

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

NIMITZ EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CENTER

FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS

AN INTERVIEW WITH

ANTHONY V. GIGLIO

CLARK, NEW JERSEY

JULY 23, 2013

LST 454

Mr. Misenhimer:

My Name is Richard Misenhimer, today is July 23, 2013. I am interviewing Mr. Anthony V. "Tony" Giglio by telephone. His phone number is 732-381-8900. His address is 784 Riverbend RD Clark, New Jersey 07066. This 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:

Tony, I want to thank you for taking the time to do this interview today, and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Giglio:

Thank you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

The first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure it's okay with you.

"Agreement Read."

Is that okay with you?

Mr. Giglio:

Sure.

The next thing I'd like to do is get an alternative contact. We find out that sometimes several years down the road, we try to get back in touch with a veteran he's moved or something. Do you have a son or a daughter or someone we could contact, if we needed to locate you?

Mr. Giglio:

My son, or you can call on my daughter, I will give you both.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well, how about your son what is his name?

Mr. Giglio:

Russell. You can reach him at his office 908-730-2292.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You mentioned your daughter, what is her name?

Mr. Giglio:

Anita.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have her phone number?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, it is 732-957-9619.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Good, hopefully we will never need those but you never know.

Mr. Giglio:

That is right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

For the record, what is your birthdate?

Mr. Giglio:

January 21, 1924.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Giglio:

Jersey City, New Jersey.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Giglio:

I had one sister.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was she involved any kind of War work?

Mr. Giglio:

No, she was older than me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, it was rough, of course my grandfather was in the plumbing business and my father and of course, I had to help out because I was the only boy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were they able to keep busy during the depression?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, you know we had enough of everything. You do a little bit of this and a little bit of that and yes, fortunately you know, but the money was rough.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you live in town?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a garden?

Mr. Giglio:

No.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to High School.

Mr. Giglio:

Linden High School.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That is where?

Mr. Giglio:

In Linden, New Jersey.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year did you finish there?

Mr. Giglio:

I didn't, I left in my Junior year.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your last year there?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, that was 1942, I guess.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you and how did you hear about it?

Mr. Giglio:

I was coming out of a movie in Linden, N.C., and somebody said Pearl Harbor was bombed, I didn't even know where Pearl Harbor was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So people did not know where it was? Did you know where it was?

Mr. Giglio:

No I didn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you heard that, how did you think that was going to affect you?

Mr. Giglio:

I was talking with some of my friends and none of us knew where Pearl Harbor was. So, we didn't know what to think to be honest with you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were about 17 about that time?

Mr. Giglio:

No, I was 17.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, 17, right, so you hadn't registered for the draft then?

Mr. Giglio:

No, but I do remember that everybody said let's go. In fact, the 3 of us that were there, one joined the Army, one joined the Marines and I went into the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you go into the Navy?

Mr. Giglio:

I went in, actually March of 42' .

Mr. Misenhimer:

March of 42, so that was 3 months after the attack?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, but they wouldn't accept me, because of fillings in my teeth, they were strict at that time. I said do the fillings have to do with it. Anyway, I had to Dr. Oxman in Elizabeth, I will never forget. He had to take the fillings out and put different fillings in and that took forever, because you the dentist years ago, they would do one and then you would come back next

week and then maybe they would do something else. Then, but anyway, that is what happened. Finally, when I got done, I finally went back to 93rd street in New York and then they accepted the fillings that he put in and they accepted me. In 2 weeks, I got a letter from the Navy to report at such and such a time, otherwise they would turn me over to the Army and I would be inducted into the Army. I said, after all that trouble I have been going through to get in the Navy, but anyway thank God it worked out the way it did you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So when did you actually go into active duty?

Mr. Giglio:

Actually, they took me on September 18, 1942.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In the Navy? You volunteered?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes. People wouldn't believe, of course they sent me and a whole bunch, they sent us to Norfolk, Virginia for boot training. Down there they checked me and they did not like the fillings.

Honest to God, they had to take them out. Because, they said, "if a sub came by the fillings would bounce off the sub or something," and they had to take them out and put theirs in.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Chuckles....Oh my gosh..

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, that is what I said.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many fillings did you have?

Mr. Giglio:

I think I had 4 or 5.

Mr. Misenhimer:

My goodness.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, boy... chuckles...

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, you finally got that taken care of ?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, finally.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you take your boot camp?

Mr. Giglio:

Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Tell me about that, how was boot camp?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, boot camp, I tell you that chief would come in maybe 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning, "up and at em, up and at em!" Man everybody jumped, "what happened, what happened?" And we would march you know, so all we would do was march back and forth. I guess it was just to break us in you know we were all kids, what did we know. So, that is what we would do and come back and go hit the sack and get ready for muster in the morning. You know I had two weeks of boot. They wanted us out. Two weeks of boot, went home for 10 days and then back to Norfolk, Virginia and we started forming a crew.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, in boot camp did you have any kind of weapons training?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, a little bit with the Springfield O3, you know. We never really used them either. You know, but they had to have something.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, your boot camp was only 2 weeks then?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes, that is all it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

A lot of marching?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes, a lot of marching, tying knots, and stuff like that, but how much can you learn in 2 weeks?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, right? Then after the 2 weeks, you went for leave back home right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Then we came back and then they put us on different crews. They put us on the LST training ship, 389. What we did is, the skipper of that 389, he anchored here in the route of the ferry and we got hit by that and somebody yelled "torpedo, torpedo!" and there was a whole bunch of us guys from different LST's you know. So, then they took us all off and brought us back to Norfolk, Virginia, and we were all hoping, some of us hoping on the East Coast and some were

hoping on the West Coast. Anyway, after a while, maybe I don't know how long, it was so long ago, maybe 8 to 10 hours. They said okay, shape up, we boarded the train and we were going to Portland, Oregon, and that is where we went Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long was that train trip out there?

Mr. Giglio:

Well you know the way sailors are they were jumping off at different stops every time the train stopped. They would be jumping looking for a place to drink or something. It took quite a while for us to get to Portland Oregon. Then when we got out there we went to different schools and we had liberty at night. During the day there were different things that we would have to do. Tie knots and go through things and different things that pertained to the Navy while we were waiting for our ship. Our ship was being built in Spokane, Washington, the 454.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you were waiting for it to be built and then what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, finally, it was built and we brought it down the Columbia River and the crew went aboard it. You know our captain accepted the ship and we commissioned it at that time. There was plank owners.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were a plank owner.

Mr. Giglio:

Yea. I think there was 7 officers and 49 enlisted men. That is what we headed, you know out with. So, then we came back and to put things in and get ready and taking stores on and getting ready. We knew were going to be , of course, the one guy, I asked him I said, "T.H, what is that supposed to mean?", he said, " we are going to Hawaii", that means territory of Hawaii. He was right. Of course, what they did is that they took the LCM, are you familiar with the LCM?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes sir, I am.

Mr. Giglio:

This monster of a Derickliff, when they lifted that thing up we all had to get off, you know out of the way, lifted right up and put on the deck of our LST and then we all had to go and secure it, buckle it down and make sure it would not shift. That is how we took it overseas, you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you join the 454?

Mr. Giglio:

When it was commissioned?

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were aboard then?

Mr. Giglio:

I was one of the first ones on the ship and would you believe I was the last one to leave the ship.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is that right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, I spent 49 months overseas.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh, all of it on the LST 454?

Mr. Giglio:

All on the LFT 454, because everytime a new captain came on board he used to say, " Gigolo you are a morale builder and we are gonna keep you aboard...." chuckles..... I used to laugh at him but, boy it wound up the truth!

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, the 25th that is when it was assigned to the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About, when did you arrive in Hawaii?

Mr. Giglio:

I don't remember off hand, maybe Sal remembered?

Mr. Misenhimer:

I don't have that off hand, but that is okay. Lets go ahead. It would have been in the Spring sometime right?

Mr. Giglio:

It had to be yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that trip over to Hawaii?

Mr. Giglio:

Not bad at all. It was nice you know. We worked as far as look outs and so on and so forth.

Then we had an escort taking us over so, it was pretty nice.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you the only ship besides the escorts?

Mr. Giglio:

No, there were other ships.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were on the way over there, were there any alerts for Japanese submarines or anything?

Mr. Giglio:

Not that I can recall.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you got to Hawaii, what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, we got to Hawaii, and people never saw an LST, you know they were all shook up. You are familiar with it so you know. The bow doors open up and the ramp comes down, kind of just sitting back there and they are all wondering you know..... chuckles. Anyway we stayed there a while.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got to Hawaii with the LCM, what did you do with the LCM?

Mr. Giglio:

That stayed aboard. Yes. Until we got to New Guinea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Let's go back to your time in Hawaii. Did you get any liberty there?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes, we got liberty there. In fact, this friend of mine Betts, his brother was working over there in the shipyards and he went home and he wasn't supposed to go home, because if he did the Army would grab him. But, he wanted to get home and see his father. Betts was in the Navy with me you know. His brother went home and then he didn't. He said, he went back home and he got caught and the Army took him and in the Battle of the Bulge he got killed.

What a shame huh?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh, I see, yes, that is right.

Mr. Giglio:

But, who knows what the man upstairs wants.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was liberty in Hawaii.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, curfew, I think it was at 20:00 I think curfew off the street.

Mr. Misenhimer:

8 o'clock. Now, were you in Pearl Harbor or where were you?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there still much damage when you were there?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yea, there was still damage, what a mess!

Mr. Misenhimer:

The ships were still there and all of that?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, they were down, what a mess it was yea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything in particular you recall from your time in Hawaii?

Mr. Giglio:

Not really, I mean the people were really nice to us. I guess they were happy to see us, you know. We couldn't do too much except stand guard you know and stuff like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then you left there and went to New Guinea?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, that is right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you went to New Guinea were you in a convoy with a lot of other ships?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, then to balance the LCM on an LST, we let it go like to the starboard side, It was real greased up and left the LCM slide off. We had fenders along side our ship, so if it bounced back it would hit the fenders. That is where we left the LCM off.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That is in New Guinea.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that trip down to New Guinea?

Mr. Giglio:

Not too bad. We had I think we had Australian if my memory serves me right. I think we had Australian destroyers escort us down there you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you zigzag on the way?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever have any submarine or airplane alerts?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, we did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, they would say you know, " watch out for this and watch out for that, and stay close," you know. Then we would had the plane overhead you know. You had your code changed everyday you know and if they would code, you know, and if you didn't give the right code you would be in trouble. So, yea that worked out pretty good.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your job on the ship?

Mr. Giglio:

I was a Gunner's Mate.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What gun were you on?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, I was in charge of all the guns.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh.

Mr. Giglio:

I was Gunner's Mate First Class Acting Chief. When I first went aboard I was an Apprentice Seaman.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, when did you get to be Gunner's Mate?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, let's see....

Mr. Misenhimer:

Before or after Hawaii?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, long time after Hawaii. Jim Lemaere he came onto our ship, from the Battleship Missouri, I think it was. He took a liking to me and he and I had been in the plumbing business and all. He said, "you know, you are pretty familiar with stuff, why don't you come and join us here?" So, I went to my deck officer Mr. Drummond, real nice, good officer. So, I mentioned it to him and he said, "well you can do it if you want to, but you still have to do your seaman's duty." I said, "okay." Because nobody kills themselves as you well know, aboard ship. So anyway, after a little bit of both then the time came up that around 8 months or 9 months. Then Lemaere said, "I am going to put you up to Third Class." In the meantime, I became a Seaman Second and then Seaman First. Then I said, "sure I will take it." So, I took it and I became Third Class. Then he went home. He had enough points and all to go home and then there was Ken Betts. He was Second Class Gunner's Mate and then myself. After while, Ken and I worked everything. Then Ken's mother passed away. He was supposed to go up to First Class and I was going to go Second Class. So he decided to go home and I went Second Class and everything worked out and I thank God. It just worked out. You know when you take just the First Class it is also for Chief but it is a matter of putting your time in. So, that's how I happened to get ahead so quick you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, about when did you make First Class?

Mr. Giglio:

If I was ready, I wouldn't hold you up you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you at when you made First Class do you recall?

Mr. Giglio:

I think it was probably in New Guinea either that or in the Philippines one or the other.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were in New Guinea before you went to the Philippines right? Well that is okay it is not important.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, what was your battle station?

Mr. Giglio:

I had the headphones. Any kind of a problem, they would call me and I would have to go and fix whatever the problem was whether it was jammed or a shell stuck inside the barrel or whatever happened with one of the guns. I would have the phones on all the time. I was by the wheelhouse and they would call me. In fact, one time we had one jam, I don't know how they did it but they jammed it, on the portside, in the gun barrel. So, everybody had to get off that side of the ship and I had to go in there with them and get that shell out. Fortunately, thank God I am still here talking. I pushed it over the side and we were lucky. I was lucky.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What size gun was that?

Mr. Giglio:

It was the 20 mm.

Mr. Misenhimer:

20 mm? What all guns did you have in your LST's.

Mr. Giglio:

I think each one was a 3 inch 50, then we had 40's 20's, and some 50 calibers and some 30 calibers. All kinds of small arms.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many 40's did you have? Do you know?

Mr. Giglio:

We had, I think we had 4?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were these single 40's or twin 40's.

Mr. Giglio:

Single. Sorry, that was 5 we had one on the bow, 5- 40's.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about the 20's?

Mr. Giglio:

25.

20's, we had about 6 on there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

These were singles also?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, and the 3 inch 50 you know was a single.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That was dual purpose, anti aircraft and bombardment.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, that was it, we fired 70 rounds in Borneo, oh you know about that? We fired 70 rounds in, not Borneo in Admiralty Islands Los Negros. As the Japanese were coming down, 40 LST's were on the beach and 4 were told to fire you know at them coming down. Of course, the tin cans couldn't get in because they would get stuck because of the draft, so we had to fire ours. We fired 70 rounds at that time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Before you got to be the Gunnery Officer what did you do then?

Mr. Giglio:

Before I used to work on the deck and on the guns at the same time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Your battle station was where then?

Mr. Giglio:

I think I was a pointer, the one who aims the 20s.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the first place you went to in New Guinea?

Mr. Giglio:

I think it was Milne Bay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Milne Bay? What did you do there?

Mr. Giglio:

I think we loaded up later on to make our first landing, which was at Goodenough Island. In fact, I think one night we snuck into some island and we dropped off the Australians to spy on the Japanese. I forget which island that was, you know, we have to go back 70 years.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Right.

Mr. Giglio:

I can't believe the way the years go by.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That is right. I think that Sal said you all went to Sydney, Australia first is that right?

Mr. Giglio:

We did go to Sydney, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Giglio:

Sydney was great. In fact, you are talking about when we first went to New Guinea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you first got down there?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, okay I thought you were talking about maybe 10 days R&R.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, before you went to New Guinea, he said that, well I am not sure about that. I think he said that you went to Australia, Brisbane, Townsville, and then to Port Moresby.

Mr. Giglio:

Yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you first got down there...

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, that is right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was Brisbane?

Mr. Giglio:

I tell you all those places were terrific. The people treated us wonderful. They were really were nice to us.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I have here that your first invasion was Goodenough Island?

Mr. Giglio:

It might have been Goodenough.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You said that you all were in the first wave there, is that right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened when you landed there?

Mr. Giglio:

Thank God, not too much. Nothing that I can think of.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you have aboard?

Mr. Giglio:

We had the Army aboard.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You had troops and, you let them out?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was your ship ever attacked by enemy airplanes or anything?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Fortunately, thank God they missed us. In fact, I get mixed up sometimes with being in the Phillipines when we were tied out there you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, but the Phillipines was later.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went to through a lot at New Guinea before you went to the Phillipines.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, oh yes, definetly.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Of the invasions you were on, which do you recall as being the worst?

Mr. Giglio:

I think the Phillipines, yea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about in New Guinea what would be a bad one there?

Mr. Giglio:

The one where, oh God, Lae, New Guinea? there....

Mr. Misenhimer:

Lae, New Guinea?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, that is the capital of New Guinea. Coming back, we had to pick up this 473 and tow it into the shore and take their stuff, you know, we tied up with them. We took it ashore and took all their stuff and brought it back up you know where we made the invasion because what's his name Johnny Hutching got killed on that one. You know that?

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, go ahead.

Mr. Giglio:

It was on the 473.

Mr. Misenhimer:

He was one of your crewman?

Mr. Giglio:

No he was on the 473. No. Fortunately, our ship was very lucky. We might have been out there the longest and had gone in on 13 invasions and all that but thank God nobody got hurt or anything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That is remarkable really.

Mr. Giglio:

Very lucky, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now Sal, said on the way down you all went to Fiji?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, we did go to Fiji?

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, that was nice. People were real nice there too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

He said you went to New Hebrides?

Mr. Giglio:

Yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

New Caledonia?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, we went to New Caledonia too yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did anything happen at those places?

Mr. Giglio:

Nothing to really speak of you know just some liberty and stuff like that and you had to behave yourself. You know how sailors get at times.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you were at the invasion on Lae, right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about Finchhaven?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What do you remember about it?

Mr. Giglio:

Finchhaven, you know I don't see where it was really that bad to be honest with you. You never know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about New Britain?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes. The worst one I can think of was Los Negros in the Admiralty Islands. Two Army guys had 2 and 2 underneath with 50 calibers, what do you call those?

Mr. Misenhimer:

The quad-50's?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, they had 2 of them and our ship was right there and these two, man they were going on all through there.... (Mr. Giglio making firing sounds with his mouth.....)all through there. Man, I thought how can anybody live through that. You know, you wonder. Man was that thing going.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yea, those quad-50's were something.

Mr. Giglio:

Why can't people get along?

Mr. Misenhimer:

That was at Los Negros right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else happened there?

Mr. Giglio:

At Los Negros, oh, I guess maybe Sal told you, a couple of B-25's came over and we fired at them. They were our own planes you know. But, they weren't supposed to come there because we were told, if anybody comes from the starboard side they were going to be enemies. They tried to help us because they were following one of the Japanese planes and you know, how scared you are you know we are all kids. Thank God, I wasn't on a gun.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did they shoot them down?

Mr. Giglio:

I think they damaged one or two but didn't shoot them down.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Giglio:

I guess that was it, not too much happened after that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went to Hollandia right?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh yea, Hollandia was a big port.

Mr. Misenhimer:

The island of Biak? Sal says that was his last one.

Mr. Giglio:

I think we got off after that, to the small what you might call it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Small water craft?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, he left and went to there then? Did you know him when you all were on the ship?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, sure. Oh, yea, I knew Sal, everybody knew me because I was one of the originals.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you all go to the Phillipines?

Mr. Giglio:

I saw MacArthur there. Oh, yea, I saw him. I wish we could of taken cameras and taken picture you know. Because I would of loved that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you see him?

Mr. Giglio:

On the invasion the first day, but we weren't allowed to take pictures.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go in the Phillipines? Was that Leyte Gulf?

Mr. Giglio:

Leyte Gulf, that is right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that there?

Mr. Giglio:

I think that we were worried because they said that the Japenese might be coming down after us you know. So, we were worried. We got shook up there for a while because we had no big armament, you know. Thank God it worked out.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when they had the battle of Leyte Gulf, were you all there for that?

Mr. Giglio:

No, we were on the outside. Thank God for that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand that there were some Kamikazes at Leyte, did you see any of those?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, oh yes, in fact we shot one down, I guess Sal told you that, or maybe he wasn't with us, oh.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No he wasn't with you there no.

Mr. Giglio:

As we were going there, you know there was LST's on each side and that side and this plane came down right in between us, of course in between us, so we couldn't fire, because if we would fire then we would hit our ship. So, what we could do is stay there and he just rode along with us. Then all of the sudden he decided to go to the left toward the port. As he did, we were told, "commence firing!" and we shot his wing and fortunately we got him and he went down. So, we got credit for one plane that we shot down.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you see any other Kamikazes there?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh yea, some would go into and hit the.... one of the ships, I can't think the name of the ship. We also saw the USS Brownson. I forget which invasion it was, but the Japanese dropped the bomb and it went down right down the stack and blew the whole ship apart. There was some awful stuff, and we picked up some bodies, oh it was a mess.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What ship was that?

Mr. Giglio:

The USS Brownson.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of ship was that do you know?

Mr. Giglio:

It was a tin can- a destroyer.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, we got all shook up with that you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was that there at Leyte or where was that?

Mr. Giglio:

I am trying to think of where that was? I am not sure where that was, I want to be honest with you, I don't want to give you(Editor's Note: Off Cape Gloucester New Britain.)

Mr. Misenhimer:

That is fine. How about some other things that happened?

Mr. Giglio:

When I was in charge, we had a smoke generator aboard ship. Are you familiar with the smoke generators?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, I know of them.

Mr. Giglio:

This is what happened. They wanted me to take care of the smoke generator and all that stuff you know, okay, so I did it you know. I got it working every morning I got there, I said, "man you know I'm First Class and I am Acting Chief." I said, "I am going to put one or the other gunner's mates in charge and I will sleep a little late." I get this guy Muse, who I think he was Third Class at the time, Third Class Gunner's Mate. I showed him how to use it and all that there you know. How you do this and you got do this to make the smoke. Because early in the morning the tin cans would go all around and make smoke and we would make smoke with our generator so nobody could see from the sky. Anyway, that morning I told him don't wake me wake up Muse. Because he was going to be in charge of the generator from now on. Sure enough, he goes up there and something always blows up you know and it blew up on him. He started a fire, man! They got me up and we put the fire outchuckles... in the meantime we had a 50 caliber machine gun not far from the smoke generator so I grabhold of the hose because I was also fireman aboard ship. So, I get the spray to spray that and this big guy Carl Herrgesell he was Acting Chief Bosun Mate he grabs me like a little kid and I am holding a hose and after we got the fire all out, I said, "Carl you know, there are armor piercing shells and they could of went through me, through you, through the wheelhouse and keep on going....chuckles, he said, "now you tell me!"..... chuckles.... oh, we had some crazy things happen.... chuckles....

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did they use the smoke generators for?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, that is for early in the morning to make all that smoke so that the planes that come over

they can't see down below what is going on.

Mr. Misenhimer:

To lay a smoke screen?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea. Nobody could see you know because the tin cans would go around in circles. We would have our smoke and other LST's going, everybody would have their smoke and nobody could see anything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where was that at when this happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, that was in New Guinea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

New Guinea, before you went to the Phillipines?

Mr. Giglio:

That is right?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where else did you go in the Phillipines besides Leyte?

Mr. Giglio:

Cebu, then Mindinao, there is one other place I can't think of it off hand.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about Luzon?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes definitely Luzon.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do in those places?

Mr. Giglio:

We made the invasions.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You say your ship made 13 invasions?

Mr. Giglio:

That is right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You made them all right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, sir, thank God.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which one of those would you think was the worst?

Mr. Giglio:

I think the one in the Admiralty's was pretty bad.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you?

Mr. Giglio:

When the Japanese came marching down. Borneo was rough too, when we hit Borneo, that was the last one we made was Borneo.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now in Borneo you went to where did you say?

Mr. Giglio:

No, that was our last one, Borneo.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went to Balikpapan?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, Balikpapan.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You picked up some prisoners there?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, we took up a bunch of prisoners.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Japenese?

Mr. Giglio:

Yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do with those?

Mr. Giglio:

We took them aboard ship and we brought them back and turned them over to the Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how many prisoners did you have?

Mr. Giglio:

I guess it was about 24 or 26.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you take them to?

Mr. Giglio:

I don't know exactly where we took them but we turned them over to the Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any problems with having them on there or anything?

Mr. Giglio:

No, they behaved themselves.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a place to put them or did you have a BRIG?

Mr. Giglio:

We put them up on top of the deck.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a place fenced in for them or anything like that?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yea, when we brought them down below, you know on the tank deck, we had somebody stand watch over them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You didn't have them pinned up in anything, or any kind of prison?

Mr. Giglio:

No.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They were not aggressive, they didn't try to get away or anything?

Mr. Giglio:

No, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Giglio:

I was trying to think off hand. Sometimes so much runs through your mind and then all of the sudden you get blank..... chuckles.....

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand, I have been there and done that.... chuckles...

Mr. Giglio:

Yea...

Mr. Misenhimer:

What would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Giglio:

When we were in the Phillipines. I never seen so many ships in my life. When we went to the Phillipines, today there would be so many, and the next day there would be more that it got to the point, that I swear as God is my judge, it felt like when we were going to go in you could walk from one ship to another and walk right into the Phillipines. I never saw so many ships in my life. My God was there ships...

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale on your ship?

Mr. Giglio:

Our morale was pretty good.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of the officers you had there?

Mr. Giglio:

I thought they were pretty good, to be honest with you, they were pretty good.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anyone of them you had any trouble with?

Mr. Giglio:

Nope, I was very fortunate, I got along with all of them. They were all good as far as I am concerned.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you every under friendly fire?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, we were.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened?

Mr. Giglio:

What happened is that we pulled out and got way out at sea so we could read it, but then we got to worry because what was happening, is especially like when we were going into the Phillipines. A lot of these guys would come out with the boxes over their heads and tie bombs to the side of the ship, I guess you heard about that?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes, go ahead and tell me about it....

Mr. Giglio:

My gunnery officer, Mr. O'Connor, he would say, " alright Gigolo", you know he would call me that, you know you were never called by your first name. I am going in there for a minute or two or something and he said, " make sure everything is okay out here." I said, " yes sir." So, then these guys you know how they like to fool around. They had a box and threw it over the side and let it float down and make believe that somebody was in it. So, they could fire their guns and all..... chuckles.... this one guy Balochaque, he was great for that. He threw one over the side and he would say, "A.J., come here there is somebody coming over there, look it at that, he is over there, look he is coming, Oh my God I think he has got a bomb!" I said, "wait a minute I will go find Mr. O'Connor." I couldn't go to officer's country you know. Mr. O'Connor, I can't find him, I can't find him, so he said, "hey you!....fire!.. he fired, he let go.....(Mr. Giglio making firing noises with his mouth....) it was just a cardboard box, but I didn't know. So, Mr. O'Connor he showed up, and said, "why did you do that!" Just say, "I told you to fire, just say I told you to fire," and so we went on to explain... chuckles... you know crazy guys you know we all do crazy things.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything funny happen any time along the way?

Mr. Giglio:

No, except when we crossed the equator?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh yea, what happened then?

Mr. Giglio:

You know you get out the officers and then you really wrap them up, if you get a chance.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have quite a ceremony?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, yea.... Im sure you went through that didn't you?

Mr. Misenhimer:

No I didn't go across the equator in the service?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, you didn't oh.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I stayed in the states the whole time.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, that is right you told me that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all did they do to you when you crossed the equator.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, man you better be wearing your shorts, because they really wrap you up.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Make you crawl through some garbage?

Mr. Giglio:

You name it they did it.....it was all fun.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have some shellbacks on board to initiate the pollywogs?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, oh yea they loved it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when did you come home from overseas?

Mr. Giglio:

I was the last one to leave the ship.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you leave the ship at? In the states or overseas?

Mr. Giglio:

No, overseas.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They brought the ship back home right?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes. If I would have known that the war ended, on my way home the war ended, if I had known that I would have stayed aboard the ship, but I didn't know you know. I came home on a liberty ship.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you were on the ship on August 15th, when the war got over?

Mr. Giglio:

Yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, let me ask you on April 12, 1945, president Roosevelt died did you all hear about that?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the reaction?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, everybody was sad at that time. We felt bad, yea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

On May the 8th, 1945 Germany surrendered, did you all hear about that?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, yes....

Mr. Misenhimer:

What reaction did you have to that?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh man, we were happy, we said, "hey we will be going home!"

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, I said when Germany surrendered...

Mr. Giglio:

Yea, I know, we thought we would be going home after Germany, then everybody would be coming over to the Pacific, we would really be wiping them all out and then we would all be going home.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then, when they dropped the first atomic bomb did you hear about that?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the reaction when you heard that?

Mr. Giglio:

Of course, a lot were for it and a lot of them against it, but I think he did the right thing.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you were on the ship on August 15th, when Japan surrendered right, on the liberty ship?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any kind of celebration there?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes and no, because you know it was all together different they didn't know us and we didn't know them. There was only 2 of us guys from the Navy aboard that ship and all the rest was the Merchant Marines but everybody was happy that the war was over you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you every hear of Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, sure.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of her?

Mr. Giglio:

They should have hung her.....chuckles....

Mr. Misenhimer:

Chuckles..... why was that?

Mr. Giglio:

Well you know she used to say, " I know you people, you are coming here but your sweethearts are waiting for you and stuff like that." She had a good voice and all you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I hear she played good music?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, she did she played our type of music.... Glen Miller and all that stuff yea.....it would make you home sick.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What would you consider your worst day?

Mr. Giglio:

Worst day?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yes sir, or night? Were there several bad days?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, you know once in a while you would get a bad day but then you got to overlook it too you know. Some days are good and some days are bad you know. Sometimes you know you would get into a fight with one of your friends, which you shouldn't really get into a fight with but you know you took the heat or whatever, when you would get into it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you get back to the states?

Mr. Giglio:

San Francisco.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You landed in San Francisco in the ship and about when would that have been?

Mr. Giglio:

The Golden Gate yep....

Mr. Misenhimer:

If you were on the ship on August 15th, was that somewhere around the 1st of September.

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, I think so..

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, then you had to check in at San Francisco then they sent me home. I was home I think 2 weeks and then I had to report to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Then, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, they had seen that I was First Class Acting Chief, they put me in charge of draft going to the Kearny shipyard. Some of these guys were older than me, I mean they were old salts.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened there?

Mr. Giglio:

They put me in charge of the draft from Kearny, like I said some of these guys were old enough to be my father you know. Because I was what 18 or 19 maybe?

Mr. Misenhimer:

You about close to being 21...?

Mr. Giglio:

Whatever, somewhere around there...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Giglio:

Well, while there at Kearny, what a job trying to keep 8 or 10 sailors together, Oh my God. So, finally after getting them all back, I said, "let me get out of here, this is anyway,. They sent me to Shoemaker California, because I said, maybe I will stay in or maybe I won't, I was undecided whether to stay in the Navy or not. Of course, I would go with who became my wife but at that time we had grown up together. So, I said, "I don't know." So, at that time I got to Shoemaker California, you familiar with Shoemaker?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well, I have heard of it, but I don't really know it no?

Mr. Giglio:

Anyway, at that time, they put me in charge of another group. They said, " you are in charge of the Dive Bombers." The guys are going around picking up papers and so forth off the ground you know, it was an easy job. So, I thought what the heck am I going to do with that? So, then they told me look, "we are going to put you over with some of the aircraft carriers." So, we worked on them and taking and moving stuff so on and so forth. They said, "if you reup up we will

make sure you get a cage for your crow." In other words they would make me a permanent chief you know. I thought okay. Of course, in writing back and forth to my wife, we were engaged at the time and she wanted me to come out. So, then what should I do you know. I had more than enough points, with all the invasions and all that I had done you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Sure, right.

Mr. Giglio:

So, I thought let me go back home again. So, they put me back in Brooklyn Navy Yard again. Back and forth you know. So, anyway, I just thought well let me get out, and so I got out . I got married and that was it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When were you discharged?

Mr. Giglio:

In December of 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Giglio:

Acting Chief.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What ribbons and medals did you get.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh my God, I got a whole slew of them. I don't remember all of them. I don't know off hand.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You got the Asianic Pacific, Phillipine Liberation, how many battle stars?

Mr. Giglio:

Can I send you some of this stuff? Let me have your address... this way I don't want to give you....

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Giglio:

A little bit yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of problems did you have?

Mr. Giglio:

First of all my grandfather was a plumber, my father was a plumber so, they wanted me in the plumbing business. It was alright for awhile, but when I got married, at first the new housing it wasn't as it should have been. It came maybe 6 to 7 months later, but in the meantime I had gotten married and I needed money. Of course, it was rough getting started. It was good thing that my wife had a job there for a while you know. Finally, I had to leave and go to work for another plumber but that is what happened with me. You know things were finally worked out. I went on and on, and finally I decided to take my own test and get my own license and I wound up getting into my own business.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Plumbing business?

Mr. Giglio:

Yes, plumbing and heating.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your GI Bill for anything?

Mr. Giglio:

No I didn't, I should have, but I didn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home with any souvenirs?

Mr. Giglio:

No, I had one, but when they told us they were confiscating everything I left it on the parade grounds.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was it?

Mr. Giglio:

A beautiful rifle.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see any USO shows anywhere?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, yes, Bob Hope, Jerry Colona and he had some beautiful women with him.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Frances Langford?

Mr. Giglio:

Yea. He was great.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you see him at?

Mr. Giglio:

Some place in New Guinea, I don't know where...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you see any other USO shows?

Mr. Giglio:

Not that I can think of, that is the only one I can think of that we saw, but we saw a lot of movies.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Sure, yes. Did you have any experience with the Red Cross, good or bad?

Mr. Giglio:

Nope, nothing to do with the Red Cross.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got home, could you see any changes in this country?

Mr. Giglio:

The people were really nice to you, you know. People were really great I thought.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, no, no, sometimes were out at sea and you wouldn't get it for about a month or so. Then you would get so much mail, you did not know what to do with it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You would get it all at once huh?

Mr. Giglio:

It was great getting it, I tell you that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see that sign Kilroy was here?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh yea... chuckles... we still use it...chuckles.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What do you use it for now?

Mr. Giglio:

Well you know, we go to a men's room, and we yell " Kilroy was here!" Either at a V.F.W. or the Legion or some place like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else that you recall of World War II?

Mr. Giglio:

There were some crazy things we used to do you know...

Mr. Misenhimer:

Like what?

Mr. Giglio:

I am trying to think of some of the crazy things we used to do, to keep the monotony away.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever get seasick?

Mr. Giglio:

Thank God, no, but I tell you a lot of guys did especially with the LST you know. That has a flat bottom. Oh, we had one officer, Kaplan, I will never forget how sick he got. Oh, man, he was really sick.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else you recall of World War II?

Mr. Giglio:

Maybe after a while, that is why I wanted your address, I will send you some stuff, when I think of it aboard our ship, we would go on some invasions. Me and Mr. Drummond who was our deck officer who knew I did plumbing and stuff you know. So, this man lost his watch down the head, I said, "Mr. Drummond that is gone, it is gone, he says, "look take that bowl and do whatever you have to do and check it." I said, "but I am a gunner's mate?" He said, "you don't have to do it, but there may come a time where you wish you had done it." I said, "okay, Mr. Drummond." Anyway, I will never forget, but, him and I were good friends.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you find the watch?

Mr. Giglio:

No, it went out to sea, you know, it was gone.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yea, I know how those things work.

Mr. Giglio:

But, he wanted to make the officer feel good, I guess. We picked up some Australians.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do with the Australians?

Mr. Giglio:

We took them up to oh.... they were good fighters too you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how many of them did you have aboard.

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, we had a whole bunch of them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They were Navy or Army?

Mr. Giglio:

Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You took them to some place to fight then huh?

Mr. Giglio:

We took them to some place in New Guinea at that time, I forget where.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever have any experience with the Native New Guineans? The fuzzy wuzzies?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, Natives, no we seen a lot of them, but never messed with them. We were told not to mess with them you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They called them fuzzy wuzzies?

Mr. Giglio:

Yep, exactly.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Alright, anything else?

Mr. Giglio:

You know you stop and think and wonder where do the years go by you know that you think about all this stuff now you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many reunions have you been to?

Mr. Giglio:

Oh, I have been, in fact my wife and I started it really.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When was that?

Mr. Giglio:

In 1982.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you get it started?

Mr. Giglio:

Carl Herrgesell and I were good friends we would go back and forth and talk about doing different things and so on and so forth. Finally, I decided to say, "let's try sometime." So my wife, she looked up all the guys names. She was a big help. There everybody was worried about New Jersey's and New York, they worried about gangsters and all that stuff, so we held it in Phoenix, Arizona that is where Carl moved too. So, that is where we held our first one. After that we just continued, of course we have lost a lot of people though you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Thanks again Tony for your time today.

Mr. Giglio:

Nice talking to you, if your are ever out this way stop and see me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Thanks to your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Giglio:

Thank you for your service too, and when I get this stuff I will mail it out to you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Good, and thank you.

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