

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Nimitz Education and Research Center  
Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With

Glenn E. Norwood  
Oxford, Mississippi  
November 30, 2016  
307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group  
370<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron  
B-24  
Pacific

Mr. Misenhimer:

My name is Richard Misenhimer, today is November 30, 2016. I am interviewing Mr. Glenn E. Norwood by telephone. His phone number is 662-236-5305. His address is 218 Woodlawn Drive, Oxford, Mississippi, 38655. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

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

Mr. Norwood:

Okay, thank you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the first thing I'd like to do is get this name straightened out. What is your actual, official first name?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, originally when I went in I signed it as Glenn E. Norwood. But actually the name on the birth certificate is Everett Glenn Norwood. But all of my records were Glenn E. Norwood.

Mr. Misenhimer:

All your records are Glenn E.?

Mr. Norwood:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, that's fine. I just wanted to make sure on that. Your discharge and that sort of thing all say Glenn E.

Mr. Norwood:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the next thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this is okay with you.

*"Agreement Read"*

Is that okay with you?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, that's fine.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mrs. Norwood:

How about Lisa, Glenn?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, that'd be alright.

Mrs. Norwood:

Lisa Notestone.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have a phone number for her?

Mrs. Norwood:

386-334-4844. 1280 Dal Maso Dr., Daytona Beach, Florida.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay fine, thank you. Hopefully we'll never need that but you never know.

Mrs. Norwood:

Okay, great.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What is your birthdate?

Mr. Norwood:

7/15/25.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And where were you born?

Mr. Norwood:

Mathiston, Mississippi.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, I had three brothers and one sister, but the brothers are all gone.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were any of your brothers in World War II?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, two of them were. They were in the service, a big part of it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But they're no longer living?

Mr. Norwood:

No.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What were your mother's and father's first names?

Mr. Norwood:

My father's name was Everett Norwood and my mother's name was Lee Cooper Norwood.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Mr. Norwood:

Well we got along. My daddy worked here and there and wherever he could find a place to work pretty much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was he able to keep employed most of the time?

Mr. Norwood:

It was a come and go thing, he would get a few, maybe a week or so and then he'd be looking again.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a garden?

Mr. Norwood:

One thing that helped us get by, we had a garden, we always had a few chickens and a cow.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you had a milk cow?

Mr. Norwood:

Right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you got by, you had food to eat then?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh yes, yeah. We didn't go too hungry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where did you go to high school?

Mr. Norwood:

Well before I went in I went to Mathiston High School, but afterwards, I got out I went to Maben High School.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on December 7, '41 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how did you hear?

Mr. Norwood:

On radio.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And when you heard that how did you think that would affect you?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, that's one of things when I guess I eventually decided I was gonna go and enlist. My daddy told me he wouldn't stop me but I had to agree to go back to school when I got out. And I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So what date did you go in?

Mr. Norwood:

May the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1942.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you volunteer or were you drafted?

Mr. Norwood:

No, I enlisted.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah you were seventeen at that time, is that right?

Mr. Norwood:

Sixteen.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were actually sixteen when you went in?

Mr. Norwood.

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They didn't stop you from doing that?

Mr. Norwood:

No, they did not. I got out on the highway and hitch hiked to Cleveland where they had an enlistment station and walked in there and they took me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Which branch did you go into?

Mr. Norwood:

Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how did you choose the Army?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, the Air Corps was a division and I was hoping to be in the Air Corps whenever I got there, as it turned out.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where did you go for your basic training?

Mr. Norwood:

Well I was enlisted at Camp Shelby, I mean they processed me there. And then I went to Kiesler Field and went through a little training and they put me in an AM school. And with some other guys we went to New Orleans and missed several days in the AM school. And they took us out of the school and let us do odds and ends around there, for a couple of weeks. And then they shipped me off to Salt Lake City. And I hung around there and did errands. And then I was sent from there to Sioux City and that's where I joined the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what is an AM school?

Mr. Norwood:

Airplane mechanic. I never did go but I think about three or four weeks to it. And then we went to New Orleans, didn't get back and missed part of it. And they dropped us out of school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any other schooling at all?

Mr. Norwood:

The main thing I had when I got to 307 I was assigned to the armament section and the guys there took it on themselves to train me to be in armorer.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What does an armorer do?

Mr. Norwood:

Armorer took care of the turrets, and the guns, and the ammunition, and the bombs, and the bomb racks, and all that kind of stuff, and the turrets.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So this was a ground job?

Mr. Norwood:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So then what happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Well then after I got to Sioux City we were packed up and sent to Angel Island. And from there we loaded on a boat and went to Hawaii. Well we went to Hawaii, on Oahu, and we were moved into Kipapa Air Base on Oahu.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now how did you travel over there?

Mr. Norwood:

We loaded out of Angel Island on a boat and we went to Oahu. And then we were put on trucks and taken out to Kipapa Air Base.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now where is Angel Island, what state is that in?

Mr. Norwood:

Angel Island is out past Alcatraz. They said that none of us going to go AWOL, we were going



to get on that boat to go.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that trip over on that ship?

Mr. Norwood:

It was slow, I think it was a banana boat is what they called it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there much sea sickness?

Mr. Norwood:

A little bit early, but it didn't last very long.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you got to Hawaii what all happened there?

Mr. Norwood:

Well I'll tell you my training and our planes were doing sea searches because that wasn't too long after they had hit the islands. And they were doing sea searches until they packed us up and sent us to Guadalcanal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About what day did you arrive in Hawaii?

Mr. Norwood:

Gosh, I don't have any idea. (\*Editor's note: November 2, 1942)

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long after you went in, how many months afterwards?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh it was about a month and a half or two months.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So August, September, something like that?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what kind of planes did your 307<sup>th</sup> have?

Mr. Norwood:

B-24.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what else happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Well we stayed on Hawaii a couple of months and then they had us pack up everything. And we went from there, got on a boat and went to Guadalcanal, to Henderson Field and we stayed there for a little while. And the CBs had completed a strip down on Koli Point. And we moved down there on Koli Point and started operating there. And we stayed there for, God I don't know how long, pretty good long while. And then we moved from there, we moved to the Admiralty Islands in Los Negros, was the air base on Los Negros Island. And then we left Los Negros and went to Wakde, right off of New Guinea. And then we left Wakde and went to Noemfoor in the Netherlands East Indies. And we left there and we went to Morotai. And then in '45 we went up to, they sent me up to Leyte and put me on a boat and brought me to Seattle. And I got off the boat the day the Japs quit all their support August 14, '45.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now let me go back and get some information here. Now you were in the 307<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, what Bomb Squadron were you in?

Mr. Norwood:

370<sup>th</sup> Squadron.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now about when would you have arrived in Guadalcanal?

Mr. Norwood:

I guess probably in..., November I guess it was. (\*Editor's note: February 1943)

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was the fighting still going on there?

Mr. Norwood:

They were cleaning up when we got there. They still had some Japs and they were mopping up you know what was left over.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division still there?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah. I don't know if it was the 1<sup>st</sup> Marines, but Marines were still there. They were using the Army unit to come in to help them mop up.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, the 1<sup>st</sup> Marines stayed until December and then they went to Australia. And the Army came in and finished up.

Mr. Norwood:

Well they were there, we were there while the Marines were there too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And then in February of '43 is when they declared Guadalcanal to be taken over.

Mr. Norwood:

Well they declared it cleared, yeah by that time. By that time we were up on Koli Point in Carney Field. We moved from Henderson up to Carney. The CBs had built up a field up there. And there's so many people trying to operate off of Henderson Field, so they had to get some of us out of there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now where all did your outfit bomb, do you know?

Mr. Norwood:

Just about everything. Mostly in the Solomons, in the northern Solomons.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did they lose many planes?

Mr. Norwood:

When we were at Los Negros now, there was some bombing going on in the Central Pacific.

Most all of it was southwest. Well, we lost a bunch of them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You lost a lot of planes?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, we lost planes. I remember we lost several of them where the Jap headquarters was in the Southwest Pacific at that time. Let's see it's, Bougainville was one of the strips that was close to that thing. And I can't think of the name of that....

Mr. Misenhimer:

Rabaul?

Mr. Norwood:

Rabaul, yeah that's where Yamamoto was going to when the P-38 shot him down at Bougainville.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah in Bougainville, right. And Rabaul was their big headquarters.

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, that was the headquarters he was going to. But Rabaul had a number of airstrips around it. In fact we lost two planes that I can remember, on the Rabaul missions. Then later on we were bombing the oil fields in Borneo, we lost a good many of them there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever fly on any of the missions?

Mr. Norwood:

One mission I went to Bougainville on. I can't give you the number of the plane, the name of it was "Jack Rabbit."

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that to fly a mission?

Mr. Norwood:

I was glad to get back. I was flying sideways and the thing about it, I didn't like it sideways because the tip of the wing was out there and I was afraid I'd come around too far.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were a waist gunner?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, right waist.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you shoot at any Japanese planes?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you hit any?

Mr. Norwood:

No, I don't think so. Bougainville was one of the strips that serviced Rabaul.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then from Guadalcanal where did you go, to Admiralties?

Mr. Norwood:

Well from Guadalcanal we went to Los Negros, yeah in the Admiralties.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do there?

Mr. Norwood:

I was in armor when I got up there and that's what I did. Just looked after turrets and ammunition, and load bombs, make sure the turrets were operating.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many people were in your crew?

Mr. Norwood:

Well at different times, there's different numbers. Usually we worked in crews of three and four because most of the time we loaded bombs at night. And that wasn't a very nice time because "Washing Machine Charlie" came over every night. Keeping everybody awake I thought.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, he was pretty disturbing wasn't he?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, he would come pretty often. And when we were on Guadalcanal I guess it was more often because he'd come across over the bay and hit Tulagi and then come on over for us. And Tulagi was the big Naval base at that time at Guadalcanal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever get to Tulagi?

Mr. Norwood:

No, I never did go over there. It wasn't far, but I'll tell you one thing. If you want to see some Christmas fireworks, well when he came across Tulagi with all those ships over there and the guns that were on shore, you never seen this much firing in the air in your life. These little old things they put on around here to show the fireworks, that was nothing compared. That's the most fireworks I ever saw any place.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of guns did they have?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, the ships had all kind of them on there. And the thing about it we could see all the firing and the shells exploding in the air, plus the fact that most of them had tracers. And you could see them going up with the tracer.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you ever bombed anytime by the Japanese?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Norwood:

Well that's when we was on Guadalcanal, we got bombed several times. At Carney Field we got bombed. And one of the bad things about that, he'd come at night and we loaded bombs at night. And we, most of the time try to get off of the strip whenever he'd start making his runs. We got bombed on Morotai too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And then from Los Negros where did you go?

Mr. Norwood:

We went to Wakde. It's the little island off of New Guinea and it was just long enough for there to be an airstrip on it. There was a high place on the east end of it and whenever the planes went up for takeoff they'd get on that high spot and lock their brakes up. Running as high as they could run them, turn the brakes loose and make sure they made it off the island. In fact when we moved from there up to Noemfoor we had everything we had just about on the plane that I was on, moving up there and we was glad to get off of the runway. I didn't think we were going to make it, but we did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there ever any time when a plane didn't make it?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh when they were taking off on some missions we lost a couple there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand that the B-24 had a bit of a problem with some gasoline leaks in their tanks, is that right?

Mr. Norwood:

Not much. The only leak would come when the gas was being transferred. When they began to get low on certain tanks and then at times, like on the Borneo missions and oil fields on Borneo,

we took the bomb rack out of one of the bomb bays and put a gas cell in there. And then the gas had to be pumped from that gas cell into the wing cells to keep the plane in the air long enough to get to Borneo and back.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else happen on Wakde that you remember?

Mr. Norwood:

Well Wakde, the only thing it was just a little coral rocks, what it was. And you couldn't go swimming. We caught the edge of a typhoon while we was on there. And there wasn't enough dirt on there to get your stakes in the ground really to hold your tents there. And we had some wind blowing and we were trying to hold our tents (*laughter*) to keep them from blowing away.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you ever attacked by Japanese ground forces?

Mr. Norwood:

Not that I can, no, uh-uh, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then from Wakde where did you go?

Mr. Norwood:

To Noemfoor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And that's an island up further out from New Guinea?

Mr. Norwood:

It's out of the East Indies is where it was. And that's where we got paid in guilders. Instead of dollars we got guilders when we was there. The only thing was there wasn't any place to spend it. And that's the reason why there was so many crap games and so many card games.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all happened on Noemfoor?

Mr. Norwood:



Well not much of anything. When we moved in there the strip, by the strip where our tent was set up was elephant grass. And they'd gone in there and just mashed the grass down and we set up our tents in there. And while we was there I got stung by a centipede behind my ears that was living in that grass. By the way I got stung by a scorpion on Guadalcanal. We was on Guadalcanal on Mother's Day and the river, we had set our tents up in an old river bed so we'd be under the trees and cover from the air. And anyway, the river came out of the regular bed and got into the old bed, we had to move our tents out of there. And while I was moving the tent out I put my hand up under the flap to take a post out and when I did a scorpion got me on the end of my right finger.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how was that?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh, it turned black. But you know, it was almost kind of dead like for awhile. But fortunately I was close to the dispensary, up on the ridge up there. And I went up there and they put a thing on it and it sucked it and so forth.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Well when we was setting up in that old river bed, you know there was all kind of vines going up in the trees and we had the machetes and cutting them vines and getting them out of there. And one of the guys hit a vine and evidently it was kind of rotten up in there and when he hit there was ants about an inch long started just like rain coming in there. And we got covered up pretty good, but it wasn't but about a hundred yards to the river. So we took off and jumped in the river to get those ants off of us.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Norwood:

On Morotai one of the guys came back in and he couldn't..., one of the things that we tried to do was cover the guns, the turrets and the guns when they came off a mission. And anyhow, this guy couldn't get his nose turret to get the guns to turn down so he could get his cover on there. So I climbed up in there to do it, when I did I messed up and bumped the control and the reason why he couldn't get them down, he hadn't turned his hydraulic fluid off on that turret. And when I reached in there my right elbow, I was checking the gun and see if it was charged to see if that had anything to do with it. But anyhow I hit that control and it turned the turret on me, because I was standing outside the turret just with my head and shoulders in there, and then when I woke up I was in the dispensary. Because that thing got all the air out of me when that turret turned around, because it's about six to eight hundred pounds of hydraulic fluid pressure on those turrets.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So how badly were you hurt?

Mr. Norwood:

No, it really wasn't, it was kind of just a mark on my chest where I had gone against that door. But it wasn't that bad.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, quite often we would load bombs and get ready for a mission, especially when we operated under MacArthur we knew we were going to have a bomb change. In fact while we were on Wakde, Bob Hope and his group came to Wakde. Well we all there got down there early and got a good seat. And about the time this show started they made an announcement, all armorers to fall out to the bomb row change. We had to go and get those five hundred pound bombs and put frag bombs on there or personnel bombs. And so like then I said, we go down there, we take the fuses out of the nose and the tail and then let one of the guys go up in the bombardier's compartment and just toggle those bombs off one at a time and let them drop down. And then

roll them out from under the plane and then move them away so ordnance people could bring in those frags that we were loading.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you missed the Bob Hope show then?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, Bob Hope was the show when they called us out. He had us all come over there so we could shake hands with him and that kind of thing. That was one thing most of us like hadn't expected to happen. But we was kind of upset, we wasn't going to get to see that, but the show, because He had his own show there. Colonna and several women and I can't remember who all. I've got a little book here that says who's there, what. Some of our guys got together the month before we left and put together a little book that says, we were saying goodbye. And some of the pages she was talking about are in there, but I can't remember them. So I've read that book a hundred times.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then from Noemfoor where did you go?

Mr. Norwood:

Noemfoor, went to Morotai.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened there?

Mr. Norwood:

Well that was, Morotai was more of that Borneo oil fields, that's the place that probably we lost the most aircraft. Because you know Japs, that was their only, about only oil supply and they were protecting that pretty much. And then I left Morotai, they took me on a LST. I don't know how to tell you, but anyhow when we got ready to leave to go to Leyte, the boys and I to come home, evidently they were getting ready to drop the atomic bomb because they ground all the aircraft. And we were loaded on an LST and taken from Morotai up to Leyte to get on a boat to come to the States. Anyhow, we couldn't understand why all the planes were sitting on the

ground and we were riding in an LST up there and it took forever to go from Morotai to Leyte to go on a boat to come home. By the way they dropped the atomic bomb while we were on the ship coming to Seattle from Leyte. But I got off that boat on August the 14<sup>th</sup>, 1945, the day the Japs quit. Oh boy, the folks were making a whole lot of noise around there and you know we thought they were glad to see us. hell they were glad the war was over. Like we were. And we got back to Seattle they took us up to Fort Lewis and then they loaded us on a troop train. And took us to Camp Shelby and I was discharged on August the 26<sup>th</sup>. August 26, 1945. We came home, on the boat we was on was Washington, Idaho, and Oregon National Guards. And they announced that all those guys on there in National Guards that had relatives living in Seattle could get a pass. The rest of us were restricted to the post and they weren't even going to sell beer in the PX. So a couple of us got a telephone book and looked up, and I found a Norwood and called him and asked him if he'd be my uncle. And he said he would, so Joe Styers and Andy Kovalick got somebody, and anyway we got off the base that late afternoon, for a little while at night.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there a pretty good party going on?

Mr. Norwood:

Everywhere there were. Everywhere they were throwing parties. I didn't know there was that much whiskey in the world. But there's folks everywhere.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you were over there in the Pacific, what would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Norwood:

Maybe a couple of times when we loaded bombs at night. And you know we'd have the lights on in the bomb bay and everything. And old Charlie would come over and we'd try to get off that strip because we maybe had a whole bunch of bombs under that plane getting ready to load. And that was probably the time that you wanted to get out of there the quickest.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you were overseas how was the morale in your outfit?

Mr. Norwood:

It wasn't bad. You know all of us had something to do and we did it. While we were on Morotai, Charlie came one night and dropped a bomb or two and he hit the \_\_\_\_\_ hole over there and I was out to the side, I was under a jeep. And I don't know if I got a piece of shrapnel or I got \_\_\_\_\_ by the jeep. But anyway, I had a cut place on me when I got out the next day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Norwood:

Linda said everywhere we went we had a baseball team just about, except Wakde. It was too small, we didn't have one there.

I was a Corporal. And by the way I had good friend, Sam McConnell, he was from Chattanooga and he had a degree in math from Duke University and he worked for me. He was on my crew. And Sam was one of the reasons why I guess probably I got into the school business when I got home. But I finished school. Oh by the way now, the G.I. Bill was the greatest thing that ever happened. You know I dropped out of high school. When I got out I went back to school and finished high school. Then I went to junior college and then I transferred to another junior college and finished that junior college. And then I went to Delta State and got a B.S. degree on the G.I. Bill. Then I got some hours in several other places, Western Carolina, Western Kentucky, and University of Alabama. Anyhow I got my master's degree at Ole Miss and then all these other hours, I had enough hours I had certification as a specialist, above a master's degree, and I got all of it on the G.I. Bill. And it makes me mad when I think about those dumb idiots who wouldn't go to school and use that thing, you know it?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh yeah. right.

Mr. Norwood:

But my daddy had told me I had to go when I got back and I'd agreed to it. And I don't know, I'll tell you what happened when I came home. I got discharged at Camp Shelby and one of the guys in Ole Dixie Division that lived in Laurel, he got discharged and we hitch hiked to Laurel and his momma fed us. And then I went over and got a bus from Laurel to Lewisville, Mississippi and then the GM&O railroad went north to Maben where my parents were living at that time. And anyway I got on that, what was called the *Rebel* and bought a ticket to go to Maben, but the train didn't stop in Maben. So Mathiston was three miles south of Maben, so I got off at Mathiston. And walked a mile down to where Highway 2 and 15 crossed and they had a bench there, I laid down on the bench and went to sleep. And Mr. Joe Wise who I'd known and gone to school with his two sons, came across the street and said, "What are you doing over here?" And I told him (*laughing*), "I'm sleeping." He said, "Who are you?" He said, "Well I know." He knew who I was cause I'd been, you know before I'd gone I'd known his sons fairly well. And it was three miles to Mayben and he said, "Come on and get in the car and I'll take you to Mayben." And so he took me to Mayben and I got there and he went up to where the post office was. And so Cody Butler was getting himself ready to deliver his mail, he's a mail carrier. And anyway, he came out and I didn't know where they lived, they'd moved. had a different place. Any anyhow.....

*(End of side 1 of tape.)*

*(Beginning of side 2 of tape.)*

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay go ahead, they picked you up and what happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Well Mr. Butler put me in his car with all his mail and took me over to the house where my parents were living. And he kind of let me out where the back door was and my momma was cooking breakfast and I went in the back door and she went crazy, making all kind of noise. My

daddy just looked at me, he said, "When you going back to school boy?" And I told him, I said, "September and school starts pretty shortly, I'll be going back." He said, "I'm glad you're home." But he didn't tell me that until I told him I was going to school. And I was lucky like everybody else, like I said awhile ago I had that G.I. Bill and I don't know if I'd have been able to go otherwise, you know what I mean?

Mr. Misenhimer:

I think the G.I. Bill was one of the great things that happened to our country. A lot of people would not have gotten a college education without the G.I. Bill.

Mr. Norwood:

The G.I. Bill was probably the greatest thing that ever happened to us. Because the vast majority of them wouldn't have gone. It's also amazing how many were stupid enough they didn't go.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Like I say, one of the questions I ask is about the G.I. Bill and probably about half the people I interviewed did not use it.

Mr. Norwood:

It's amazing how many of them. And you know some of them were real bright guys and that kind of thing. I guess they just didn't want to take the time. Well I don't know if I'd gone if my daddy hadn't been on my back so much. Because I didn't tell you that, but he didn't have an education and he was gonna make sure I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand your dad may have been illiterate, is that right?

Mr. Norwood:

Pretty much. But I'll tell you one thing, when I was working in mathematics, adding something up, I'd start to add it up and I'd call it out and add it up. And when I got through calling it out he'd tell me how much it was. Because he could do that mathematically in his head faster than I could do it on paper. I was amazed at that thing. But you know I always feel like that if you don't have one thing you'll adjust and try to get something else to help you live with it. And by

the way, I don't know if Linda told you or not, but once I got out I worked in education forty-three and a half years. I started out when I got out of college coaching basketball, baseball, and football. And then I was a principal for awhile. When I retired I was superintendent. But you know what the toughest job is in the education business?

Mr. Misenhimer:

No.

Mr. Norwood:

High school principal. It doesn't make any difference, something happens, you've got have a decision immediately. And a lot of times your decision is not the best. But anyhow I was lucky, in so many ways.

Mr. Misenhimer:

My college degree is in Agricultural Education.

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah. Well Mississippi State was the one putting those out and I just went part of one summer over there. I was just getting extra hours at that time, anyway.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you were overseas did you ever get a leave or time off to go anywhere?

Mr. Norwood:

I got a rest leave to go to Australia. And they sent us to a little town in northeast Australia, the name of it McKay. And there was more of us G.I.s down there on rest leave than there was people in that town.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's was the name of that town?

Mrs. Norwood:

Mckay, M-c-k-a-y.

Mr. Norwood:

I made a note to myself to remember that one day I was going to go back to Australia to see what



Australia was. So one Christmas Linda and myself packed up and went to Australia.

Mrs. Norwood:

Tell him about the \_\_\_\_\_ company, it's what's her name kept saying that the iceman was coming.

Mr. Norwood:

Oh, we got down there and there wasn't enough room and they had one little old hotel in the town. And it looked like a hotel you see in western movies, and anyway most of us ended up in local homes. And we was in this home with Mrs. Magarity. And there were four of us that stayed in her house and she told us when we came in there she had a party room downstairs and that we could use it. And she said, "And by the way the iceman comes there." And we didn't pay attention to it, about the fourth time she said that the iceman comes by. And anyway one of the guys asked her, "What's this iceman business?" She says, "Oh he brings beer too." So anyway she had a big icebox down there. And not only, most of the beer in Australia comes in quart bottles. And we got some of that in the islands, occasionally, but not often. And usually when somebody went on rest leave they brought something back for the rest of us.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now let me ask you, when you got out of the service did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Norwood:

I was trying to go back to school and these things. Well I guess the biggest adjustment was I went back to high school and here I was in high school with all those high school students and I'd been gone over three years. But anyhow I was lucky, the people running the school really truly made me feel good, it was unbelievable. I couldn't have left there because they'd come and got me and put me back in there probably. They really, really treated me right, as if I were important. And I'll tell you what, that's one reason why I ended up coaching, they didn't have a coach in that high school at that time. And I half-way helped the guy that was a teacher, that was acting as a coach, while I was going to school that year.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Mr. Norwood:

Not that much. Not really.

Mrs. Norwood:

You had a can of cigarettes. but that was it wasn't it?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah. On that boat you could buy a carton of cigarettes for fifty cents. And I had a bag stashed full of cigarettes when I got home, and so that's about the only thing I had. And my two khaki shirts and my two khaki pants. And I'll tell you one thing, when the guys around there found out how many cigarettes I had, I had all kinds of friends.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in the service did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Norwood:

Red Cross, when we came back from Mckay going back to Noemfoor we stopped in Hollandia and we went to the Red Cross. And you know while you're on rest, well we spent every nickel we had, we didn't have many to begin with, we spent it all. And so we went down to the Red Cross. we was going to get us something to eat, but they were gonna sell us something. And we didn't have any money, so we finally found out that the Salvation Army was around there. We went around there and they gave us some sandwiches. And I don't donate anything to the Red Cross now.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see that sign, "Kilroy was here?"

Mr. Norwood:

Everywhere. Yeah, it was everywhere. Mostly in the restrooms, but everywhere else too. You couldn't go anywhere and not see that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now April 12<sup>th</sup> of 1945 President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Norwood:

Yes, sure did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the reaction people had?

Mr. Norwood:

Well, they didn't know who was gonna run things after that. And you know, didn't think there'd be anybody available to, I'll tell you what Truman got up and said. "The buck stops here." And he did it and you know what I mean.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on May the 8<sup>th</sup> of '45 Germany surrendered, did y'all hear about that?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah. We were kind of hoping though that they wouldn't send all those guys over there to end the war and stuff because we thought it was about to wind down and it was. But I think they were getting some of those guys ready in Europe to send them over there. And by the way my outfit, ones I left them at Morotai, they went up to, what was the big place up there? The roughest thing in the Pacific, I'm trying to remember where, where they had so many kamikazes that got boats and everything else up there. I can't think of the name, it was an island there.

Okinawa. Wasn't that it?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Norwood:

That's what we listened to every night. That was one thing, when the planes cracked up on a strip or something and there was something left in it. The first thing that was taken out of it was the radio. And the radio was hooked up in ceilings in different tents and at night we'd listen to Tokyo Rose most of the time. But there's also we could get a station most of the time from Honolulu. I remember there was a guy, the announcer that was sponsored by Mr. J. J. Glubber

from Hawaii. Tokyo Rose, that's the best music that there was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I hear she played good music.

Mr. Norwood:

Oh, it was great.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you crossed the equator did you have any kind of a ceremony?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah, they played that game. I forgot what they called it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you came out you were a Shellback, is that right?

Mr. Norwood:

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all did they do to you?

Mr. Norwood:

Oh they poured some water on us, that's about it. But you know, I don't know. I'll tell you one thing though, you talk about being in Hawaii, one of the things that we enjoyed more than anything else being in Hawaii, is I don't know, you wouldn't know, but anyway after we had been there awhile they set up a Christmas in 1942, Christmas. Our planes, the whole group, all four squadrons, were loaded up and went from Hawaii to Midway. And they staged off of Midway, they loaded the bombs and refueled and everything. And that's the first time Wake Island was bombed by us, on Christmas Eve. And then they came back to Midway and flew back to Hawaii. And when they got back to Hawaii we had a party Christmas Eve. And that was the same night they bombed it, but they crossed that International Dateline.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of your outfit?

Mr. Norwood:

We've had a bunch of them. It's about phased out now because everybody's gone. Since I was one of the younger ones in my outfit I'm still around, but there isn't many of them around.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what ribbons and medals did you get?

Mr. Norwood:

I don't know. I've got some. I'll tell you what, I got a divorce way back yonder and what I did have was in that house that I left and I never did get them. And I wrote to them in St. Louis, they're supposed to have all the records. And my records, along with a bunch of them, they all burned up in St. Louis. So they don't have the records up there anymore.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Mr. Norwood:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Norwood:

I got invited to go to Gulfport and I'll tell you what they treated us nice. The only thing that annoyed me is some of these guys that are Senators and Congressmen they closed that Memorial up and anyhow they claimed they went down and opened it up so we could get in there. But they're the ones that closed it up the first place.

Mrs. Norwood:

You've got a Good Conduct Medal I found.

Mr. Norwood:

Linda says I got a Good Conduct Medal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well you probably got the Asiatic-Pacific.

Mr. Norwood:

Oh yeah, well I'll give you another little secret. I moved around so much I never did have a Class A uniform. And we moved out of Sioux City before it got cold so I wasn't issued one. And the only thing I ever had was khaki shirts and khaki pants. Never did have a uniform.

Mrs. Norwood:

This says medal sent Victory World War II. He was able to get some based on his discharge papers.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now Linda, you were telling me this morning about your father, what was the story about your father?

Mrs. Norwood:

Well he was a tank destroyer in Europe and April 9, 1945 he was killed outside Hanover. And I was born November of '43 and I went to school on the War Orphan's Bill and I got my first degree on that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So your father was in World War II also then?

Mrs. Norwood:

Yes. Because he was in the Army with the tank destroyer. Apparently he was in a building and the building was bombed and he was killed.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You mentioned some other things this morning, I forgot what they were, but you said some other things about him.

Mrs. Norwood:

Well I don't remember but it brought to mind that when you said the Red Cross, because he wrote home to my mother and said, "Do not send them another nickel." She used to knit and send sweaters and do things like that, because they charged them for things. I remember that. And he told her that the Salvation Army was the one to go to.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I've heard that before.

Mrs. Norwood:

Yes, and I've heard it from men who were in other wars besides World War II. Because that's imprinted on my memory bank.

Mr. Norwood:

The bells were Salvation Army.

Mrs. Norwood:

Yeah we do that as a group of retired teachers and they allow you to sit down now when you get to be ninety years old. They allowed him to sit down to ring the bell.

Mr. Norwood:

I don't know if Linda told you, but Linda, when somebody asks about me she says I'm the last white superintendent of Leflore County schools.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is that right?

Mrs. Norwood:

Glenn, he was superintendent in the Delta and the county that we lived in at that time is about 99% black at this time. So I just gave him the distinction.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Glenn, have you thought of anything else about your time in World War II?

Mr. Norwood:

Well I can remember one thing I guess when it's over. That I'd come home and you know I guess, kind of stabilized whatever it was I was going to be doing from now on. But I tell you what, if you want to know the truth, I enjoyed a lot of it. I guess I was seeing things and doing things that I had never thought that I, you know be involved in.

Mr. Misenhimer:

It was a big experience for everybody.

Mr. Norwood:

Oh it was that now, no doubt of that.

Mrs. Norwood:

Especially when you're from back of beyond nowhere in Mississippi.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you mentioned the one typhoon, were you in any other typhoons besides the one?

Mr. Norwood:

Just caught that one edge of one while we were on Wakde.

Mrs. Norwood:

Didn't a guy from your group bomb Yamamoto, hit him down or whatever?

Mr. Norwood:

He bombed the headquarters. It was the guys from 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force with a P-38 knocked him down.

Mrs. Norwood:

Cause he's a member of the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force Network.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what happened?

Mr. Norwood:

Nick Marrone was the crew chief on the P-38 that got him. One of the funniest things I've ever seen, after all this. One of the reunions, there was two P-38s went down to get Yamamoto when he was shot down. And one of them got credit for it, got a medal for it. And we had a meeting in, where was it in Indiana?

Mrs. Norwood:

Indianapolis.

Mr. Norwood:

In Indianapolis. And those two guys were back there at a table arguing, they're still arguing about who got him. Even though the one got a medal, got credit for it. But I would bet a



hundred dollars if there's any way to figure it out, both of them helped shot him down. So when they went down after him, they wasn't going down there and turning their guns on them.

Mrs. Norwood:

The 307<sup>th</sup> met for years, and years, and years. But now just the men are not able to associate, a group of their children have taken it over and it's just not the same anymore. They're playing games, so there is no 307<sup>th</sup> reunion anymore of the men. There are a few that go, but that's about it. But we did have some good times at those reunions.

Mr. Norwood:

Well we started off with the 370<sup>th</sup> Squadron. And then it began to tail off from the squadron so we got the four squadrons in the group and then went to the 307<sup>th</sup> group. And then later on we went to the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Glenn, that's all I have, have you thought of anything else about World War II?

Mrs. Norwood:

There were pineapple plantations in Hawaii and I think they all learned how to make all kinds of obnoxious alcoholic drinks. It's a wonder they lived. He told me stories about that. Wasn't that \_\_\_\_\_ stuff that you used on that \_\_\_\_\_? The Lister bags?

Mr. Norwood:

That was one Christmas, we got wormy raisins, Christmas and I think this came from the Red Cross, we had wormy raisins, some razor blades and a razor that was rusty. And one of the guys started collecting all of the raisins and nobody knew what he was doing. The raisins were kind of wormy and anyhow he got them all in front of the Lister bag and got it started working and that's the awfulest stuff you ever tasted in your life. And they went down to the chow hall and got a few potatoes and stuff, and some other stuff and put it in the Lister bag with it, while it was working.

Mrs. Norwood:

It's a wonder they're all alive and healthy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Glenn, that's all the questions I have.

Mr. Norwood:

Well I'm sorry I can't think of anything else.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You did well.

Mrs. Norwood:

And we enjoyed the museum, it was a wonderful, wonderful time. And we're sorry that we didn't get to meet you.

Mr. Norwood:

And I'll tell you something else, since everything is not complete I'd like to go back sometime when you get the rest of it put together.

Mrs. Norwood:

But I will tell you, it was 1796 miles to drive from here to Fredericksburg.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Round trip, uh?

Mrs. Norwood.

Right and stay in Kerrville. I'm not ready to do that anytime soon.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Glenn, Linda, I appreciate your time today and thank you for doing this and we'll talk to you later.

Mrs. Norwood:

Well we appreciate you giving us your time.

Mr. Norwood:

I'm just sorry I couldn't give you.....

Mrs. Norwood:

Oh you did great.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You did well, right, right. Alright so long, we'll talk.

Mrs. Norwood:

Thank you very much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

We'll keep in touch.

Mrs. Norton:

Bye-bye.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Bye

*(End of interview )*

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