

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

Center for Pacific War Studies  
Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with  
Cecil V. Warner  
Sgt.  
UAAF

November 19, 2014

Interviewed by  
John B. Tombaugh  
Peg Van Meter

Sgt. Cecil V. Warner  
35258247  
956th Air Eng Sqd.  
USAAF

Medals Earned:  
Good Conduct  
EAME Ribbon

My name is John B. Tombaugh and Peggy Van Meter and we are interviewing this gentleman.

John Tombaugh

Would you please give your name and address?

Cecil Warner

Cecil Vernon Warner, 16519 Linden Rd. Argos, Indiana 46501.

John Tombaugh

What were your parents names and where they were born?

Cecil Warner

Robert Dewey and Harriet Bender Warner. My father was born in Missouri and mother was born in Wabash Co., Indiana.

John Tombaugh

Where were you born?

Cecil Warner

Argos, Indiana.

John Tombaugh

When is your birthday?

Cecil Warner

February 7, 1920.

John Tombaugh

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Cecil Warner

Yes a sister, Geneva.

John Tombaugh

Where did you go to school?

Cecil Warner

I went to Green Township and Argos High School.

John Tombaugh

What year did you graduate?

Cecil Warner

I graduated in 1938 from Argos High School in Argos, Indiana.

John Tombaugh

What did you do after school?

Cecil Warner

I worked for Mr. Meck.

John Tombaugh  
Where were you on Dec. 7, 1941.

Cecil Warner

I was over at Culver Acadmey.

John Tombaugh  
When and where did you enter the military?

Cecil Warner  
I was drafted, I went into the service on February 14, 1942  
and went to Fort Benjamin Harrison at Indianapolis, Indiana.

John Tombaugh  
Where did you go for basic training?

Cecil Warner  
I did not go for basic training.

John Tombaugh  
What did you do?

Cecil Warner  
I went straight to Texas and trained as a mechanic.

John Tombaugh  
How did you go there?

Cecil Warner  
I went by train to Texas.

John Tombaugh  
What were the barracks like there?

Cecil Warner  
They were two-story and located by the airfield.

John Tombaugh  
What did you do while there?

Cecil Warner  
I worked on the C 47 transports and the B 17.

-----  
C 47 Skymaster aka Dakota 4 man crew  
transport L.W.

---

Power :two 1,000 hp Wright Cyclone R-  
1820 12 cylinder air cooled  
radial engines or two Pratt and  
Whitney Twin Wasp R-1830 14

cylinder air cooled engines.  
 HP :1,200 hp ea.  
 Max Speed :260 mph  
 Ceiling :25,000  
 Tactical Radius  
     :750 miles  
 Range :1,100 miles  
 Wing Span :95'  
 Length :64'6" Long  
 Height :16'11"  
 Weight :17,720 pounds empty, 29,000  
         Lbs full  
 Capacity :28 men or 6000 Lbs cargo or 18  
           Hospital litters or a jeep and  
           a 75 mm cannon.  
 Retractable Landing Gear  
 Tail Dragger

In 1932 Transworld Airlines gave specifications of a commercial plane they wanted built to Douglas for the replacement of the Boeing Model 247 they were using at the time. In the original order a specification was included for a trimotor aircraft. Douglas was aware of the P & W engine on the drawing board at the time and designed the first model, the DC-1, as a twin engined aircraft. The resulting airplane far exceeded the original design specification in passenger, cargo fuel ratio and distance capability.

During a landing the one and only DC-1 crash and so the new model, the DC-2, was built which was slightly longer than the DC-1 but almost identical for the remainder of the plane. This model of the airplane was the first to have in-flight movies available for the passengers.

The U.S. Army ordered three of the DC-2's in 1935 for experimental conversions and shortly thereafter they ordered 18 more with a modification on the side to include the standard double doors as seen on the C-47s. These were used for communication centers and transportation.

In 1936 the first Douglas Sleeper DC-3 was built and the first of the DC-3 was produced known as the Biscuit Bomber, Goonie Bird or Hydraulic Horror to name a few of the names given to them though the correct name was the Dakota.

Prior to and during the war the Japanese actually built, under license, the DC-3/C-47 and mounted gun turrets on them.

The Russians were supplied with 700 C-47's and built, under license, approximately 2,000 more.

The C 47's were used in a variety of manners including the pulling up and towing of the Gliders, supply drops and evacuating the wounded, complete with a nurse aboard and even carry a jeep with trailer or small howitzer.

The C in C 47 stands for Cargo and in the DC 3 the DC stands for Douglas Commercial.

During the Normandy landings there was 1,000 C 47s operating in that area alone.

Almost 11,000 of these were built over the war years.

-----

John Tombaugh  
Where did you go next?

Cecil Warner  
I went by train to California to tour Douglas plant after that was by bus to Alabama for more training then to Florida for deployment. Had appendix removed while in Florida.

John Tombaugh  
Did you have barracks in California?

Cecil Warner  
No, we stayed in a hotel.

John Tombaugh  
Did you ever have c-rations?

Cecil Warner  
No.

John Tombaugh  
How were your officers and NCO's during your time in service?

Cecil Warner  
They were good, not stuck up.

John Tombaugh  
How did you go overseas?

Cecil Warner  
By ship, but can't remember the name.

John Tombaugh  
Do you remember the countries you were in?

Cecil Warner

I was in Europe; Algeria; Tripoli; Tunisin.

John Tombaugh

Any stories you would like to tell us?

Cecil Warner

I was in Africa and always wanted to go for a ride in one of Bombers so this one time went I with the crew on a run and it went from desert to minus 20 degrees in a matter of minutes and those bomb doors were open, I was glad to get back down to the ground. It was hot on the ground and I did not wear the heavy clothing.

While in Africa, we were sending 3-4 bombers to Romania to bomb the oil fields and we were never successful. So they decided to take a different route through Russia. We sent 12 B-17's and only 1 returned. I lost my best friend from Detroit that day. He was never found and is still listed as missing.

Also in Africa, they decided to rebuild the batteries which were used in the planes - they were expensive and did not last long. In the first plane that used the rebuilt batteries, the batteries blew up - so we didn't do that again.

During my time in Africa, we (the crew on the ground) were only in danger twice. Twice the Germans tried to bomb them, but the British blew the German planes to pieces before they could drop any bombs. The British were providing the Americans protection when in Africa.

I arrived in Africa - Jan. 26, 1943.

I arrived in Italy - Dec. 17, 1943.

John Tombaugh

Do you remember any of your officers?

Cecil Warner

The HQ was Capt. Richardson and out in the field we had Lt. Scott.

John Tombaugh

What was your job?

Cecil Warner

Mechanic, but we just fixed the holes when the planes came in most of the time.

John Tombaugh

How was the food?

Cecil Warner

Okay.

John Tombaugh

Did you see any USO shows while overseas?

Cecil Warner

No.

John Tombaugh

What was your rank, company, battalion, division/if a flyer-squadron, group, division, wing?

Cecil Warner

I was a Sgt. with the 956th Air Engineers Squadron with the 301st.

John Tombaugh

What medals or battle stars, ribbons did you receive?

Cecil Warner

Good Conduct; EAME Ribbon; AAF Tech Badge w/Airplane Mech Bar.

John Tombaugh

Date you were discharged?

Cecil Warner

I was discharged at Sioux Fall, South Dakota on Oct. 6, 1945 and hitchhiked home.

John Tombaugh

How did you find the United States when you came back?

Cecil Warner

Same, went to work.

John Tombaugh

Your wife's name (maiden name and marriage date)?

Cecil Warner

Jane Kepler and married on Oct. 6, 1946.

John Tombaugh

Do you have any children?

Cecil Warner

Yes, daughters; Kathleen, Delores, Rebecca and Elizabeth.

John Tombaugh

Have you been to any of the military reunions?

Cecil Warner

No.



John Tombaugh

Have you kept in touch with your buddies?

Cecil Warner

No.

John Tombaugh

You are now retired. What did you do when you came home from the service?

Cecil Warner

I went to work for John Meck and worked at Bendix and then my own business.

John Tombaugh

What would tell young people today?

Cecil Warner

I enjoyed serving my country.

-The End-