitary facilities? Did you have showers and --

JG: Yeah. We had showers.

RG: Were they heated? You have hot water?

JG: Yeah. Oh yeah. We had hot water. Yeah. Yeah.

RG: So it was like a regular bathroom shower stall type of thing. There was no problem with that.

JG: That's right. No problem.

RG: Because I didn't know if they had -- you had latrines you had to go out to.

JG: No. No. I mean, obviously, the latrine wasn't where we were staying. We had to go to it.

RG: You had to walk to it.

JG: It was a separate Nissen hut. Yeah.

RG: All right. So when did you have your -- how long had you been there before you had your first mission?

JG: Not much more than a week. The pilot took one trip first with another crew, get oriented. So then we took our first mission.

RG: And what did they have you doing that week that you were not flying with anything?

JG: Not very much. I remember one time we were walking down to the mess hall. And it was a lousy day as most of them were. Misty. Low overcast. And all of a sudden these four P51s came out of the -- they were right on the deck. I could not -- Jesus, look at them flying in this kind of weather. They would never have flown that way in training. But that's what you had to fly in. That was standard SOP after that.

RG: Okay. When you went on your first mission, what -- give me kind of an idea of let's go through a day in the life of the navigator. When you first got up in the morning, what

did you do from there? And how did your day go on your missions?

JG: Well, we had breakfast. And then we had to go to briefings. And then we had to pick up our parachute and our gear. And they'd take us out to the plane in a truck. To a (inaudible). And then we'd all assemble there and get in and get to our positions. And it was usually -- moved right along. By then, the engine start up. And then we'd taxi to our -- they would all get into line and go out to -- they were taking off about every 30 seconds.

RG: Oh wow. Okay.

JG: So then we'd take off and once we got the wheels up and started climbing, now it was a long circling procedure to get up to altitude. And it was usually -- I think the -- one of the most dangerous parts was the weather and the fact that everybody else was doing the same thing. And so where the hell are they? So we had to really keep our eyes open.

RG: So we're talking pretty low cloud cover?

JG: Yeah.

RG: What was your --

JG: Well, I bet you we took off in 400, 500 feet. The ceilings. And we went right on instruments. And, of course, they -- I don't know. The pilots apparently had

their assigned routing, but it was really basically circling and climbing. And but everybody else was doing the same thing. So there were a lot of airplanes in the sky.

RG: Now were you under radio silence at that point?

JG: Well, I never used the radio outside of intercom. But the pilot -- I don't know what -- he was probably talking to the group leaders.

RG: So radio as opposed to intercom. The intercom couldn't be picked up by enemy --

JG: No. The intercom was between the crews on the airplanes.

RG: So just strictly a closed section there.

JG: One of my jobs was supposed to be to monitor the intercom and make note of anything that happened that was significant and keep radio silence. You didn't want everybody talking at the same time.

RG: Rule number one, they could read your radio transmission and probably get a direction finding on you.

JG: I had an ADF on mine. My position. As part of my navigation.

RG: Now you say EDF. What does that stand for?

JG: Automatic direction finder.

RG: Okay. All right. So you as navigator, what was your function on that aircraft from the time you took off until the time you got to your target?

JG: I had to trace our route. I had to keep track of where we are. Headings, speed, altitude, and so on. And calculate the track as though I were navigating the airplane which I was doing until we assembled. Once we assembled and started a -- our trip into Germany, we were in the bomber flow, and it was follow -- they were following the lead plane. So I was -- my job was really to monitor the happenings as we went along. Keep track of our position and that's all.

RG: Okay. So you just kind of kept track of where you were in the sky?

JG: Right.

RG: Now when I guess you went into briefing you found out where you were going to go. Your target area. And so I guess they would give you headings and things like that. And you would copy those down. Or would it come in a packet of material that you got.

JG: Right. That's all part of the procedure.

RG: So from the time you got into the airplane you had that packet out, and you were trying to figure out which way you were going to go. Your compass headings and all that.

JG: I had my charts on the table. And I had a log I was keeping track of.

RG: Now did they train you in navigation in the military -- in the Army Air Corps?

JG: Yeah.

RG: And how long was --

JG: That's what they did in San Marcos.

RG: Okay. So that was your training for navigation. How to orient yourself up in the air. Was that pretty intense training?

JG: Well, it was. We had the four things you had to learn how to do. Piloted they called it which is looking at the ground and comparing it to your map. And that was one thing. And then two was dead reckoning which was figuring out your drift and your air speed and using it to calculate -- we had what we call an E6B computer.

RG: I know what those are.

JG: And so that was two. And celestial navigation, which was three. And radio navigation, which was the fourth basic thing. Of course, we never did celestial navigation over there until the end of the war. I had to go on one trip to check back out on the --

RG: Well, I guess with the lousy weather you couldn't see any stars anyway.

JG: Well, you would do it daytime. You couldn't have any stars to go by anyway.

RG: True. Okay.

JG: So that was it. It was really direct. It was really dead reckoning was the biggest.

RG: Did you ever fly any night missions?

JG: No.

RG: Never did. Okay. Did any of your other squadrons fly night missions at all?

JG: Not in our Army. The British were flying. And oftentimes when we were on our way out, we'd see them coming back looking like a hive of bees because they didn't fly formation. They were just all over the place. (laughs)

RG: All over the place. Okay. So they weren't quite as precise as we were. Okay. All right. So once you got up in the air and you got your heading set, you would then tell the pilot? Or were you in control of the plane? Or you just tell the pilot go to heading such and such?

JG: Well, he was following the leader really. So I mean I couldn't tell him to deviate. But I'd let him know whenever he asked where we were, how many miles to the initial point, and then --

RG: Now were you also in charge of checking fuel and making sure you had enough fuel to get from point A to point B?

JG: Yeah. I had one coming back I told -- we were back over about Belgium. And I said, "You know, Ernie, I don't think we're going to get back to base. We're running low on fuel. I can give you a heading to a base here in our hands." And he said, "No. We'll make it." He was adamant we were going to get back. He was a hell of a good man. But when we got back and landed, we were taxiing to our (inaudible) stand, and two engines shut down. So afterwards, I asked him. I said, "Ernie, why did you shut those engines down?" And he laughed. He says, "We were out of gas." (laughter) I said, "You bastard."

RG: As long as you've got two engines left, I guess you can still make it, huh?

JG: So anyway, that was -- I had to monitor the fuel. Yes.

RG: Okay. So you had a pretty good job to do then. You had a lot of stuff to worry about.

JG: Kept us (inaudible).

RG: Now were you in a formation.

JG: Yes.

RG: Did you ever switch off as lead aircraft? Or was there always one lead aircraft?

JG: Well, there was one lead aircraft of the group. But we led our element quite often. Element of three. And we were leader of the high -- there was a high element, low

element, and lead element. And oftentimes, we were lead of the high element, which meant we were second to lead group if the leader was knocked out.

RG: Okay. I was going to ask that next is how the hierarchy went for if the leader got shot down who was next in line. His second wingman or something.

JG: Many times we were number two or most of the time three to go up there.

RG: Okay. So were the formations set up like in a triangle situation?

JG: Yeah. They were -- because you had your lead -- your elements. They called an element of -- this was an element.

RG: So you'd have three planes in a triangular shape.

JG: So that was that. Then they had three low. Another one over here. And then a lead one was up here. And then there was -- I think there was six, nine. Yeah. I think there was an element in the middle. I can't remember how the hell they --

RG: So you basically have four groups of three each.

JG: Four boxes. Yeah.

RG: So you got 12 aircraft in the group.

JG: Well, in our whole group, we had about 30. We'd be from 20 to 30 depending upon abortions. And if somebody had an

engine go out, they'd call an abortion and go back. And then if we didn't have enough airplanes that were operational, they'd go up with what they had.

RG: Sure. And so then somebody would be chosen as lead. And then they would know before they got up there how that was going to work.

JG: Oh yeah. That was all an assignment.

RG: Okay. Good enough. Okay. So you're up there, and you're flying. You're kind of above the soup now. You're in some clear space. What transpires then? How long do you have to go? Just depends on where your target is?

JG: That's right. And then by the time we were flying, the targets were pretty much way in. We had more 10, 11-hour missions. We'd get to Berlin several times. Munster, Nuremburg, those are way in there. They bombed -- I think we bombed Nuremburg two or three times because that was Hitler's redoubt they called it. He was -- so he could get down to Bavaria as the Russians came in except they never got there. (laughter) But yeah. It was long trips.

RG: Now how would you pass time when you were up there? Would you just sometimes play cards? Or just try to keep warm?

JG: No. We never played cards, but we'd keep our eyes open.

RG: At what point did it start getting real touchy as far as anti-aircraft and other?

JG: Well, as you get closer to your target, now you'll start seeing flak or the bomb person.

RG: Okay. Now you mentioned before that it was toward the end of the war and the U.S. -- or the Allies pretty much ruled the skies.

JG: Well, we did rule the skies as far as fighters are concerned. We'd see our own fighters. By that time, they had dropped tanks, and they could follow us all the way to Berlin which was pretty significant. But we never saw very many German fighters. Once a 282, I think it was. A German jet came through. And they were so fast we couldn't even hardly see them. They'd come the opposite way we were going. They'd find it fun to go down, and they could hit the lead plane. And they just go -- and they were faster than us. They were very significant airplanes. If they could have made those fast enough and trained pilots fast enough, I think it would have -- might have stumped us.

RG: No. We're lucky.

JG: Well, we had the B29s come along.

RG: Yeah. That would have got out of their range. All right. Did you ever get involved in any combat with fighter planes?

JG: No. Just that one time when that -- when those F190s came through our formation, and I couldn't get my (laughs) gun unhooked.

RG: Okay. So how did you -- you could see out your little side windows?

JG: Yeah.

RG: And that was it. Could you look out the front?

JG: I couldn't see out the front, but I couldn't see back of the wing.

RG: Okay. So you were pretty much right there in that little cone right there. That's what you could see. Okay. And that was both left and right?

JG: Yeah.

RG: Okay. So there were no mirrors or anything that you could adjusted?

JG: No. No.

RG: So your cone of responsibility was rather small.

JG: Yeah. My cone of vision.

RG: Cone of vision. Sure. Of what you could see.

JG: Yeah.

RG: All right. All right. Now when you got close to the target area, any duties you had to come in and do? Or did you just follow off the lead plane and when he dropped you dropped?

JG: Well, we had a bombardier on our crew, and we had an (inaudible) bomb sight. But we had a bomb -- we had to toggle up with the lead plane. So when the lead plane dropped, our bombardier just hit the switch and --

RG: Okay. Explain toggle. We had a toggle switch.

JG: Toggle switch. And that would release the bombs.

RG: Okay. All right. I had some -- one of the pilots on a B24 had told me that they had -- when the lead plane dropped their bombs, the last thing they dropped with a smoke -- some kind of a smoke device that spit off smoke and that would kind of key you as to when you dropped your bombs.

JG: That could have been. I never recall that because we could see them. But it might have -- it certainly would have helped. Yeah.

RG: Okay. Quite a bit of antiaircraft fire?

JG: Did we ever get on fire? No.

RG: Antiaircraft fire.

JG: Anti -- oh, yes. We had that almost every mission. Yeah. And you'd hear the shrapnel hit the plane. (laughs) It was just like a rain hitting a tin roof. And we get the little holes in the skin, and they'd have to patch those at night. But we never got a direct hit. Once I was looking out the -- looking at the B17 right in front of us, and it got a

direct hit and just gone. Yeah. I couldn't even follow it. It was kind of --

RG: Did it kind of just drop down? Or did the whole thing just explode?

JG: No. It just -- it got hit and just went right down.

RG: Okay. So it dropped.

JG: I think it the root of -- wing root and it collapsed the wing. They turned out to be some kids that had just gotten on the base. I remember the night before it was at the officers' club. And these kids -- they look like kids. If you've had 10 missions, you were all of a sudden a lot older than (laughs) even though you weren't physically. But you felt --

RG: You grew up quick.

JG: You just felt -- yeah. Exactly. You felt a lot older. But these kids were all Jewish. And they were very proud. And they -- it was their first mission. I felt very badly for them because -- that they --

RG: That's too bad. Especially getting shot down over Germany.

JG: Just right off the bat and not a one of them could get out.

RG: So you saw no chutes coming out of the plane or anything.

JG: No. Well, I couldn't follow it. As I say, just like -- it happened right there. Jesus.

RG: And it was gone.

JG: They were gone. I looked on the chart to see who it was and realized, "I think those kids were in the officers' club last night." But anyway.

RG: That's a shame.

JG: Yeah. It was terrible.

RG: Okay. So when you got to the target then you would just drop your bombs. And then at that point, what would you do? Just turn around and come back.

JG: Well, after you drop the bombs, the plane would pop up because it lost a lot of weight all of a sudden. And then we'd just get the hell out of there. He'd peel off. And I mean the whole --

RG: The whole wing would take off. Yeah.

JG: It wasn't just our plane.

RG: So you'd all kind of make one turn at the same time after the last bomb drops. You all made your turn.

JG: And get out of there. Right. Yeah. We were, by that time that was where most of the flak was. I mean by that time they knew our altitude, and those damn things were going off all around you.

RG: Now on the way over going to your target, you couldn't fluctuate your flight plan very much, could you? You had to pretty much stay on course.

JG: Oh no. We had to stick with the flight plan. Yeah.

RG: So if there was some storm that came up, you couldn't go around it?

JG: That would be up to the lead plane. We had only one mission that was rather bad. And that was we took off from England because the weather was so bad. And they wanted us to rendezvous over France, and they gave us a point in France. And so we had to get there individually. So we flew out, got our altitude, and so on. We came into this area. And Jesus. Now that all the airplanes are converging we saw two midair collisions. I was watching one. Then they call back that they'd had one off to the right. I couldn't see. But I mean it was just a horrible. And we couldn't find our -- I think on that mission -- we only ended up with about nine airplanes. And we picked up a couple stragglers from other groups, and we went on into the targets. So that's when we did navigate ourselves and got to the target and the weather had been terrible. But at the target, it opened right up. There's the target. We did our bombing and went back to England. Then went right back in the soup. So they used to send mosquitoes out.

RG: The little (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JG: Yeah. To find -- check the weather over the target. So they report came in the target is clear, but (laughs) that doesn't mean we were.

RG: You had to get there. Yeah.

JG: I don't know how many planes we lost just trying to get there. But it was a bad mission. That one.

RG: Well, that was all up to the pilot through all that keeping track of where their airplanes were and all this.

JG: Well, that's right. They were watching all the time. And we were all trying to watch too. But we couldn't confuse - - we couldn't all get on the intercom and start talking. That'd just confuse things. I was fortunate to have a very good pilot. He was Ernie Pinkham. And he was older than the rest of us. I was only 20. I didn't get to be 21 until after my discharge. (laughs)

RG: Yeah. You did grow up young, didn't you?

JG: Yeah. (laughs) But he was 25. He was an old guy.

RG: Oh yeah. He was an old man. Jeez. (laughs) So his last name was Pinkham?

JG: Pinkham. P-I-N-K-H-A-M.

RG: Now do you still have any contact with any of these people on your flights?

JG: Well, I lost all contact except for him. And I called him up one day just out of the blue 30 years later. And he answered the phone, so we had a nice chat.

RG: I'll be darn.

JG: And then a few years later -- yeah. We had made arrangements to meet at -- there was going to be a reunion in California that year. And so I said, "Okay. I'll come out. I want to see you." But then at the -- couple of weeks before it happened, he called. I said, "I don't know any of those guys." He says, "I'm not going to drive way down there." So I -- that changed our plans and didn't go. Then a few years ago -- let's see. I guess it was probably -- oh, six or seven. My wife died in '06. And so then I remarried this girl whose husband had just died. And so we got together. And so we took a trip out to the west coast, and we drove up the west coast to Seattle. And I never forgot the name of his town was Snohomish. And it's up north of Seattle.

RG: I know it.

JG: And I called up -- called him up. And his wife answered. But he had died. But we made arrangements to take her out for dinner. And so we had a very nice reunion with her and heard all about what they had done.

RG: So you knew his wife from before.

JG: No. Not his wife. No. But I say -- called up and, of course, he -- she answered.

RG: Talked to her.

JG: So we had a nice reunion in Snohomish. And we still write Christmas cards.

RG: Good. Good.

JG: And she sent me a lot of information on the 493rd that I didn't have.

RG: Didn't know. Okay.

JG: I didn't bring it with me.

RG: Now you had talked about -- you had your parachutes and stuff like that. Where did you get jump training?

JG: Well, we never jumped. We just had a -- our harness had a couple of buckles here. And then our parachute was in a package with the males -- I guess we had the females. We could just pull it out.

RG: Just clip it on there.

JG: Then jump out and pull the rip cord. (laughs)

RG: So you had never had any jump training or how to use a parachute or -- except here's what you pull.

JG: That's right. (laughs) You pull this ring. Count to three and pull. But you couldn't do that at altitude or you wouldn't make it because you were -- out of oxygen where we were.

RG: So you had to drop a little bit, didn't you? (laughs)

JG: Yeah. I ran across a friend of mine in London af-- just after the war. And he had been on a prisoner of war camp.

And he said when he jumped he said he remembers somebody told him to wait until he could see the frames of the windows of the houses and then pull his ripcord. So he says, "I went (laughs) down for a long time before I got to that point," where he could -- that meant he was probably 10,000 feet. He could breathe. But he watched his plane go around him. And he could see his pilot in there. They couldn't get out.

RG: So you were saying you had high and low elements. So one would be higher than the other. How many --

JG: Now that wasn't much. It was just a couple hundred feet.

RG: A couple hundred feet. Okay. Well, still if you were jumping out of a plane, you can't see what's behind you. If you jump into one of them, you're toast.

JG: That's right. But you go down -- you don't go sideways.

RG: You go straight down. Yeah.

JG: It's just like guys jumping out of fighters. They don't do it right they can get hit by the tail and so on.

RG: But you never had any jump school. That's what amazes me. They never taught you how to do anything.

JG: (laughs) Didn't have any practice. (laughter)

RG: Okay. So once you got through running your target, your bombs were dropped, and you made your turn to come back,

did you stay in formation? Or could you vary some? You always stayed in formation?

JG: Oh yeah. Oh no. We stayed in formation because that was your protection. See? They had the cones of fire -- those planes all figured out, so that it would be overlapping. And if you -- the tighter your formation was the better. That was one of the reasons the B24s were pulled out because they couldn't -- when you got up to altitude in a B24, it had a (inaudible) wing, a very narrow wing. And they just would mush. They just -- you just -- and our guys were spending all their time -- our pilots -- changing. They were really flying to keep themselves in tight. And that was a very important part of their job. They couldn't put it on automatic pilot. (laughs)

RG: No. No. They had to fly it.

JG: Right. (laughs) They had to really fly it.

RG: Okay. So once you got back, what happened after you got back?

JG: Well, once we got back we got in the (inaudible). The Red Cross set up a table with shots of whiskey and doughnuts and different things. And then we'd have a debriefing, which was important. And an intelligence officer would go through all the things that happened. And that's where my log came in. And that was important. And I usually -- my

pilot didn't drink. And I don't think my copilot drank.

(laughs) So I got to half snuckered before I got --

RG: You drank theirs, huh? You're right. You say you kept your log. What information would you put in your log as a navigator?

JG: Well, time of takeoff, and then any happening. Once, for example, there was a plane was back where I couldn't see it. But the gunners were telling me that, "Hey, this guy is out at the waist, and he's hanging on. He's outside of the airplane." Jesus. What the hell?

RG: You're talking about the waist gunner?

JG: Yeah. And so it turned out that the pilot had said, "Prepare for -- to bail out." And this guy had jumped out, and they grabbed him but they couldn't get him back in to the plane, and they were telling me all this. That was an incident. (laughs) They finally had to let him go.

RG: So he fell and parachuted wherever.

JG: I think they did get his parachute open. Yeah. But wherever -- he ended up in Germany. (laughs)

RG: Ah, maybe he wasn't lucky then.

JG: Pardon me?

RG: Maybe he wasn't too lucky.

JG: I don't know. I never heard. (laughs)

RG: Oh, well.

JG: Any incident of a plane being -- going down or any happenings, weather.

RG: So now would all navigators do this? They make their own log?

JG: They're supposed to.

RG: So sometimes the information would overlap.

JG: Oh yeah. I'm sure it did. That was up to the intelligence guys to figure it out.

RG: (laughs) So you let them do all that.

JG: Pardon me?

RG: You let them do all that figuring.

JG: Oh yeah. We didn't try to analyze it.

RG: So did you ever get -- what did you do during the time between flights that you were off? I mean was there ever times that you had maybe a couple three days off.

JG: Oh yes. We'd get passes. Yeah.

RG: Down time and stuff like that?

JG: Yeah.

RG: What did you do? How did you pass the time?

JG: Well, I usually go to London. But I did take one trip up to a town called Markham, England because I had an aunt that came from there. And her family ran a hotel there. So I thought that would be interesting. So I took -- I had

enough time on the pass to get up there. This is a seaside town on the Irish Sea. It was a resort town.

RG: This Markham?

JG: Markham. And so, I (laughs) was walking along the road there. And this car came by. This guy asked me if he could help me. And I said, "Yes. I'm looking for this Yates family." Y-A-T-E-S. "Oh," he says. "I know them. I'll take you over there." So it turned out to be the mayor of Markham. (laughs)

RG: Oh, is that right?

JG: And so that was very nice of him. And so my family got -- family group got all their relatives. And we had a dinner and so on and so forth.

RG: Had you ever met them before?

JG: No. No. But they were my aunt's mother and her sisters and so on. So that was it. Oh, and then the other funny thing about that. It turned out to be a base for returning soldiers from Egypt. British soldiers. So these guys were grizzled veterans. And here I am just (laughs) a second lieutenant just out of school. So I'm going down the walk, and they all (laughs) hang outside. (inaudible) jerk.

RG: Well, rank had its privilege.

JG: That's what you did. (laughs)

RG: So did you have much contact with the English people in the towns, in the villages, in stuff like that?

JG: Not really. I can't say that we did. No. I didn't make any great friends or anything like that.

RG: All right. I know the British were very favorable. Did you ever have any problems with any British?

JG: Oh no. No. In fact, one time I was on a subway and the stairs in London. And this lady came over. She said, "Thank you for coming and helping us," and so on. It made you feel good.

RG: It's nice to be loved.

JG: Well, appreciated effort.

RG: From Debach, how far away was London from Debach?

JG: Well, you go to Ipswich and then Colchester and then London. On the train.

RG: This is up by Scotland.

JG: Yeah. South of Scotland. Yeah. I forgot what they call that big area in England. But anyway, I forgot how many miles it was. It took a couple of hours to get there.

RG: So you would take a train down to London?

JG: Yeah.

RG: Were the trains pretty well packed?

JG: Oh yeah.

RG: A lot of troops and stuff on there?

JG: Oh, they had lots of people on those trains. You were lucky to get a seat. (laughs)

RG: Oh, is that right? Was it pretty cheap to travel?

JG: Yeah. It wasn't unreasonable. And then in London, we'd take the taxis. But they used to be the funny things. We'd get a taxi to get back to the station to come home because we had -- and the guy was stopped. He said, "Okay. That's it, boys." I said, "Well, this isn't the train station." He said, "No. But it's tea time." (laughs)

RG: Oh, so they would stop and --

JG: They stop no matter where. He was going to stop and get my money, and he goes into the pub for tea. (laughter)

RG: I've heard they're pretty sticklers on that. I didn't know it was that bad.

JG: Oh they are. It was that bad. Yeah. I said, "Hey, we've got a mission to fly tomorrow morning. We've got to get back to the base." He said, "I got to have my tea, boys." (laughs)

RG: He couldn't bring it in a thermos.

JG: (laughs) I don't know. Oh, and London at that time was -- all of the heat in the houses were these little coal stoves. And you'd put in a shilling and stir the coals up. But the coal in the air, oh, it was horrible. If you

coughed, you'd get black from breathing that stuff in your throat. It was really a filthy town.

RG: And was that how they pretty much heated their homes in those days?

JG: Yeah. Yeah. And they had millions of those little smoke stacks, and they're all belching out smoke. But I was over there a couple years later, and London was as clean as a whistle. So they took all those out, I guess, and wouldn't let them use it anymore.

RG: Could be. Now what was I going to ask you? Did you ever get to any of the areas of bombed out London when you were there? Did you see a lot of the damage that was caused by the blitzkrieg?

JG: I did not see that. No. I didn't.

RG: Now had they cleaned that up pretty much?

JG: Well, I don't think we were in that part of town. I just think we were --

RG: You don't recall any damage or any bombed out buildings?

JG: We were looking for the pubs. (laughs)

RG: The pubs. Okay. (inaudible) to see out the windows.

JG: And the girls. Of course, they were loaded with whores. You had to be careful.

RG: Oh, I bet. I bet. All over the place. So did any -- how was there any -- ever have any chance to use any medical

facilities there? Did you ever get sick or injured or breaking legs or arms?

JG: No. I was very fortunate that I was in good health. And so I didn't meet an Englishman.

RG: How about mail? Did you get mail there pretty easy? Pretty often?

JG: I turned out to be the worst mail writer. I think I wrote one postcard home. (laughs) My wife still (inaudible), and I didn't have any cameras. So I didn't have any -- I didn't take many pictures. So I'm very sorry that I didn't take more -- keep a log and keep a lot more detailed information on the -- I didn't realize what a big deal it was.

RG: Did they have pretty fair phone service over there back to the States? Could you use a telephone to call back home if you wanted to?

JG: Oh, I never called back.

RG: Never did. Okay.

JG: I don't know whether they -- whether you could or not as a matter of fact. Oh, I'm sure you -- I'm sure the prime minister could call. (laughs)

RG: Yeah. Yeah. I'm wondering if the servicemen had a chance to use the phone somewhere.

JG: I don't think there was one.

RG: To call somebody. It was mainly letters.

JG: Not that I know of.

RG: Did you get any packages from home? Cookies? Candy?

JG: No.

RG: Homemade bread. Stuff like that. Take a month and a half to get over there.

JG: Yeah. It's a trip. (laughs) They were having enough trouble getting their war supplies in.

RG: You bet. And so how many missions did you fly?

JG: 28.

RG: 28. Anything stand out among those missions? Any close calls? Any harrowing experiences? Any funny things happen?

JG: I was very lucky. I mean when it comes to is that we couldn't fight because all you got is a machine gun with a very small cone of fire. So you were just sitting there a sitting duck in a sense. And you were just lucky as hell. And I just figured that was -- I said, "Well, we're (laughs) -- one more time we got back." But it was just pure luck.

RG: So that was the name of your plane. One More Time.

JG: Yeah. Well, that's what it came to. But I mean it was -- I think our crew -- we were just very lucky. We didn't

have any really bad times. We never even lost an engine that I can recall.

RG: Now you say you went out -- on some of your off times, you went to the pubs and stuff like that. Pretty well received in the pubs?

JG: Oh yes. The English were nice. They were always good enough people.

RG: How was the beer there? Someone said they drink warm beer over there.

JG: Well, I didn't think it was that bad. They did have a dark beer that I didn't care for.

RG: Kind of like an ale?

JG: Pardon me?

RG: Kind of like an ale?

JG: Yeah. it was like an ale. And they had a name for it. I forgot what it was. Except I didn't care for it. (laughs)
Their regular beer was good. In the officers' club, we drank scotch quite a bit.

RG: Okay. That'll kill any germs.

JG: Sorry?

RG: That'll kill some germs.

JG: Yeah. (laughs)

RG: Anything else that you can think of? Or any good stories?
How about any high faluting commanders you met? Eisenhower
or anything like that.

JG: Oh, god, no. I never met Eisenhower. But let me think.
(inaudible) I was there after the D Day raids. What was
all this about a Pacific war in here?

RG: Well, let me go on pause here. But let's go back on this
here. We're back on the interview with Mr. Glaze.

JG: So at the end of the war, of course, it was a big hoopla.
We had a big party that night. [Tally Hart?] and I stole a
jeep, and we were driving all (laughs) -- we went out of
the officers' club and here's this jeep. I said, "Gee, we
ought to take a ride, Tommy." "Yeah. Okay." (laughs) So
--

RG: This is in England?

JG: Yeah. This is at our base. So we're driving it all
around. And pretty soon these people are following us and
pretty soon there's another one following us. (laughs) So
we got back to our hut, and I ran in and jumped in bed.
(laughs) And Tommy ran in the head and sat on the urinal.
But we weren't fooling anybody. Luckily, they were very
nice to us. They didn't shoo us out.

RG: Were they MPs?

JG: Yeah. So then a couple of weeks later they came to and all navigators who had 25 missions or over, they wanted to have us pack up and get ready to leave right away. So I said goodbye to the crew. They took us down to Valley Wales. And that was an airfield. So the next day or two later we're sitting around this bank over the -- over the airstrip -- landing strip. And these 826s were coming in from France. And so these guys landed. They were all over the place. They were running off the runway. I said, "Jesus, those guys don't know how to fly." Luckily, the plane I was assigned to the guy was a -- had finished his tour, and he was very experienced. Now the 826 is pretty hit airplane. Fast attack bomber.

RG: It's French?

JG: Pardon me?

RG: It's a French aircraft.

JG: Oh no. No. American.

RG: 826. Okay.

JG: And so we got our briefing and took off for Iceland and just the pilot and I because he needs a navigator for the pilot. So we flew to Iceland. There for a few days. And then we flew to Greenland. And then we flew to Gander -- I think it was Gander, Newfoundland. And that's where all of a sudden all kinds of guns were going off and so on and so

forth. It was the end of the Pacific War. I think that was around the first of August. And then I got back to -- oh, and then we flew down. Our next place was Bradley Field, which is only a few miles from where I live. So I told the pilot. I said, "Hey, we ought to come over to my house." (laughs) And he said, "Okay. You know where it is?" And I said, "Oh yes. I know where it is." So I got him right down on the deck, and we went zoom. Right over to my house. And then I called up after I got down there. And my sister answered. And I said, "Jean, did a plane go over your house here a little while ago?" She said, "yeah. I think that was Bill Robinson." I said, "Oh for Christ's sake. That was your brother." (laughter) "Oh, you're home."

RG: So you could take some latitude with your flying sometimes.

JG: Oh yeah. Well, that was -- yeah. Right. So then they all came down, and that was the end of the (inaudible) for me. It was great to see them. I actually went home. I tried to get the pilot to go up and have dinner with us. But they wouldn't let him off the base. So I separated right then. And I don't know where they ended up with those 826s. But I was home. (laughs)

RG: Now when you -- after your last mission, how long after your last mission did you find out you were going to be going home?

JG: Oh, that was, I think, about a month.

RG: Okay. So you hadn't flown in a month.

JG: No.

RG: Okay. Did they have you just doing base stuff?

JG: Oh, we were just hanging out.

RG: (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) training or just handing out.

JG: But everyone was trying to figure out how they were going to get home. So that was the first indication. I think that -- I'm not sure what they -- I don't think they brought the B17s back over here. I think they broke them up over there. I never did hear. But I was home.

(laughs)

RG: So you had to take a ship over, and you got a plane coming back.

JG: No. Yeah. The ship was going over to France. Right. Then a plane coming back. Then I was -- got orders to go down -- back down to Greensboro, North Carolina, where I started from. And then I got discharged down there. So that as the end of the war for me.

RG: So you actually entered service in 1943. And you got out in 1948.

JG: '45.

RG: No. '45. Okay.

JG: Fall of '45.

RG: All right.

JG: Well, one thing I did want to bring up which I thought was interesting is that after the war we had a lot of parties and all that stuff. And then I went to this business college. And I had made up my mind somewhere along I was going to start my own business. So when I was back from college, I was 23. And my father died in the spring of my last year at school. And I had to go home because my mother was, of course, alone. But I was determined to start my own business. And so then I met this girl, fell in love with her. So here I was at 24, broke. Oh, I'd gotten a job, and I'd gotten laid off. And I wanted to get married, and I wanted to start my own business. And I didn't have any money. (laughs) But I wanted to tell you that I did start my own business. I had the business for 60 years and was very successful.

RG: Was this as an electrician?

JG: Pardon me?

RG: Electrical work?

JG: No. We made metal name plates. Something like these things only for machinery. And I always sold them to manufacturers. And it's quite an involved business to make those damn things. And my mother had a insurance policy she hadn't cashed. Life insurance policy she hadn't -- the banker told me I couldn't get any money. I went to every bank in town and different ones to try and get some money.

RG: The start up money?

JG: Pardon me? Start up money. So finally, I went to this guy. And he said, "If your mother got anything left from your father going," because that had only been a year before. So she did have this one insurance policy. It was worth \$5,000.00. So he says, "I'll give you \$6,500.00 with that as collateral." And she agreed. So that was enough -- just enough. I mean my wife -- my girlfriend, at that time, was working in Hartford. And so she said, "Well, let's elope," so we did. We moved down to this town in Maryland. Elkton, Maryland. It was the eloping -- big, big place where everybody eloped to. And came back. And so she kept working, and I spent a year putting this place together in the cellar of an old building at 25 bucks a month. But the point of my remark is that not only I, but an awful lot of my friends, started their own businesses that year. I mean even in those years.

RG: Were these friends of yours from school? Or they friends of yours from the service?

JG: No. From school. But I just compared to today's economy, they say start ups and all this stuff. Well, I mean we did it. I think we had a lot of confidence because we were in the war.

RG: That's got to give you confidence. You bet.

JG: I mean that's where it stemmed from. And I think that as important because it -- I mean you got to have confidence. You're going to stick your head way out when you start a business.

RG: Well, you stuck it way out getting in an airplane getting shot at too.

JG: Yeah. Sure. But I mean so therefore it wasn't (laughter) all new to us.

RG: It wasn't all that scary. Yeah. So any other good stories you got?

JG: No. I think I'm getting dry. (laughs)

RG: Getting dried up. Did you want to get some water or something?

JG: No. No. No. I'm just -- I (inaudible).

RG: All right. Okay. Well, if you don't have anything else, we can go ahead --

JG: It was what you wanted I hope.

RG: Oh yeah. That's fine. Yeah. We want to get your story and what you -- can you tell me anything about -- from the time you went into the war as an 18-year-old kid until the time you got out and all you had been through, did you change you in any way as far as your outlook on life?

JG: I think, as I just recalled, I think it gave us confidence in ourselves. I mean we know we didn't win the war. At the same time, we helped. (laughs)

RG: You helped. You bet you did. You have any old friends you still keep in contact with? Or just the one pilot?

JG: No. I did have that one guy I went in with. I saw him a few times. He ended up a radio operator that got washed out. And my wife, as I said, died after 56 years.

RG: I'm sorry.

JG: In '06. And she was a great person. But I was lucky enough to meet this girl that I'm with now. She's a trooper. And she knew this guy very well. Almost married his older brother.

RG: Is that right? (laughter) Lucky you got to her first.

JG: Yeah. (laughs) So no. I can't say that any -- I wish I had kept contact with my crew. But I called. I found an address of one of the ones and called up, and he had died. But I had a nice talk with his widow.

RG: Well, a lot of times too these reunions you can come up with people that -- you can get in contact with other guys that may know who they are and then work back around that way.

JG: Well, I don't know. They are all over the country. One guy was in Detroit. One guy was in Tennessee somewhere and all that sort of thing.

RG: Okay. Well, I want to thank you for your time and thank you for your service.

JG: I'm glad to hear about your home town and what you're doing up there. That's great.

RG: Yeah. We have a good time up there.

JG: I bet you do.

RG: Well, I'm going to go ahead and close the interview out then. And thank you, John.

END OF AUDIO FILE